

**Manual of the  
Provincial Delegate  
for  
Missionary Animation**

**Department for the Salesian Missions**

Roma – Casa Generalizia Opere Don Bosco - 1998

# **Manual of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation**

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## **Abbreviations**

AGC	Acts of the General Council
AMS	La propuesta pastoral de la Animación Misionera Salesiana. Madrid, 1991.
C	Constitutions of the Society of St. Francis de Sales
DIAM	Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation
DOMISAL	Salesian World Missionary Day
EMD	Education to the Missionary Dimension
EN	Paul VI, <u>Evangelii Nuntiandi</u> , 1975.
GC	General Chapter (19, 20, ...)
MA	Missionary Animation
PGS	Salesian Youth Pastoral Work
R	Regulations of the Society of St. Francis de Sales.
RM	John Paul II, <u>Redemptoris Missio</u> , 1990
SGC	Special General Chapter

## **Presentation**

Dear Fr. Provincial,

It gives me great pleasure to present the “Manual of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation”.

Missionary Animation has been a characteristic of our Congregation from its very beginning; commitment to the mission *ad gentes* is, in fact, an essential element of our charism.

In recent years the Congregation has deepened the missionary dimension of the charism and has been very incisive in its directives for the renewed commitments in spirituality, in the education of young people to the faith and in meeting the new appeals and urgent needs of the missions *ad gentes*.

This missionary concern has aroused among the confreres a vast movement of generosity, capable of opening up new frontiers, founding Churches and making the Salesian charism present in every culture.

The figure of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation has come to the fore only recently as a result of the renewed missionary awareness of the Congregation and progressively more organic vision of the Educative and Pastoral Plan of the Provinces.

The complex reality of our Congregation has different rhythmic process from one country to another, and not all the provinces, though willing to be fully involved in the missions *ad gentes*, are yet aware of the ways and forms of global animation which are organic and complementary among themselves.

And so, Fr. Provincial, I encourage you to verify the presence of this missionary commitment in the Educative and Pastoral Project of your Province, to appoint the Delegate for Missionary animation, and to stimulate his collaboration with the Delegate for Youth Pastoral Work and with the other members of the youth pastoral team of the Salesian Family.

I entrust this new *Manual* to your attention. It is the result of a long period of work and revision on the part of the General Council, groups of Provincials, meetings of Delegates in various Regions, and of the informal contributions of the other confreres.

Finally I invite you to encourage the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation, in the context of an organic vision of Salesian youth pastoral work, to do his utmost to *stir up among the young an enthusiasm for the faith which will transform them into credible witnesses and proclaimers of the Gospel.*

**Fr. Luciano Odorico**  
***Councillor General for the Missions***

8<sup>th</sup> December 1997

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

## I – GENESIS OF THE FIGURE OF THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE FOR MISSIONARY ANIMATION

### *A brief history*

The missionary character of our Congregation is already evident at the beginning of our Salesian history; the missionary ideal, in fact, was always prominent in Don Bosco's apostolic and educative activity.

1. In the hundred years of **salesian missionary tradition**, a great stimulus to missionary interest and enthusiasm has already been given by events and initiatives such as:
  - The annual missionary expeditions;
  - The frequent missionary dossiers of the Salesian Bulletin;
  - Letters of missionaries;
  - Fund-raising initiatives for the missions;
  - Visits of Major Superiors to aspirantates, houses of formation, etc.;
  - Publications of various kinds with a missionary character: lives of missionaries, reviews, etc.
  
2. In recent decades, missionary animation has become progressively more prominent through **significant historic events** at the level of the church, the Congregation and society; in particular:
  - The conciliar shift of emphasis on ecclesiology;
  - The post-conciliar renewal of religious life;
  - The development of new missionary frontiers;
  - The growing awareness of the missionary dimensions of our charism;
  - A **change in mentality** of the provincial community through the progressive awareness of the common missionary vocation, leading to structures and forms of missionary animation, and to greater openness to a practical missionary reciprocity or twinning between Provinces which send and Provinces which receive;



- The emerging of new forms of commitment, like conscientious objection, the volunteer movement, education to a world outlook, etc.

3. **The General Chapters** after Vatican II have repeatedly emphasized the obligations of the Congregation in respect of the mission *ad gentes*, proposing forms and structures of missionary animation which make ever more evident the need for a Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation (DIAM). We quote some of the more significant of them:

- The celebration of the *Salesian Missions Day*, I and the setting up of a Central Missionary Office at the service of Missionary Animation;<sup>1</sup>
- Specification of the tasks of the *Councillor for the Missions*, e.g.: “to encourage, coordinate, and promote salesian missionary work at all levels”;<sup>2</sup>
- The “norms at provincial level for the animation and coordination of missionary activity”;<sup>3</sup>
- The *missionary awareness* of the provincial and local communities and “the participation of the laity, especially those who are members of the Salesian Family, in direct missionary activity”;<sup>4</sup>
- The increased salesian missionary literature available, especially through the work of the *Study Centre for the Salesian Missions*, and the *Salesian Historical Institute*;
- The re-launching of attention to the missions, especially through *Projects Africa, East Asia and Eastern Europe*: these *projects* were set up and realized with the involvement of all the Provinces in the world, and through them has emerged an ecclesial line of missionary Animation dictated by ecclesial and congregational missionary reciprocity;
- The production every year (since 1988) of a rich multimedial Missionary Dossier, edited by the Missions Dept., at the service of missionary animation at provincial and local level throughout the Congregation.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. GC19, pp. 179-180.

<sup>2</sup> SGC 478.

<sup>3</sup> R 18.

<sup>4</sup> GC21 146-147

#### 4. The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation

##### – The proposal of a Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation

Speaking of Project Africa, Fr. E. Viganò once said: “*I call on all confreres, especially **Provincials and Provincial Delegates**, to be intelligent and constant animators of various groups of the Salesian Family in this new missionary venture*”.<sup>5</sup>

And the then Councillor for Missions, Fr. Luc Van Looy (1984 – 1990) proposed: “*To coordinate the different sectors of the province in what concerns missionary activity, and to sensitize adequately the confreres and the young people in the same field, **the Provincial chooses an able and suitable confrere as provincial delegate***”.<sup>6</sup>

##### – The Provincial’s Manual

The first official reference to a provincial delegate for missionary animation occurs in the *Provincial’s Manual* which states:

It is the task of every Provincial to promote missionary spirit and commitment.<sup>7</sup> He will do this by “laying down with his council norms for the animation and coordination of missionary activity”.<sup>8</sup>

“**The service of a delegate**, coordinated in his work with the provincial commissions for *youth pastoral* work and for *formation*, and in collaboration with the other groups of the *Salesian Family*, can render this task more extensive and fruitful”.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> AGC 297, p.25.

<sup>6</sup> AGC 323, p.48.

<sup>7</sup> L’Ispettore Salesiano. *Un ministero per l’animazione e il governo della Comunità Ispettorale*, Rome, 1987, n.207.

<sup>8</sup> R 18.

<sup>9</sup> L’Ispettore Salesiano. N. 207.

Missionary animation, however, still seems to lack incisiveness. A greater commitment is shown, in fact, in the Provinces where there exists an *effective overall animation*, thanks to the coordination given by the Delegate for Missionary Animation within the *team for youth pastoral work*.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> A great impulse to Missionary Animation and to the Figure of the DIAM has come in recent years from documents and initiatives like

- The Encyclical “Redemptoris Missio”.
- The letter of Fr. Viganò, the Appeal of the Pope for the Missions (AGC 336).
- The meetings of the DIAMs in recent years: *Rome 1987, Hua-Hin 1989; Madrid 1989; Lima 1991; Brussels 1991; Bangalore 1992; Rome 1994; Belo Horizonte 1995.*
- La propuesta pastoral de la Animación Misionera Salesiana. Madrid, 1991.

## II – SALESIAN MISSIONARY ANIMATION

“The Church is missionary by its very nature, for Christ’s mandate is not something contingent or external, but reaches the very heart of the Church. It follows that the universal Church and each individual church is sent forth to the nations”.<sup>11</sup>

- The globalization of the mission obliges every Christian to fulfil his commitment to evangelization. Missionary pressure, in fact, is not confined ad intra or ad extra, nor is it circumscribed in geographical positions, religious situations or cultural contexts. “Every Christian wherever he may be or work is sent into the world to proclaim the Gospel to those in his neighbourhood”.<sup>12</sup>

The salesian vocation places us at the heart of the Church. From the beginning, Don Bosco wanted us to be deeply committed to the missions *ad gentes* and has passed on to the whole Salesian Family the missionary ideal as a *constituent element of his spiritual and apostolic patrimony*. As Salesians, “we recognise in missionary work an essential element of our Congregation”.<sup>13</sup>

- The missionary dimension, as well as being an essential part of the charismatic legacy of the Founder, “has been and still is an indispensable element of novelty and enthusiasm in the mission and in the life of many confreres. It truly represents the outpost of the salesian mission and the most authentic expression of the salesian youth spirituality”.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> RM 62; Mk 16, 15; 1 Tim 2, 4-5; RM 1.

<sup>12</sup> Vecchi J.E., Pastorale giovanile. Una sfida per la comunità ecclesiale. Turin, LDC 1992, p.293. Cf. RM 33.

<sup>13</sup> C 30.

<sup>14</sup> Odorico L., Program of the Missions Department, Period 1996 – 2002, p.2.

## 1. Missionary animation

By missionary animation, we mean:

Every activity carried out to create and keep alive in the Church the awareness of being sent to proclaim Jesus Christ to all peoples, and to stir up in Christians the need to bear witness to him with generosity even to the giving up of one's life.

More specifically, **missionary animation**:

- Fosters the ensemble of activities carried out by the Church primarily to proclaim the Gospel “to those who do not yet know Christ, the redeemer of mankind”,<sup>15</sup> to take up the challenge of the new evangelization and make oneself an authoritative participant in ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.<sup>16</sup>

It is therefore crystal clear that the first and defining quality of all evangelization is the specifically missionary activity of the first proclamation. “Without the mission ad gentes, the Church’s very missionary dimension would be deprived of its essential meaning and of the very activity that exemplifies it”,<sup>17</sup>

- Is important because while avoiding reductive imagery, it is more attentive to everything that constitutes its foundation, ability for planning and pastoral creativity, complementary and cooperation between Churches, attention to the great social and religious changes taking place at the present day, emerging cultures, etc.;<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> RM 31.

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. Odorico L., Missionary Animation according to the Encyclical “Redemptoris Missio”, in *Missionary Animation, First Meeting of the Provincial Delegates of Missionary Animation for Asia and Australia. Bangalore – 1992*. Rome, 1993.

<sup>17</sup> RM 34; cf Viganò E, o.c., 19.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. RM 83; Viganò E, o.c., 20.

- Highlights:
  - the priority of the first evangelization, the implanting of the Church;
  - the universal dimension of the Church, and the involvement of all Christians in its mission of salvation;
  - missionary commitment in territories of the old and great religions, among ethnic minorities, in new frontier zones and new areopagi;<sup>19</sup>
  - Christian life which must be totally permeated by the Spirit of Jesus, so as to bring forth fruit in abundance for the spreading of the Gospel;<sup>20</sup>
  - the commitment to catechesis for the new evangelization, giving priority to the processes of the catechumenate;
  - a global vision of the mission of the Church in its contents, methods, and practical interventions.

## **2. Missionary animation in its anthropological and theological dimension**

It may be opportune to emphasize some fundamental points which are at the basis of all missionary animation.<sup>21</sup>

### **2.1 – Anthropological foundation**

- The human person is subjectively open to the others, understood as having a personal and communal responsibility as regards the needs of others. This orients his existence to:
  - The understanding of himself as part of a whole;
  - The opening of himself to universal horizons and interests;
  - Personal and communal involvement in the needs and problems of the world.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Odorico L., *La prassi missionaria secondo la tradizione carismatica salesiana*. Rome, Missions Dept., 1997, p.7.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Jn 15,5: RM 77.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. Odorico L., *Missionary Animation according to the Encyclical “Redemptoris Missio”*, in *Missionary Animation*, o.c., 22-26.

- Human maturity is revealed when the person attains self-realization together with others and is able to give practical responses to situations of need. Self-acceptance generally leads to the acceptance of others as welcome guests in his own existence, to an esteem for their values and to an understanding of their limitations.
- The sense of belonging in the heart of man the ability for empathy with others, for living in communion and sharing, even to the embracing of a simple and sober life-style and to the assuming of attitudes in which being counts more than having, and giving brings greater joy and receiving.

The person's horizon does not stop at history. Man's ability to accept his own death so that others may live leads him to open himself to the Absolute Value. Hence the anthropological dimension leads spontaneously to the search for sense and definitive truth, and this in turn leads to his need for involvement in the searching for faith.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.2 – Christian foundation

- There is no doubt about the fact that the point of reference for contents and the modern for inspiration of Missionary Animation is Christ himself.<sup>23</sup>
- This absolute relationship to Christ is due to the fact that he is *the definitive revealer* of the Father's plan of salvation, that he is with the Father, and that he is the divine reality become part of human history.<sup>24</sup>
- He not only tells us of the intimate divine life but communicates it to us in and through himself: his whole person, his message, and *especially his paschal mystery* lead us to the Father.

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. EMD, pp. 12-13. 24-25.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. RM 88.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Acts 4, 10. 12.

- Jesus Christ is the first missionary, the missionary par excellence, because he is *the unique Mediator*: his life is the message of salvation, and his words and deeds are the instruments of animation for the meeting between God and men.<sup>25</sup>

#### – Pneumatological foundation

- *The unique mission* carried through by Jesus Christ once and for all is animated and accompanies in the Church's history by the Holy Spirit.<sup>26</sup>
- The Holy Spirit is, in fact, the Spirit of Jesus Christ; he is the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son; the Spirit who animates, inspires, gives new strength, opens to innovation, and provides an *urge towards new frontiers*, especially frontiers *ad gentes*.
- Even from an etymological standpoint *spirit and animation* are synonymous and indicate an action that transforms from within.
- In the history of the Church, missionary expansion – and hence Missionary Animation which is inseparably united with it – has always been attributed to the action of the Holy Spirit.<sup>27</sup>
- The pneumatological dimension is **the source of missionary spirituality**. The Holy Spirit in fact represents:
  - the surprise of the missionary call;
  - the grace and courage to proclaim the kerygma, despite problems and difficulties in doing so;
  - the security of perseverance in the evangelizing enterprise;
  - enthusiasm in the face of the challenge of the new evangelization.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. 1 Tim 2, 5-7.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Rm 24; Acts 1,8; 2,17-18.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. RM 21.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. RM 87.



## – Ecclesiological foundation

- The church is the sign and sacrament of Christ in history. It is the result of Jesus' missionary activity, and is *animated and constantly urged towards missionary expansion* by the sanctifying action of the Spirit.<sup>29</sup>
- The purpose of its existence is the salvific mission, because it is *essentially that of a community sent for the salvation of all*. The Encyclical RM says explicitly that the mission reveals the most intimate nature of the Church.<sup>30</sup> In consequence, Missionary Animation is the instrument of its pastoral enthusiasm and its spirituality.
- The Church has always emphasized, through 20 centuries of history, its *essential missionary dimension*, both in the territory of each particular Church and in missionary territory *ad gentes*.<sup>31</sup> It has made Missionary Animation the dimension of all the various components of its activities *for human advancement, for evangelization, and for the implanting of Churches*.
- Through Missionary Animation the Church has lived the enriching reality of *missionary reciprocity* among the different particular Churches. The reciprocity is in its turn the instrument of communion of the universal Church.
- Intimately connected with the ecclesiological foundation is **the Marian dimension of missionary animation**: after Christ's ascension, in fact, the apostles – as the first nucleus of the Church – gathered together in the cenacle “with Mary, the Mother of Jesus”,<sup>32</sup> to implore the Spirit and obtain courage and strength to carry out the missionary mandate.<sup>33</sup>
- Mary, therefore, is the model of the maternal love, by which must be animated all the Church's apostles who cooperate in the regeneration and salvation of

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. RM 28.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. RM 9. 18. 20. 26.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. RM 33.

<sup>32</sup> Acts 1, 14.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. RM 92.

humanity.<sup>34</sup> Mary's spiritual pilgrimage, which began with her unconditional *fiat* if adherence to Jesus' mission and culminated in her martyr-like fidelity of the Cross, is the paradigm of the missionary animator and apostle.

### 3. Salesian Missionary Animation

#### 3.1 - Salesian Missionary Animation in the Educative and Pastoral Community EPC<sup>35</sup>

The missionary dimension is a constituent and essential part of our being baptized and being Church. Hence every community is called to become missionary i.e. to make of the mission the reason for its existence and work.<sup>36</sup>

Being a "missionary community" means, in the first place, putting oneself in a state of conversion and mission, ready to be "visited by the Gospel and open to the universality of the Church".<sup>37</sup>

The salesian charism is explicitly missionary, specifically when it declares its option for *the young and the poor who have the greatest need of love and evangelization, for young workers and the working classes, and missionary activity among peoples not yet evangelized.*<sup>38</sup>

"The salesian missionary style is characterized by amiability, joy, availability, creativity, enthusiasm and unlimited work. In some cases salesian missionaries have courageously faced even the test of martyrdom".<sup>39</sup>

The implications of these premises urge every educative and pastoral community to:

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Viganò E., o.c.38.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Vecchi J.E., *The educative and pastoral community*. SDB, Rome. 1981.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. GC23, 217.

<sup>37</sup> EMD, p.47.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. C 26. 27. 29. 30.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Odorico L., *La prassi missionaria secondo la tradizione carismatica salesiana*. Rome, Missions Dept. Missioni, 1997, p.9.

- Acquire a broader vision of the Universal Church, to the point when “*distant problem is our problem too, for solidarity has no geographical limits and neither does responsibility*”.<sup>40</sup>
- Feel again the inspiration of a true and enthusiastic missionary animation, able to raise up a renewed commitment on the part of all for the most neglected and those farthest away, to the ultimate consequence of the *sequela Christi*;
- Break down prejudice and grow in the understanding and acceptance of persons of different origins, race, financial levels and religious faith, by the study of their cultures and by learning to engage in ecumenical and interreligious dialogue;
- Seek the collaboration of lay people, by virtue of the common baptism, in *involvement and shared responsibility*<sup>41</sup> for the mission *ad gentes*, to the extent of rousing a generous response in volunteer work and missionary vocations;
- Make use of the missions as a school for education to evangelical radicality, to holiness and optimism, and to the joy of fulfilling a mission desired by God.

An educative community animated by a missionary spirit is one which feels its responsibility for the Church’s mission, which engages in patient evangelization, which is happy to become enriched with the virtues of others and open itself to the needs of all, overcoming the facile temptation to limit the missionary horizon to one’s own particular mission.

### **3.2 – Salesian Missionary Animation in Youth Pastoral Work**

**Missionary animation is an integral part of salesian pastoral work for the young,** and hence an essential element in all parts of the salesian educative and pastoral project (PEPS).

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<sup>40</sup> Vecchi J.E., *Pastorale giovanile. Una sfida per la comunità ecclesiale*. Turin, LDC 1992, p.229.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. GC24, 180; and index under ‘evangelization’ and ‘mission’.

- It *pervades* and *gives dynamism* to youth pastoral work, bringing in confreres, youth groups and members of the Salesian Family.
  
- In communion with youth pastoral work, it must be present in the overall educative and pastoral project:
  - in the contents, concentrating decisively on the commitment to first evangelization;
  - in style, encouraging openness to a ‘universal Church’ mentality, quality of interreligious and ecumenical dialogue, and availability for practical solidarity;
  - in choosing those to whom we direct our work, renewing the decisive option for poor and needy youth.<sup>42</sup>
  
- A well targeted missionary animation
  - accentuates in youth pastoral work the priority of first evangelization through *the witness of life, the explicit proclamation of Jesus Christ, and the sense of the universality of the Church*;<sup>43</sup>
  - mobilizes all the educative and pastoral features typical of our charism in their support of the work of “patient evangelization and foundation of the Church”;<sup>44</sup>
  - enhances youth pastoral work by giving it a horizon, an objective and a special sensitivity for the universal dimension of ecclesial praxis:
  - illumines the process of education to the faith and of introduction to salesian youth spirituality through the setting of goals, objectives, attitudes and missionary experiences capable of leading young people back to the roots of the faith, and bringing them to see the significance and joy of self-giving for others;<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. VIS, *Camminare insieme*, 1993, 4.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. AMS p.14; EN 80.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. C 30.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. EMD ch.2 & 3, pp. 22-41.

- opens the hearts of the young and of communities to the great problems of humanity, and develops in them the capacity for dialogue with other cultures, religions, and groups belonging to ethnic minorities;<sup>46</sup>
  - Stirs up in the young enthusiasm for the faith, which makes of the credible witnesses and proclaimers,<sup>47</sup> provoking in them a strong requirement concerning their own life style and their ability to commit themselves:
- In the volunteer movement or in groups of missionary animation;
  - In the acceptance and education of persons of different origin, race, faith and refugees, children who are isolated and at risk;<sup>48</sup>
  - In the evangelization of those who do not yet know Jesus Christ and are waiting for the first proclamation of salvation,<sup>49</sup> etc.

Missionary animation and youth pastoral work, therefore, orient young people to a comprehensive love of life, open to culture and ideals, to sharing and solidarity, capable of the courage to dream as did Don Bosco of new worlds and new people.<sup>50</sup>

### **3.3 – Salesian Missionary Animation and Vocational Pastoral Work**

“In the salesian pedagogy of faith the vocational option is the mature and indispensable result of all human and Christian growth”.<sup>51</sup>

- An authentic missionary animation has the task of presenting the missionary vocation within the vocational pastoral work, by helping the young to “discover their own niche in the building of the Kingdom and to will it with joy and determination”<sup>52</sup> and to give a unique sense to their own existence: “to make of it

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. R 18; GC24, 183.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. GC23, 93.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Vecchi J.E., AGC 359, pp.28-30.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. EN 72; RM 34; GC23, 93.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Viganò E., in EMD p.36.

<sup>51</sup> GC23, 149; cf. c 37.

<sup>52</sup> GC23, 150.

an acknowledgment of the absolute greatness of God and a response to his love”.<sup>53</sup>

- The missionary reality continually opens new horizons and reveals frontier zones where man’s future is at stake. For this reason it has a strong motivating power for jolting consciences and stirring up generous responses of vocational commitment.
- Within youth pastoral work and in its privileged relationship with vocational pastoral work, Missionary Animation presents the particular aspect of the missionary vocation (lay, religious and priestly) as the greatest freely given response of a person to the Lord’s call.
- Missionary animation and vocational pastoral work, moreover, find common ground in the education of the young to values, attitudes and involvement, such as:
  - The gratuitous nature of service in places which are humble, uncomfortable and difficult;
  - The sense of the worldwide aspect;
  - Total self-donation in medium and long-term experiences of the volunteer missionary work;
  - The capacity for openness and dialogue with persons from other cultures and different religious convictions;
  - Generous commitment in service to the very poor and to those who have not yet received the revelation of God’s love;
  - The desire to give a permanent and generous response to the mission and gentes.<sup>54</sup>
- “There is no testimony without witnesses, just as there is no mission without missionaries”.<sup>55</sup> The common commitment between the two sectors of the

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<sup>53</sup> GC23, 156.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. RM 65.

<sup>55</sup> RM 61.

missionary animation and vocational pastoral work finds its best expression in the care and development of missionary vocations in the strict sense: “Such a ‘special vocation’ is not something that makes them exceptional in respect of other confreres, but rather a more lively and generous expression of the vocation of all”.<sup>56</sup>

- “Do all you can to foster vocations for both the Sisters and the Salesians”.<sup>57</sup> “The Salesians go to the missions to stay there. Their commitment, while respecting the seasons of the Lord of the harvest, is characterized by an immediate rendering indigenous of the Congregation, This require and adequate inculturation in vocational discernment, and the special following up of candidates from ethnic minorities”.<sup>58</sup>
- Finally, missionary animation strengthen the faith and vocation of those who engage in it. In recent decades there has been noticed a connection, which is not fortuitous, between missionary commitment and renewal of Religious Life: “It is in the missions in fact that one experiences more clearly that the Gospel is the precious ‘good news’ for the present day, and that the faith of the confreres themselves becomes reawakened as they proclaim the events of Christ”.<sup>59</sup> “Faith is strengthened when it is given to others”.<sup>60</sup>

4 In the light of all we have said about salesian missionary animation, the following **OBJECTIVES** emerge:

- **To promote interest in the missions ad gentes in the educative and pastoral community.**
- **To foster the formation of all members of the EPC in witness if life and to the commitment to radiate and communicate their own faith.**

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<sup>56</sup> Viganò E., o.c. p.11.

<sup>57</sup> Don Bosco’s Collected Letters, IV, Letter 2556. SEI, Turin, p.332.

<sup>58</sup> Odorico L., p.8.

<sup>59</sup> Viganò E., o.c. p.35.

<sup>60</sup> RM 2.

- **To propose ways of practical realization to facilitate in the educative community the commitment for the missions ad gentes.**



### III – THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE FOR MISSIONARY ANIMATION ❖ *Identity and tasks*

#### 1. The identity of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation<sup>61</sup>

- The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation is *the witness to and promoter* of the Province's commitment to mission ad gentes.
- "To live and work together is for us Salesians a fundamental requirement and a sure way of fulfilling our vocation".<sup>62</sup> To be a true work of evangelization, missionary animation is of its nature communal. The DIAM must be aware of this and strive to work in harmony with all the other organisms of provincial animation.
- His deep ecclesial sense makes him a person capable of the efficacious organization of various initiatives, which can create a healthy missionary concern within pastoral work, to urge it to get out of its hidebound horizons and point to new ones.
- The DIAM, like every Salesian, "accepts responsibility for his own formation".<sup>63</sup> In addition to his personal qualities and talents, he will try to acquire other skills, e.g.: knowledge of interreligious and intercultural contexts, the ability to communicate and to conduct reflections on missionary facts.

#### 2. The tasks of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation

To attain the objectives indicated in the preceding chapter, the Provincial Delegate assumes the task of translating them into strategies and interventions in the provincial programming of his own sector.

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<sup>61</sup> For this chapter we refer the reader in particular to: Melinda A., La figura del delegado inspectorial para la Animación misionera: responsabilidades, competencias, metodo, in *Animación Misionera Salesiana, Primer Encuentro de Delegados Inspectoriales de América Latina*. Lima – 1991. Rome, 1991.

La propuesta pastoral de la Animación Misionera Salesiana. Delegacion Nacional Salesiana de Pastoral Juvenil, Madrid, 1991.

<sup>62</sup>C 49.

<sup>63</sup> C 99.

## 2.1 – Fostering interest in the missions *ad gentes* in the EPC.

The tasks which derive from this first objective are:

- **To bear witness to his own faith** by observing the options and motivations which prompt us to assume a certain style of life.

What qualifies animation is not only the practical details but the ability to put across, through *the eloquent language of his own existence*, the values he wants to transmit and the experience in which he wants to involve those he is addressing: “*One is a missionary first of all through what one is, before being do through what he says or does.*”<sup>64</sup>

- **To promote information and the knowledge of missionary activity** in the cultural and social contexts of other peoples, with regard to the possibilities and difficulties met with in evangelization and the work of the missionaries.<sup>65</sup> And so it will be useful:
  - To set up a provincial **Documentation Centre**, or database, make it available for initiatives of missionary animation, and encourage its use within the educative community as a source of information;
  - To encourage **an updated knowledge of experiences of missionary life in the Church and in the Congregation** through provincial newsletters, local Salesian Bulletins, and in particular through the “good night” (or the “good morning”) on the 11<sup>th</sup> of each month, recalling the first missionary expedition;<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> RM23; cf. GC24, 151; Viganò E., o.c. p.35.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. AMS, p.16.

<sup>66</sup> To this end use can be made of materials already existing, e.g. those of the VIS (International Volunteer Movement for Development) via Appia Antica, 124, 00179 Rome, which can be translated. The Missions Dept. is always grateful to those who can supply, in a spirit of reciprocity, information about similar initiatives.

- To foster the production of *publications and audiovisuals*, the setting up of *mini-projects*, and subscriptions to and easy consultation of *missionary reviews*;
  - To promote in a particular way the production of teaching aids concerning *themes of development, worldwide attitudes, and interreligious dialogue*;
  - To collaborate with **missionary organisms of the local Church** for a reciprocal enrichment as regards information, formation and the joint realization of activities.
- **Maintain contact with missionaries of one's own Province, or those passing through.** This implies:
    - Letting the local communities of the Province know in good time when there are missionaries passing through, so that they can invite them as *living and eloquent witnesses of the mission ad gentes*, so that by telling the story of their decision *ad vitam*, they may communicate the joy of their self-giving, pass on the search for truth, and provide authoritative documentation of the transforming power of the Gospel.<sup>67</sup>
    - Programming with them at provincial level meetings, forums, days of missionary formation, etc.;
    - Keeping missionary confreres of the Province informed about *courses of missiology* and sessions of missionary formation in the various Study Centres and Universities, and about meetings for formation and verification organized for resident missionaries;
    - Knowing and keeping *contact with the families of missionaries* of the Province, organizing meetings with them and the Salesian Family for the sharing of ideas and missionary information.

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Vecchi J.E., o.c. p.297.

- **Revive the sense of belonging to the one mission of the Church and the Congregation.**

For this purpose, the Delegate will take care to form and inform the confreres and Groups of the Salesian Family in the Province on:

- Reflections, proposals and eventual directives coming from the Centre of the Congregation:
  - Letters of the Rector Major about the Missions;
  - Initiatives, publications and guidelines from the Councillor for the Missions and his Department;
  - Projects for development proposed for the World and Salesian Mission Days;
  - Proposals for ongoing formation of missionaries at world level.
- Initiatives of the missionary formation coordinated with the youth pastoral team and the other branches of the Salesian Family, in particular those of a missionary character and those involving responsible involvement in strategies in areas most at risk or of great social need;
- Manifestations, celebrations and ecclesial gatherings of a missionary kind, particularly those of the national branch of Pontifical Missionary Union, of other missionary Congregations, the national and diocesan Caritas organization, local committees for justice and peace, etc.

## **2.2 – Fostering the formation of all members of the EPC, so that they can give living witness, and spread and communicate their own faith.**

The information on missionary activity goes beyond satisfying curiosity and occasional interest. It stimulates a universal outlook, educates to reflection on the significance of facts, problems and cultures which are interrelated, and throws light on the perception of the religious experience present in peoples as a universal search for the absolute even to the understanding of history in which God is present as guide.<sup>68</sup>

On the formation sector, the tasks of the DIAM extend to both the contents and the ways they can be accessed:

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<sup>68</sup> Cf. ID, p.296.

- **Formation of a missionary awareness *ad gentes***, such that each one will know he has been sent to radiate his own faith and feel an interior force compelling him to communicate to others the reasons for his hope: “An obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel”.<sup>69</sup> For this purpose use should be made of the outstanding parts of the liturgical year, the missionary month of October, the salesian world missions day (DOMISAL), missionary departures, etc;
- See to it that in the programs of initial and ongoing formation of EPC, **specific themes of systematic missiology** are included, e.g. the mission of the Church, approach to ecumenism, interreligious dialogue and inculturation, history of the salesian missions, typical missionary figures, etc.
- **Emphasize the explicit missionary catechetical content** in processes of the education of young people to the faith, and in particular:

The urgency of the Kingdom, the universal call of all men to salvation, the mission of the church to be the “sign and instrument” of such a vocation in the world, learning the “ways of the mission: *poverty, meekness, acceptance of suffering and persecution, the desire for justice and peace, in other words the Beatitudes, lived in apostolic life*”.<sup>70</sup>

- Foster **initiatives of solidarity** aimed at creating new ethical models of behaviour, because “faith without works is dead”.<sup>71</sup>
- Propose a spiritual process of ongoing conversion by comparing one’s personal life with the paschal kerygma: such an attitude is essential for every kind of first or new evangelization, by making one’s witness a free and joyful presentation of the faith. For this purpose it will be useful to organize days of missionary spirituality or retreats animated by missionaries or by specialists in missiology.

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<sup>69</sup> 1 Cor 9, 16; cf. 1 Pet 3,15; AMS, p. 17.

<sup>70</sup> RM 91; cf. Mt 5, 1-12.

<sup>71</sup> Jas 2,17.

### **2.3 – Propose practical ways for facilitating in the educative community the making for a commitment to the missions *ad gentes*.**

Communication and formation to the missionary dimension *ad gentes* is based on concrete proposals and structures for creating and sustaining attitudes of *ecclesial membership*, and of service and commitment to the missions. And so the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation will have the task of:

- **Drawing up** and presenting to the EPC a simple, realistic and concrete **PROJECT of MISSIONARY ANIMATION**. Such a project:
  - Will be integrated into (and not merely joined to) the Salesian Educative and Pastoral Project at provincial and local level<sup>72</sup> to provide a re-reading from the standpoint of the missions *ad gentes*;
  - Will be able to put forward and verify obligations, activities and experiences of openness and mentality of the universal Church, by educating to attitudes of freely given services and long term commitment in frontier mission work;<sup>73</sup>
  - Will take account of the indications of the Document “Educating to the Missionary Dimension” in both the elaboration of the above-mentioned Project and in the meetings for the missionary formation with young animators of the salesian youth movement.
- **Fostering the creation and development of missionary groups**, ensuring that:
  - They work within the Salesian Youth Movement to keep alive in the young people and animators the awareness, openness and ability to respond to

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. EMD, pp 45-46.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. EMD, p.47.

the most needy sectors of their own geographical area, and towards work on the frontiers of the missions *ad gentes*;<sup>74</sup>

- They have a specific formation based on the contents of the mission *ad gentes*, even though they may have to assume different times, forms and deadlines, in accordance with local requirements. They can be developed as:
  - Groups for reflection and study, to analyze more deeply the information they received and make better known the missionary activity of the universal Church, cultures and religions of peoples far away and of immigrants, dangerous frontier contexts where the missionaries are most at risk, etc.;
  - Working groups to coordinate the realization of specific projects and mini-objectives, maintaining contacts with persons or countries and spreading knowledge of their concrete reality.<sup>75</sup>

“The reawakening of missionary awareness *to obtain new levels of faith and commitment* is typical of groups and movements which have a specific interest for the missions, the development of peoples, and international collaboration: *missionary experience then becomes transformed into a process of growth and maturing in the faith*”.<sup>76</sup>

- **Encouraging and developing the salesian missionary volunteer movement** within the overall volunteer movement promoted by the Province.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Cf. EMD, p.47; VIS, p.8.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. AMS, pp.22-23.

<sup>76</sup> Vecchi J.E., o.c. pp. 294 – 295.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Salesian Volunteer Movement and Mission, Rome 1997.

For this the DIAM, in agreement with the Provincial Delegate for the Volunteer Movement, must:

- Ensure that candidates volunteering for the missions follow a formative process of at least a year's duration, in line with existing programs at national and interprovincial level;
- Prepare volunteer missionaries as to how they must insert themselves into the Province receiving them, on their willingness to listen, their "openness to world horizons, to intercultural situations, to interreligious and ecumenical dialogue", and on the space to be reserved for more direct commitment on the frontier of evangelization;<sup>78</sup>
- Prepare with the community accepting the volunteers *a program of formation and work*, and follow up the volunteers during their experience:
- Help the communities receiving the volunteers to settle with equity and discretion some conditions inherent in their lives, such as a minimum salary, their living conditions, savings, travelling details, journey home, etc.;
- Keep in contact with the volunteers even *after their return*, so that they can be active witnesses in the Christian community which sent them, *and bring the richness of their experience* to the formation of other volunteers and the animation of missionary groups;
- Sensitize the EPC to keep always in mind a "culture of volunteer work", emphasizing that:

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<sup>78</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p.17.



- The volunteer missionary movement makes better understood the linkage and exchange of riches between Christian communities realized through volunteer work, which constitutes the human bridge which makes reciprocal relationships possible”;<sup>79</sup>
  - The salesian missionary movement is the most mature expression of the scope of salesian formation; it makes concrete at a high level Don Bosco’s idea of the cooperator.<sup>80</sup>
- Involve the EPC in **the celebration of the Salesian and the World Missionary Days**. For this purpose it will be useful:
    - To see that each of these “days” is preceded by a *suitable preparation in all the local communities*, involving those in charge of missionary formation and appealing to their creativity;
    - To make use of the various means available for the purpose: the material sent out by the Missions Department, the multiplication of items contained therein or the result of personal creativity, the provincial newsletter, the local salesian bulletin, and aids put out by the Pontifical Missionary Union;
    - To sensitize and educate the Christian community and the young members in particular, to the duty of contribution even financially to missionary work, giving reasons for specific projects, thanking those making offerings, and informing them of the progress of the projects concerned.

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<sup>79</sup> EMD, p.41.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. VIS, “Camminare insieme”. 1993, p.39.

## **IV – ORGANIZATION**

Missionary animation has need of organizational structures which give to it consistency and continuity.

It is useful to remember that the following guidelines must be assessed according to the reality of the particular geographical area and the practical possibilities of the Province, and must be integrated into the Educative and Pastoral Project.<sup>81</sup>

### **1. SALESIAN MISSIONARY ANIMATION AT PROVINCIAL LEVEL**

**1° - “The Provincial, with the consent of his Council, appoints a Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation”.**<sup>82</sup>

With a sense of sound realism, and with due attention to the program priorities of the Province and the interests of all the sectors of animation, it should be arranged that:

- The DIAM is a person with certain experience in the sector of the missions ad gentes, with sufficient time for his work and with encouragement in it, so as to guarantee greater efficacy in the animation of this sector;<sup>83</sup>
- The DIAM maintains close contact with the Provincial Council and is invited to its meetings when it deals with or approves pastoral projects of the Province which concern the sector of his competence;
- The DIAM takes care to send to the Missions Dept. material and a summary of significant missionary activity, schemes and programs for formation to the missionary dimension, celebrations, studies and useful research results of common application for wider use in the Congregation.

**2° - The DIAM should have an effective place in the Province’s framework of pastoral animation.**

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<sup>81</sup> The guidelines indicated in this chapter have already been stated in a general way in the Department’s document: “Education to the Missionary Dimension”. Rome 1995.

<sup>82</sup> R 18; L’Ispettore Salesiano, 207.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. EMD, p.51.

**To this end, he should:**

- Take part in the various meetings for programming and animation of the Province;
- Present to the Provincial and his Council the plan for missionary animation within the Province's Educative and Pastoral Project;
- Be an integral part of the youth pastoral team;
- Coordinate provincial missionary activities and initiatives of a missionary character: missionary days and campaigns, missionary groups existing in the various houses, formation of missionary volunteers;<sup>84</sup>
- Verify the presence of the missionary sensitivity in the Province's formation communities through missionary group, meetings, special days, information, visits, missionary campaigns, etc.;
- Help local communities to plan and involve the entire local educative community in missionary animation;
- Keep in touch with groups of the Salesian Family in what concerns missionary animation, promoting with them missionary activity *ad gentes*;
- Maintain contact with missionaries of the Province, and attend to those home on leave to coordinate with them visits and days of missionary formation;
- Set up a group of lay collaborators, if possible representatives of the Salesian Family, to share with him the work animation.

**2. – SALESIAN MISSIONARY ANIMATION AT REGIONAL LEVEL**

- Interprovincial (or Regional) Conferences should choose one of the Provincials as the reference person for missionary animation in the Regional, assisted by a confrere who will coordinate:
  - Interprovincial programming of missionary animation;
  - Regular meetings of DIAMs, if possible with the Delegates for Youth Pastoral Work;
  - Exchange of missionary experiences *ad gentes*;
  - Formation of missionary volunteers;

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<sup>84</sup> Cf. EMD, pp. 50 & 51.6.

- Ongoing formation of missionaries;
  - The involvement of returning missionaries in the missionary animation of the Provinces.
- Those responsible for Provincial (or Regional) Conferences should draw the attention of the competent Organisms to the obligation of ensuring that study programs **in the houses of formation** include courses relating to missiology, to the history of the salesian missions, and to the involvement of young confreres in formation as animators of missionary groups and experiences of the volunteer movement in missionary countries.

### **3. – SALESIAN MISSIONARY ANIMATION AT WORLD LEVEL**

#### **The Department for the Salesian Missions:**

- Exploits the courses of missiology organized by the Pontifical Salesian University for the ongoing formation of missionaries and by other academic Centres, and also facilitates their participation in other analogous initiatives;
- Fosters the exchange of updated news items about the missions, the experiences of missionary volunteers, formative processes for missionary groups, and the elaboration of a database on the Salesian Missions;
- Encourage confreres desirous of consecrating their lives to the mission *ad gentes* to address their requests directly to the Rector Major;
- Exploits the Salesian Bulletin, in line with our traditions, as the organ for the diffusion of missionary information, collaborating also with communication services, such as ANS, Acts of the General Council, and aids for animation issued by the Missions Department.

**CONCLUSION: *Missionary spirituality***

Educating to the missionary dimension and keeping alive the commitment to the mission *ad gentes* is a satisfying task involving the whole of the person and one which puts him in the forefront of the work of building the Kingdom of God.

The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation is aware that he received this task as a special vocation which makes demand on his personal resources of *formation*, of *contemplative ability*, and his *practical apostolic skill*.

- Anyone wanting to commit himself to the missions today must *make himself capable “of an open intelligence and positive confrontation with the new phenomena”* – in the complex social reality of the peoples of every continent --, *“understand cultural tendencies, try to make a proclamation in the heart of life, and interpret new languages”*.<sup>85</sup>

The effort of inculturation requires a patient work of first proclamation, the ability to bear sincere witness to the radical nature of one's options, skill in being able to dialogue with freedom and conviction, and the humility to learn from others and listen to what they say.

- “Animation” is *an art of learning, a gift of God*, on a par with that of prayer and fellowship. The missionary animator knows that his interior strength is given to him by the spirit, who is the source from which he continually derives his energy. Creativity, organizational capacity, planning, important as they all are, have need of a deep spirituality.

His contemplative capacity, moreover, is further revealed in docility to the Spirit who transforms him into a courageous witness to Christ, and an enlightened proclaimer of his Word. Conformation to Christ and close communion with him are necessary if he is to be capable of detachment, of leaving his own country, of self-renunciation and humble insertion among new people to be all things to all of them.

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<sup>85</sup> Vecchi J.E., “For you I study”, in AGC 361, p.14.

We read in “Redemptoris Missio”: “*Even before activity, mission means witness and a way of life that shines out to others. It commits us to being moulded from within by the Spirit, so that we may become ever more like Christ. Unless the missionary is a contemplative, he cannot proclaim Christ in a credible way. Only thus can he be a sign of God in the world*”.<sup>86</sup>

- Finally, apostolic interior conviction is the quality of the missionary which enables him to work as though he saw the invisible, to live in the *ecstasy of activity*, which makes his faith industrious, and able to diffuse his own interior beliefs.

What makes missionary animation authentic is its concrete ecclesial association: the missionary does not live on the margin of the Church, *but works within it and to build it up*.<sup>87</sup> “he is urged on by zeal for souls, lives his love towards all – especially the poor and lowly – overcomes divisions of race, cast or ideology; his love excludes no one and has no preferences”.<sup>88</sup>

Whoever has experienced a call to the mission *ad gentes*, or to educate to such a call, feels within himself the urge to open himself to the universal mission of the Church, to change his own of life, and bear witness to his joy at having found in Jesus the content, style and motivation for giving himself to God and his neighbour.

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<sup>86</sup> RM 26. 87. 88. 91.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Viganò E., o.c, pp. 36-37.

<sup>88</sup> RM 89.