



9th CONGRESS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

Fatima 29 August - 1 September 2024

Good Night | 29 August 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters, it is a great joy for me to be here during these days at this ADMA Congress, a joy and a privilege that I experience with a sense of great gratitude to the Lord.

This is why I am happy take the floor for a brief good night, according to the tradition that Don Bosco has left us; a brief word that possibly makes us think.

I bring you the greetings of all the Salesian confreres, given that I am one of the 14,000 temporarily pushed to the front! This greeting of the confreres, in addition to those present, is itself a sign: we are here, and we are increasingly aware that our being here, as a Congregation and as individual stories of life and vocation, is the work of the Virgin Mary, who brought us here and keeps us in the presence of her Son Jesus.

Being here is a sign of blessing and privilege for all of us, returning us once again to who we are and where we are going, returning our sense of belonging and our trust in the Virgin Mary. Trust because we are here, but with us we bring a world of people, dreams and needs... we take them with us to deliver them to our Heavenly Mother.

Our being here together reaffirms a journey that continues and grows from the faith of Don Bosco. It is a meeting, a congress that reaffirms a deep identity, reinvigorates it and renews it, together, as Church and as Salesian Family.

The place where we are is evocative and providential for this moment, a place that speaks for itself; that speaks of Faith and conversion to Christ and expresses in a very strong way the sense of the presence and action of the Mother of God, our helper, among the people of God, her history. We are here in the heart of Portugal's faith, and for this we must give thanks.

I think it is very good for us, at the beginning of these days, to remember Don Bosco's very strong words about Mary's presence in Valdocco, which also applies to us here today: if we are here, it is because Our Lady brought us here! Let us bring our brothers and sisters with us and believe this by living it!

The initiative is not ours. Wherever we arrive, we are always preceded by the heart of God and the intervention of Mary, who, as she did at the wedding at Cana, tells us what to do and how to do it: do what HE tells you. That's enough for you!

Good night.

*Fr Stefano Martoglio
The Vicar of the Rector Major*