



THE LOVE THAT OVERCOMES DEATH

Dear friends,

Our wish for you is that you may experience the joy and fullness of Easter! The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our whole life and all our hope. "If Christ is not risen, our faith is vain" (cf. 1 Cor 15:16)

As Pope Francis says, "we are called to believe in the **resurrection** not as a kind of mirage on the horizon, but as an event already present, which mysteriously involves us even now. And yet, this same faith in the resurrection does not ignore or mask the loss that as human beings we experience in the face of death."

Isn't this what we experience all the time? Do pain, death and fatigue miraculously disappear from our lives as we remember the death and resurrection of Jesus? Does our faith in the resurrection make us immortal or immune, does it make us supermen or superwomen?

"The Lord's Passover does not transfer us to an unreal world, but reaches our hearts to let us travel an authentic path towards the certainty of a life that no longer dies ... The resurrection is not only what awaits us after death. It is a present fact that takes place day after day in the one who believes and hopes, who suffers and loves."

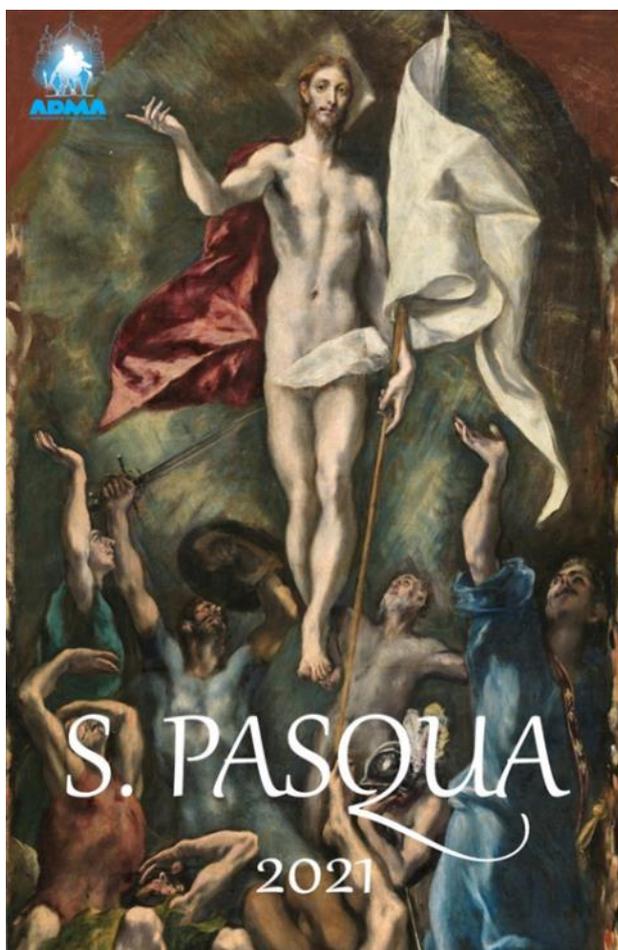


Easter is already the victory of love over evil, hatred, violence, indifference and poverty. The resurrection is born in the gift that Jesus gave on the cross. It is only love that overcomes death and opens us to life and to hope, and takes us out of darkness, loneliness, fear and emptiness.

In this free gift, in the ability to create space for the people in our life and in our heart, we can rise again every day in our gestures of fidelity, love, peace, friendship and forgiveness! Every day we can discover and ignite a little resurrection in us and around us.

As members of ADMA we all want to be a gift that turns into resurrection, to be a sign of God's love in our local situation, to be witnesses of an Easter lived with Mary who went before us and accompanies us. It is good to remember that the disciples of Emmaus met the risen Jesus as they walked on the road. And what is our association if not a journey of sanctification and apostolate? Setting out with Mary and letting her accompany us on our journey is the best way to rediscover the faith and meet Jesus in our heart.

Renato Valera, *President of ADMA Valdocco.*
Alejandro Guevara, *Spiritual Animator ADMA Valdocco.*



*O Padre, che in questo tempo ,
per mezzo del tuo Figlio unigenito,
hai vinto la morte e ci hai aperto il passaggio alla vita eterna,
concedi a noi, che celebriamo la risurrezione del Signore,
di rinascere nella luce della vita,
rinnovati dal tuo Spirito.*

In comunione con tutta la Famiglia Salesiana,
l'ADMA Primaria augura una

Santa Pasqua 2021

affidando tutti a Maria Madre gioiosa del Risorto.

Renato Valera, *Presidente,*
don Alejandro Guevara, *Animatore Spirituale,*
con il Consiglio dell'ADMA Primaria di Torino-Valdocco

ADMA formation programme 2020-2021

"Dream...and help others to dream!"

7. Mission, the heart of our vocation and the soul of our formation

The Synod on young people has several times underlined the intimate link between vocation and mission, strongly affirming that the idea of vocation has nothing self-referential but is always a call to the "ecstasy of life", that is, to go out from oneself to meet others. For this reason, everyone **is** a mission and it must not be said superficially that one has a mission: the mission is of the order of being, of identity, of the original form, and not of having, as if it were an extrinsic good that one possesses. And even when we talk about the "Church going out" we allude to the same dynamic, because the Church, in fact, as a community subject, lives by this same logic: she can be fully herself only when she goes out of herself! We can say the same for ADMA: when it goes out of itself and goes to meet people from the working class and young people, then it is truly itself. And vice versa, when it withdraws into itself in order to try to survive, it renounces its own identity, which in fact is intrinsically missionary.

Like Don Bosco, the members of the Salesian Family are also called to renew their vocation as pastors and apostles of the young with the mission of leading them to Christ, the only one who does not disappoint their deepest aspirations and is capable of satisfying their hunger and thirst for life, happiness and love. In carrying out this mission we are not alone. Mary has been given to us as a powerful help against evil in the struggle for the salvation of young people. She is the Help of Christians who takes care with maternal love of those who pass through this dark world, as depicted at her feet in the large painting in the Basilica in Turin. Specifically, as members of ADMA we are called to:

- Spread devotion in the Salesian Family to the Help of Christians as a constitutive element of the Salesian charism and identity.
- Involve young people in the spiritual journey of ADMA, so that they may experience the motherhood of the Church and of Mary.
- Accompany the formative journey of the members of the Association.

Starting from these guidelines it becomes clear that mission is the heart of the vocation and soul of formation. Pope Francis is fully convinced of this, so much so that he affirms that "we are not formed *for* the mission, but that we are formed *in* the mission. Our whole life revolves around it, with its choices and priorities." (*Message to GC28*). This fundamental position is extremely precious, because it places vocation and formation in their correct pedagogical and pastoral position in relation to mission. The platform of mission is baptism, which makes us all "missionary disciples".

A position to be avoided is that of rigorism, which increases in times of fragility, where we are all in search of certainty, security and solidity: "It claims to govern and control human processes with a scrupulous, severe and even petty attitude in the face of one's own or others' limitations and weaknesses (especially those of others)" (*Message to GC28*). Rigidity is first of all a form of defence in



the face of the complexity of the world we live in. We defend ourselves by detachment, distance and judgment; by an obsessive control of people, who are thus deprived of their freedom of expression; by excluding difference, and an obsessive search for uniformity; by a systemic lack of love and mercy which completely undermines relationships of confidence and familiarity that alone can guar-

antee a healthy educational environment; by a vertical authority that risks becoming perverse because it does not help anyone to grow, as it should by nature; by a return to the past for fear of taking the risk of discernment.

The fruitful position being proposed consists of this precise invitation: "I encourage you to continue your efforts to make your homes an **"ecclesial laboratory"** capable of recognizing, appreciating, stimulating and encouraging the different calls and missions in the Church", because "evangelization implies the full participation, and with full citizenship, of every baptized person". (Message to GC28). This, if we think about it well, was Don Bosco's initial intuition in Valdocco.

We all remember the humorous episode that brought Don Bosco to Valdocco. He was looking for a space to carry on his "oratory", and Pancrazio Soave offered him a site for a "laboratory". Eventually Don Bosco's oratory became an "ecclesial laboratory" of pedagogical and pastoral renewal capable of giving rise to a specific charism in the Church. It was a place where all vocations were present and active. There were lay people who were co-responsible and who supported Don Bosco's work from the outside and from within. There were priests who gave of their time. There was Mamma Margherita and other motherly women. Above all, there were young people who participated in the mission with Don Bosco and who were his first partners and the principal partners in his educational and pastoral work.

This proposal is being fully implemented. It is the recognition and full appreciation of the **educative pastoral community** as the subject of the mission. It is none other than the journey begun by the Second Vatican Council and taken seriously by the Salesian Family. There is an unstoppable chain of exciting achievements, but unfortunately it still encounters forms of resistance. Among these we must mention clericalism, understood as "the personal quest to possess, monopolise and control things, minimising and nullifying the anointing of the People of God. Clericalism, living out our call in an elitist way, confuses election with privilege, service with servility, unity with uniformity, differences of opinion with opposition, formation with indoctrination. Clericalism is a perversion that fosters functional, paternalistic, possessive and even manipulative ties with all other vocations in the Church."(Message to GC28).

This brings to mind the lay nature of the Association of Mary Help of Christians. In reality, on the one hand, there is still a tendency to identify the Church with the hierarchy, forgetting the common responsibility and the common mission of the People of God. On the other hand, the tendency to conceive the People of God according to a purely sociological or political idea also persists, forgetting the newness and specificity of this people which becomes the People of God only in communion with Christ. It is important that in each Association the members are ready and available to work in the various apostolic fields. In the first place, it is necessary for both the spiritual animators and the laity to renew the effort for a formation that is more attentive to the reality of the Church. At the same time, it is necessary to improve the pastoral approach, so that, while respecting the different vocations and roles of consecrated and lay people, the co-responsibility of all the members of the People of God is gradually promoted. In particular, the laity are to be seen not only as "collaborators", but really "co-responsible" for the being and acting of the Church, and consequently to promote the consolidation of a mature and committed laity. This means that the first responsibility of the Association lies with the members of ADMA themselves. They will be the protagonists of a well-prepared and effective animation that will help them to fully express their lay vocation.

Consequently, to what does the charism call us, first and foremost? "The first call is to be a joyful and free presence among the young" (*Message to GC28*). This asks us to return to respond with our lives to what God has called us to be: "a sign of the gratuitous love of the Lord, and for the Lord, in his young people, which is not defined primarily by a particular ministry, function or service, but by a presence. Even before things that need to be done, the Salesian is a living reminder of a presence in which availability, listening, joy and dedication are the essential features which give rise to processes. The gratuitousness of presence saves the Congregation from any activist obsession and from any kind of technical and functional reductionism. (*Message to GC28*).

Parents, educators, consecrated persons and all those who have educational responsibility are called above all to carry out a ministry of active and solicitous presence: "Those who accompany others in their growth must be people with broad horizons, capable of holding both limitations and hope together, thus helping them to always see things, ultimately, from a saving perspective. An educator "who is not afraid to set limits and who, at the same time, abandons himself to the dynamics of hope expressed in his trust in the action of the Lord, is the image of a strong man, who directs and guides that which does not belong to him but to his Lord." It is not lawful for us to stifle and prevent the strength and grace of what is possible, the realisation of which always hides seeds of new and good Life. We learn to work and to trust in God's times, which are always greater and wiser than our short-sighted measures. He does not want to destroy anyone, but to save everyone." (*Message to GC28*).



How is the charism mainly manifested? Without any doubt through a maternal, welcoming, loving attitude. This is what causes Pope Francis to wonder and to ask us: "What would have become of Valdocco without the presence of Mamma Margaret? Would your houses have been possible without this woman of faith? In some regions and places "there are communities that have long preserved and handed on the faith even though no priest has come their way, even for decades. This could happen because of the presence of strong and generous women who, undoubtedly called and prompted by the Holy Spirit, baptized, catechized, prayed and acted as missionaries. For centuries, women have kept the Church alive in those places through their remarkable devotion and deep faith" (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Querida Amazonia*, 99). Without a real, effective and affective presence of women, your works would lack the courage and the ability to transform presence into hospitality, into a home. Faced with the rigour that excludes, we must learn to generate the new life of the Gospel." (Message to GC.28).

In February 2020 in Valdocco there was the inauguration of a bronze statue depicting Mamma Margherita in the act of welcoming a young man to Valdocco. The welcome is always maternal, even when it is not directly a mother who offers it! Ours is a welcoming charism, therefore maternal rather than paternal. We know that there is a large ongoing debate on the presence and role of women in society and in the Church, which the journey of the synod on young people has also nurtured and supported. The Salesian charism is a family, confidential, maternal charism.

For this reason, the observation comes naturally: "Without a real, effective and affective presence of women, your works would lack the courage and the ability to transform presence into hospitality, into a home." (Message to GC.28). The first element of the "oratorian criterion" lies in being a welcoming home and this aspect is clearly linked to the presence of women, because without a mother it is difficult for there to be a home. The Salesian charism is generated by two mothers: the Help of Christians, who since the dream at the age of nine was recognized as Don Bosco's teacher, and Mother Margaret, from whom Don Bosco learned that concrete loving kindness which together with reason and religion would become the pillars of the Salesian educational method.

For personal reflection

- How do we spread devotion to the Help of Christians as a constitutive element of the Salesian charism and identity in the Salesian Family? What steps, signs, gestures do we make?
- How do we involve young people in the spiritual journey of ADMA, in enable them to experience the motherhood of the Church and of Mary?
- How do we accompany the formative journey of the members of the Association?

For prayer

- Vocation of the first disciples (Jn 1, 35-51).

The next day as John stood there again with two of his disciples, Jesus went past, and John looked towards him and said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God.' And the two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Rabbi' -- which means Teacher -- 'where do you live?' He replied, 'Come and see'; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him that day. It was about the tenth hour. One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the

brother of Simon Peter. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother and say to him, 'We have found the Messiah' - which means the Christ - and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas' - which means Rock. The next day, after Jesus had decided to leave for Galilee, he met Philip and said, 'Follow me.' Philip came from the same town, Bethsaida, as Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth. Nathanael said to him, 'From Nazareth? Can anything good come from that place?' Philip replied, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming he said of him, 'There, truly, is an Israelite in whom there is no deception.' Nathanael asked, 'How do you know me?' Jesus replied, 'Before Philip came to call you, I saw you under the fig tree.' Nathanael answered, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the king of Israel.' Jesus replied, 'You believe that just because I said: I saw you under the fig tree. You are going to see greater things than that.' And then he added, 'In all truth I tell you, you will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending over the Son of man.'

For life: [I will ...]

- Read a book about Our Lady as a way of taking care of my vocation and my formation.
- Introduce ADMA to people who do not know it.



GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

ADMA EAST TIMOR

Dear friends

I will try to answer your questions based on my brief understanding; I hope this is enough about myself and ADMA in East Timor. What I have written here is based on the questions you asked me. It's not going to be a perfect answer, maybe, but it's the best I was able to do.

Where are you from?

I am from East Timor. My hometown is Gari-Uai, in the sub-district of Baucau and municipality of Baucau - East Timor. I am pure Timorese.

- Can you tell us something about your history and your experience of life and faith?

I was born in Gari-Uai, Baucau on 26 March 1964 and was baptized in the Church of Our Lady of Fatima in Uailili on 13 October 1965. My parents are Carlos Ximenes and Lidia da Silva. I am the fourth of a family of ten. (I have 3 brothers and 6 sisters) Unfortunately two brothers and one sister have died. At the moment there are seven of us left (two male and five female).

My life has been full of struggles caused by the economic and political situation; I was only 10 years old when we fled with my parents to the forest for 4 years, from 1975 to 1978, because we were being pursued by Indonesian troops. In November 1978 we returned from the forest to our hometown when we were captured by the Indonesian military. In January 1979 I studied at the elementary school in Fatumaca. From 1980 to 1983 I was transferred from Fatumaca to the public primary school in the village of Gari-Uai. After graduation I continued my studies at the public high school of Baucau from 1983 to 1986. In the year 1986, I applied for the technical school at Don Bosco Fatumaca. It was there I discovered my Salesian vocation. When I was in the second year of technical school, I started dreaming of wanting to become a Salesian. In 1988 I applied for the postulancy and in 1989 I finished technical school and applied for the novitiate. I made my first profession on 31 May 1990. In 1991 I was studying Philosophy in the Philippines, and I learned that my older brother was killed in Santa Cruz on November 12, 1991. He was killed by the Indonesian military. That was a painful moment of crisis in my life and in my vocation. But I consecrated my whole life to our blessed Mother as my protector and inspirer. In the end, together with my superiors who assisted and guided me, I was able to overcome my crises and that painful moment.

- How long have you been a Salesian?

My first profession was on 31 May 1990. I was ordained a priest on 16 August 1999 in the Cathedral of Baucau by Mons. Basilio do Nascimento, Bishop of Baucau. I have been a Salesian for 31 years and I have been a priest for 22 years.

- How long have you been an animator of the association?

I have been an animator of the association for 7 years and I have been national animator since 2014.

- What were you involved in previously?

I was involved in the association when I was Rector from 2005-2008 in the Agricultural School of Fuiloro-Lospalos and local animator of the Salesian family. From 2009 to 2011 I was parish priest in the Parish of St John Bosco in Laga. From 2011 to 2018 I was both parish priest and rector in the same place, always in charge of the Salesian family in that community. In 2014 the provincial appointed me national animator of ADMA, a position I still hold.



- How and where did the association develop in your province or region?

The Association was formally founded in 1964 in Baucau by Fr. Alfonso Maria Nacher, SDB, a missionary from Spain. The association was initially called an ARCHONFRATERNITY. Following Don Viganò's visit to Timor Leste in 1988, the Archconfraternity became ADMA and it still is today. The second national animator was Fr. Ramocito Padilla, SDB. The third was Fr. Virgilio da Silva do Carmo, SDB, now Bishop of Dili, and the fourth is the current animator from 2014 to the present.

- Can you tell us how many local groups there are now and how many members?

We have 35 groups: among these 35 groups there are 4 groups in diocesan parishes and 31 groups in Salesian settings, FMA and SDB.

18 groups have an SDB assistant and 17 an FMA assistant. The total number of people belonging to ADMA is 148 men and 941 women. In total we would be 1089 but on February 20 2021 an active member passed away and returned to the Father's house and we now number 1088.

- How is the association structured at provincial and local level?

Structure of ADMA in Timor Leste:

President: Maria Fatima Belo

Vice President I: Juvita Rodrigues (current Vatican ambassador)

Vice President II: Lidia da Silva

Secretary I: João Brito

Secretary II: Biatriz de Carvalho



The structure at provincial level is cared for directly by the national animator either SDB or FMA, together with the national president and councillors. When there are meetings at national level, we invite the province to attend for the opening and also to celebrate Mass for ADMA on some special occasions such as the closure of retreats, the acceptance of new members, etc. National meetings are held three times a year:

- a. Lenten retreat
- b. Advent retreat
- c. Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Fatumaca

The activity of ADMA at local level includes:

1. Formation and meetings every 24th of the month
2. Promoting solidarity among members
3. Organizing formation training for newcomers or candidates
4. Visiting and helping the sick and the elderly

5. Organizing the prayer of the rosary with the people during the month of May and October.
6. Collaborating with the SDBs and FMAs in the parish and communities especially by participating in planning and implementation of pastoral work.

- Can you tell us something more about your life and your experience in the association?

I can say that my life and my experience in the association are very fruitful because I draw constant growth from it. The association includes both well-off people and others with medium or low resources. There is an exchange and sharing among all that builds a true family spirit. This spirit reminds me as a Salesian of the need to strengthen the family spirit in our religious community life. One of the most important things is to listen to the other, to put up with the other's faults. We too learn from families how to listen to one another, to listen from heart to heart.

- What is your relationship with the other groups of the Salesian family?

There are excellent relations between ADMA and the other branches of the Salesian family in Timor Leste. We have organized the Salesian Family Day at both provincial and local level on the feast of Saints Calistus Caravario and Louis Versiglia (25 February). Normally only a few representatives celebrate at provincial level so some remain in their local communities to celebrate at the same time.

For the feast of Don Bosco, we distribute the work of animating the communities. Every year we share the responsibilities, such as setting up the steering committee to organize the activities for the feast of Don Bosco.

- Looking to the future, what ideas and projects do you have to maintain faith among the people and promote love for Jesus in the Eucharist and entrustment to Mary?

The idea we have for preserving the faith is to make people aware of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. In fact, in East Timor faith, gospel culture and local culture are still mixed together, and in some cases traditional issues may prevail. Many people are very devout but do not deepen their love for Jesus the Eucharist enough. ADMA tries to be an instrument to help people be aware of this. This is why we are asked to re-catechize



or re-evangelize the people in the parishes.

The three-year pastoral plan of the diocese of Baucau is centred on the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The team is "Comunga Cristo? Moris hanesan nia!" which means "Communion of Christ? Live like him"!

- And for young people?

We encourage ADMA to carry out an apostolate for young people starting with the members' own children, before reaching other young people in the parish or in other environments.

- Have you a suggestion to Primary ADMA so that it can carry out its commitment to animation on a world level and increase sharing and dialogue between groups?

We would like to suggest to Primary ADMA to continue communicating through WA that we have established to share with us some formation materials for formation both initial and ongoing. The materials must be structured so that in the future whoever takes over from the animator will continue to follow him. It's a kind of formation manual. For now, we have only the rules and regulations of ADMA.



In East Timor we are not very strong economically, so some members are committed to the needs of families. It would be desirable to establish a system of support, financial or otherwise, especially with those from rich countries.

THE REGULATIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS TO GET TO KNOW AND LIVE OUR IDENTITY

ARTICLE 2 - Nature and purpose (first part)

The Association of Mary Help of Christians is a public association of the faithful in the Church in accordance with Canons 298-320 of the Code of Canon Law, and hence has the status of a juridical ecclesiastical person.

In particular, Canon 298 reads verbatim: "In the Church there are associations which are distinct from institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life. In these associations, Christ's faithful, whether clerics or laity, or clerics and laity together, strive with a common effort to foster a more perfect life, or to promote public worship or Christian teaching. They may also devote themselves to other works of the apostolate, such as initiatives for evangelization, works of piety or charity, and those which animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit."

ADMA can therefore be described as a stable and voluntary union of several faithful, with a common ecclesial purpose, lived through an experience of communion in faith and apostolic-educational collaboration.

In line with the prevailing legislation in the individual countries this can be followed by civil juridical recognition, but the Association does not as such adhere to political parties, nor to profit-making groups. In this sense, it is important to safeguard the identity of the Association, maintaining its specificity and originality, avoiding any interference of a political nature or particular interests.

The Association of Mary Help of Christians offers a path that leads to holiness and to the Salesian apostolate. Don Bosco founded it to involve a large number of people in the spirituality and mission of the Salesian Congregation as the second Group of his Work.

May the Blessed Virgin help us to preserve and defend the Christian faith in this particular moment of history, recognizing and bearing witness to the beauty and grandeur of this journey of holiness.

Andrea and Maria Adele Damiani

FAMILY CHRONICLE

We remind you of some news items referring to ADMA published in ANS in the past few weeks. This news is in several languages.

- ADMA in the Philippines -
<https://www.infoans.org/sezioni/notizie/item/12401-filippine-il-dinamismo-dell-adma-nelle-filippine>
- ADMA in Spain -
<https://www.infoans.org/sezioni/foto-notizie/item/12509-spagna-la-piu-antica-adma-di-spagna-compie-125-anni>

The paper can be read at the following site:

www.admadonbosco.org

For every communication you can contact

the following email adress:

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