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EDITORIAL

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF MARY

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary has been a fundamental part of Catholic spirituality for centuries, rooted in tradition and biblical teachings. This devotion is not only an act of love and veneration toward the Mother of God, but also a source of comfort, strength and protection for the faithful who practice it.

To understand the importance of devotion to Mary's Sacred Heart, we must remember that **Mary is seen as the loving mother who intercedes for her children before God; her heart, a symbol of her maternal love and compassion, is venerated as a safe haven for those who seek comfort and protection.** In Scripture, we find references that highlight Mary's unique role in salvation history. From the moment she agrees to be the mother of Jesus at the Annunciation, to old Simeon's prophecy where a sword will pierce her heart, to her presence beside the Cross, Mary demonstrates a deep devotion and faithfulness to God. Her heart is intimately connected to the mystery of redemption, witnessing the passion and death of her Son for humanity.

Devotion to Mary's Sacred Heart has had a significant impact in the history of the Church. Throughout the centuries, saints, theologians and devoted faithful have promoted this devotion as a path to union with Christ through the heart of his mother. One of the most significant moments in the history of this

devotion was the revelation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in the 17th century. This event marked the beginning of a renewed devotion to the loving heart of Christ, which also extended to the maternal heart of Mary.



Alexandrina Maria Da Costa and her relationship with devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Mary.

Among those who have experienced a deep devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary is Alexandrina Maria Da Costa, a 20th century Portuguese mystic and Salesian Cooperator. Her writings and testimonies reflect an ardent love for the maternal heart of Mary, seeing in it a safe haven in the midst of her sufferings and tribulations. Alexandrina experienced numerous visions and revelations, and her life was marked by an intense love for the Eucharist and the Virgin Mary.

At a troubling and tragic time when world peace was threatened by war, as it continues to be today, it is important to remember the contribution of Blessed Alexandrina Maria Da Costa (1904-1955) in obtaining from God the gift of peace during World War II.

Blessed Alexandrina became a spokesperson for the request for the Consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, asking Pope Pius XI for its beginning in 1937 and in the years that followed. In union with Jesus Crucified, Alexandrina was also a victim soul so that Jesus' request would be granted. From October 1938 to March 1942, Alexandrina experienced the stigmata of Jesus' Passion every Friday. Her body repeated all the events of Christ's Passion. Jesus asked Alexandrina to ask the Pope for the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was on 31 October, 1942 when Pius XII performed the consecration. Alexandrina continued to participate in Jesus' Passion for the

salvation of souls and for world peace through total fasting. She lived exclusively of the Eucharist for thirteen years and seven months.

On a crucial date, 25 March 2022, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, an important event occurred: Pope Francis, in communion with all the bishops and the priests, once again consecrated Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary is a **profound expression of love and trust** in the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary. Throughout the history of the Church, this devotion has been a source of comfort and strength for countless faithful, who have found in Mary's heart a safe haven in the midst of life's difficulties. Following the example of saints like Alexandrina Maria Da Costa, may we cultivate a deeper devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary and experience her powerful intercession in our lives. May her motherly heart continue to be a safe haven for us in the midst of life's storms, always guiding us to her Son, Jesus Christ.

Fr. Gabriel Cruz Trejo, SDB
Spiritual Animator ADMA Valdocco.

Renato Valera,
President ADMA Valdocco.

FORMATIVE PATH

THE MATERNAL MEDIATION OF MARY IN THE DREAM AT 9: MARY THE TEACHER

"I will give you the Teacher". It is the mysterious man, whom the reader of the dream account does not hesitate to recognize as Jesus, who defines the role Mary will play in John's life: Teacher. For one called to devote body and soul to education, certainly the example of a good teacher is crucial. Those involved in the training of educators and teachers know very well that, beyond the study of any pedagogical theory, when a young teacher first enters the classroom what prevails in his or her way of interacting with children is the model internalized in the experience lived between the desks during childhood and adolescence. And this is perhaps why Don Bosco's first stable collaborators were precisely his boys: those he had raised in the style of the preventive system were the best interpreters of his pedagogical teachings.

The Lord also tells John what he is to learn from this Teacher, namely, true "wisdom." In what this "wisdom" consists can be understood by going back slightly to the dialogue between the two: John had been invited to educate his companions with loving kindness, something that had seemed impossible to him! Therefore, **Jesus had introduced the figure of a Teacher, capable of making the impossible possible through obedience and the acquisition of knowledge.** What John has to learn, in short, is the art of the preventive system, that is, how to educate young people with love and not with violence - or repressive system - as was common in his time. Mary, put otherwise, will teach John how to love the youth with a transforming love, and she will do so through the discipline of love, that is, within a relationship of maternal/filial love with her disciple. **For only those who feel loved, love and understand how to make possible what at first glance seems impossible.**

The reference to Mary as 'Teacher of wisdom', is not an invention of Don Bosco. Instead, it belongs to a very ancient tradition in the Church and rooted in Sacred Scripture, which unfortunately has been lost to memory today, but which in Don Bosco's time was common and widespread even at the popular level. This is the custom, traces of which we have from the

first centuries of the Christian era, of recognizing in the person of Mary the personified Wisdom spoken of in the Old Testament, particularly in the book of Proverbs in chapter 8 and in the book of Sirach in chapter 24.

Until the liturgical reform, that is, after the Second Vatican Council, these two texts were read during Mass on the occasion of the celebration of Mary's Nativity, that is, her Immaculate Conception and Assumption. Believers, in this way, learned from the liturgy to identify the mysterious woman Wisdom with the Virgin Mary, Teacher who leads those who entrust themselves to her to live a holy life of wisdom, fullness and joy. The biblical figure of the woman Wisdom is actually a very complex figure and it is not possible to identify her only with Mary! Precisely for this reason, after the Council, it was preferred to replace these readings with other, more appropriate references.



When the authors of the wisdom books speak to us about the woman Wisdom, in fact, they do not intend to refer to a particular person. They make use of a rhetorical figure, personification, to arouse in their readers the desire to be open to the gift of wisdom: a gift that God bestows with magnanimity to all who desire it, because He Himself desires that men and women may know His plan of love for His creatures and live a full and happy life. The one who is open to giving embodies in his person the traits of the woman Wisdom, among which are the desire and ability to instruct others in the ways of God. The Gospels present us with Jesus as Wisdom par

excellence, but they also emphasize Mary's ability to discern God's will. Of both, moreover, it can be said that the heart of their magisterium is love and that this content coincides with their pedagogy. That is, it is about teaching how to love by loving and being loved. And is not this, too, a summary of the preventive system?

Teaching how to love by loving, of course, does not mean surrounding those entrusted to us with a suffocatingly sappy or hyper-permissive affection. The insistent emphasis on loving kindness, in fact, can sometimes lead to such misunderstandings. The love that comes from God - as St. Paul reminds us in his hymn to charity - never lacks respect, and respecting the other also means allowing him the space he needs to be himself and to learn, even through the doubts and mistakes that normally accompany the process of human maturation.

In the storyline of the nine-year-old's dream, Mary immediately demonstrates the sapiential quality of her affection for John. Faced with the child's questions, in fact, she does not hasten to provide a complete answer, which might perhaps appease his anguish, but which at the same time would risk being incomprehensible, because it is premature, ending up closing the space for research and maturation that he needs instead to personally assume the mission entrusted to him. Instead, the Teacher invites John to "look," that is, to lift his gaze to the reality before him. **This looking up is the opposite of the withdrawal into oneself, which occurs when one allows oneself to be totally gripped by one's fears or insecurities. In looking up, the child sees a sign: ferocious animals becoming lambs.**

In Scripture, vocation narratives always accompany the request for things that seem impossible with the granting of a sign from God, which serves to sustain the faith of the called one. In the annunciation narrative, for example, to Mary's question "how is this possible?" the angel responds by inviting her to look up to "see" her cousin Elizabeth, the barren woman who in her old age is expecting a child. Therefore, Mary leaves in haste, because she has understood that this is a sign, and goes to Elizabeth to be confirmed in her faith. The image of the fierce beasts becoming tame lambs does not, for the moment, give John relief. Certainly, however, it sticks in his mind and heart. How can one not think that it came back to him, many years later, in front of the

young stragglers on the streets and in the prison of Turin to confirm the intuition that that was precisely his field, the place where he had to work?

Knowing how to recognize and interpret God's fingerprints in the things of daily life and in the elements of creation is a typical trait of the wise men of the Bible. This ability, to turn everyday facts into parables and to open the eyes of others to recognize in them the revelation of God and his salvation, belongs in a special way to Jesus and his preaching. When He looks up at the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, He sees in it the Father's providential love for his children and teaches us to do the same. Mary, in the dream narrative, is no different. It is she who invites John to interpret the sign he saw as a parable, a prophecy of his mission and calling.

Having become an adult, Don Bosco shows that he has acquired wisdom, and therefore has been a good apprentice in the school of his Teacher, even in his ability to make dreams and interpret them. In his art as a storyteller of parables and uplifting apologies, in his pedagogical use of fantasy, art and adventure, Don Bosco presents himself as a wise man on par with the wise men of the Bible. The same wisdom, however, in its most popular manifestation, also belonged to Mamma Margaret, who in Don Bosco's life represented the earthly presence of the Mother of Heaven. When the woman, in her simplicity, would gather her children together on summer evenings and, raising her eyes to the starry sky, invite them to contemplate the greatness and goodness of God; when she invited them to meditate on their own actions, the good and the bad, in order to learn from experience; when she encouraged them to cultivate all that is good and worthy for a better future and not only the usefulness of the present moment, Mamma Margaret transmitted to them the wisdom of the small, concrete things of life. A wisdom that, precisely because it is humble, has the power to make children truly strong and robust. And everything that makes human beings grow in virtue and wisdom, after all, comes from God.

Linda Pocher, FMA.

NAZARETH, GOD'S FAMILY

9. TEACHING OF THE SCHOOL OF NAZARETH

La famiglia è la culla dell'amore e della vita, e proprio per questo è il luogo primordiale dell'educazione: educare è infatti insegnare a vivere e ad amare. Ora *Nazaret, modello di famiglia* perché scelta da Dio per l'Incarnazione del Figlio, è *anche modello di educazione*, il cui ideale è sviluppare la vita di figli e figlie di Dio inaugurata nel giorno del Battesimo.

The family is the cradle of love and life, and for this very reason it is the primordial place of education: to educate is in fact to teach how to live and how to love. Now *Nazareth, a model of family* because it was chosen by God for the Incarnation of the Son, *is also a model of education*, whose ideal is to develop the life of sons and daughters of God inaugurated on the day of Baptism.

The education of children and the maturation of parents

In Nazareth, Jesus, the Son of God, was educated, who in obedience to Joseph and Mary learned as a man to obey God's will, the ideal of every educational journey. Penetrating here are the words of Pope Benedict: "In the life spent in Nazareth, Jesus honored the Virgin Mary and the righteous Joseph, remaining submissive to their authority throughout his childhood and adolescence. In this way he highlighted the primary value of the family in the education of the person... This reveals the most **authentic and profound vocation of the family: namely, that of accompanying each of its members on the path of discovery of God and of the plan he has laid out for them.**"

*In Nazareth, there is Mary, **our mother in the order of grace for three very good reasons:** first of all, because she is the one who educated Jesus, which is already giddy; then because, at a deeper level, by Jesus she was educated by becoming the perfect disciple; and finally because given the educational excellence of the Mother, *Jesus gave her to us as mother and teacher in the faith.* There is between the Mother and the Son a marvelous reciprocity: "in the deepest discretion," explains A. von Speyr, "an exchange of mutual dedication is created between them, within which the Son is nourished by the pure life of the Mother, a life which she has received from God... She shows him how man behaves with his fellow*

men, makes him see, through her personal example, what love of neighbor is in everyday activity". And on the other hand - observes Card. Colombo - "for Mary, too, there was a strenuous journey of faith, which would make her conquer, with ever clearer awareness, the mystery hidden in that Son of hers, and gradually make her understand that she would have to detach herself from Him as the son of her only possession, in order to receive Him, at the foot of the Cross, as a saving gift, destined by God for the benefit of all humanity." The Son of God matures in his humanity thanks to Mary, and Mary matures in her motherhood thanks to Jesus!

And there is Joseph, who edified by the holiness of his bride, is raised to a perfect marriage, where love for God and love for his bride become one. Just as Jesus is the will of God himself (he is the Holy One!), and just as Mary does not distinguish between God's expectations and her own expectations (she is the Immaculate Conception!), so Joseph learns in Nazareth to make God's will his own will: "at first," von Speyr observes, "being subject to the law of original sin, he cannot consider anything but the opposition between the marriage state and virginity." But then, since his engagement to Mary, who is a woman, a virgin and completely open to God, he experiences at the same time and integrally the authentic love of a woman, the fall of every disordered desire, the joy of total service to God: in the end "his love for Mary is love in God, full and human. It will be a renunciation for him when he has to withdraw before the prodigy of the Holy Spirit. A renunciation and not a disappointment."

Education as a family fact

On closer inspection, the first educational legacy to be handed over to children is the family itself, family love,



Nazareth, God's family

family structure, and the related virtues: the ability to honor, obey, give thanks, forgive and care for loved ones, become and be free in bonds. At a time when the ideal of autonomy and the banner of individual rights have undermined marriage and the family, producing spiritual and material devastation, it must be forcefully reaffirmed - as Pope Francis says - that "the family remains the foundation of coexistence and the guarantee against social breakdown," because "children have the right to grow up in a family, with a father and a mother, capable of creating an environment suitable for their development and affective maturation." In this sense, Nazareth is the permanent reminder – in the authoritative words of Paul VI – "of the sacred and inviolable character of the family," "of the gentleness and irreplaceability of family education," "of its natural function in the social order."

Let us delve a little deeper. In Nazareth comes into full light one of the educational truths that is not a little obscured today. It is the fact that *family education cannot be reduced to care without being witness, nor can it be reduced to information without being formation*. In this sense, parents educate as parents, extending the gift of life by witnessing to the truth of life and accompanying in a good life. Instead, they do not educate as teachers or instructors. What makes family education irreducible to hygiene, nutrition and education is that its goal is wisdom of life, not anything less. In other words, in family education it is not explanations but understanding that is in the foreground, not the surface of life but the depths of life, not what is all in all self-evident but what is mysterious.

"If it is true that the basic codes of love and family upbringing are the authority of parents and the filial obedience of children, it is because - as we learn in the best way in the comparison with the family of Nazareth - *the mystery of life, which has its source and destiny in eternal life, precedes and exceeds us!* while submitting to the limits of others, to the limits of my husband, my father, my wife, to their pace." *One can grow in wisdom even in submission to not understanding and not being understood*. Understanding is basically compared to the cares, gestures and words that precede us, surround us and make us grow in family!

Particularly, Joseph is an encouraging model for all parents, because he educates them to welcome with confidence all the surprises and shadows of life.

Father Amorth, in one of his writings on Mary, asks: "why did God allow so much time of excruciating pain for both holy spouses, so loved and beloved by him?" He responds very wisely, "I believe it is the same reasons why the Father asked the Son for the sacrifice of the Cross. *God's ways are not our ways*. The Lord asks us to do his will, he does not ask us to understand his deep motives, which are often beyond our earthly faculties... Often the path of our life follows a course entirely different from our predictions. Joseph is a great model of willingness for us. The Lord does not have to give us explanations for his behavior: he seeks those who do his will, even if he often does not tell us or make us understand the reason why." ***It is necessary to trust God, rely on Him and trust in everything, whether happy or sad. Explanations will not be lacking, but they will come later, or perhaps only in heaven.***

Also because, if God on his part is able to turn everything to good, indecisive is our response, our correspondence, more or less timid, more or less decisive, to his will and grace, and indecisive is our willingness to say no to the world, to its seductions, to its threats. Above all, it is to be seen how docile we are in small things to God's will, for "if one is faithful in the little, much is given and entrusted to him" (Lk. 16:10). Herein lies perhaps the thing that is most learned in Nazareth's family upbringing: in his stay in Nazareth, Father Amorth again observes, "the main fact about which I think the Son of God wanted to instruct us is that holiness does not lie in great works, but in living righteously day by day," without too many regrets of the past and without too much anxiety and pretension to know the future.

Roberto Carelli SDB

HUMBLE AND HIGHEST CREATURE

In our Pilgrimage with Mary, Teacher of Integrale Ecology

10. VIRGIN MOTHER

“*Virgin Mother*” are the words with which St. Bernard’s prayer to Mary opens in the last canto of Dante’s Divine Comedy. “*Daughter of your Son,*” the poet continues, “*humble and highest creature*”: this is the verse that has served as the overall title of these monthly meditations of ours on Mary and ecology, and which we will now finally try to explore and understand better.

It is, in fact, three antitheses that the Supreme Poet inserts one after the other at the very opening of his invocation to Mary. The *antithesis* is a rhetorical figure composed of two elements that are normally incompatible with each other, which in this case have the function of **highlighting the extraordinary nature of the figure of Mary and her human and believing experience**. In Mary, in fact, virginity of body and heart stand together with the fruitfulness of an extraordinary motherhood. Thus she is the mother of Christ, whose, however, by faith she is also the daughter and, finally, while being exemplary in her humility, she is raised by God above every other creature.

Jesus’ identity, too, for those who believe, is defined through the extraordinary antithesis that proclaims him truly man like us, and truly God, like his Father. As man, the Son is immanent to creation, part of it, belonging to it precisely because of his birth from Mary. As God, at the same time, he transcends creation, by virtue of his eternal generation from the Father and participates together with the Spirit in the creation of the world.

This very special position between God and the world makes the Son the mediator of salvation. In him, says the letter to the Ephesians, all things are recapitulated (Eph 1:10), **that is, all that is created is taken back into God’s hands and brought to its fullness, which is communion of perfect love in the Trinity.**

As far as Mary is concerned, it is interesting to point out that the three antitheses with which Dante describes her concern not so much in her individuality but precisely in her relationship with Trinitarian God: *her relationship with the Spirit*, who made her Mother by forming in her womb the Son

without compromising her virginity; *her relationship with the Son*, whom she educated and by whom she allowed herself to be educated, in an extraordinary reciprocity; and *her relationship with the Father Creator*, who willed her from the beginning and raised her up to Himself in glory.

To complete Dante’s first triplet that opens St. Bernard’s prayer to Mary, one verse is still missing. So far, in fact, we have focused only on the first two. The third verse of the stanza reads thus, “*termine fisso d’eterno consiglio,*” meaning that **Mary is the completion of God’s eternal will, with which God, in his wisdom, created the universe.** Just as when a painter sets out to draw a landscape according to the laws of perspective and must first mark the vanishing point, a fixed point, toward which all lines converge, in the same way the Trinity imagined, before he began to create, his own expectations and wishes for his creatures.



Like Mary, all creation is made fruitful by the power of the Spirit. God’s creative power does not compromise, does not destroy, the virginal beauty of creation; it makes it flourish without delaying it. The whole creation, moreover, in each of its creatures, is created in a special relationship with the Son whose cradle it is and by whom it is cradled from eternity as in a womb. Finally, every creature, in its unique identity and in the multiplicity of its relationships, is willed by the Father and is created to be raised in the glory of his love.

In its fragility, in its interdependence, every creature is humble, or rather, is called to humility. Nothing

Humble and highest creature

that is created, in fact, is sufficient for itself, and this radical lack of self-sufficiency is a blessing because it forces one to open oneself, to give oneself and to receive as a gift. It can become, however, also a curse, when the creature, the human being in particular, distressed by the fear of fragility and death turns toward his neighbor like a predator and instead of making flourish he destroys, instead of opening himself to reciprocal gift, he robs his neighbor, nature and even God.

The three antitheses proposed by Dante, therefore, read through the key offered by the verse that closes the triplet, contains a whole program of ecological conversion and a splendid summary of the theological foundation of integral ecology. At first glance, perhaps, the reference to Mary's virginity and motherhood might lead us astray and make us think that this is something that concerns only the Mother of God and not us. It is crucial to remember, in this regard, how the Church Fathers interpreted Mary's virginity, that is, as the wholeness of the creature fresh from the hands of the creator. They believed that human beings lost their original integrity as a result of sin, not as a result of sexual union. Because of sin, the encounter between man and woman and the relationship with children, beginning with the moment of childbirth, is marked by pain and violence. Recovering original virginity means being able to experience fruitfulness and mutual gift without violence. This original virginity, which for Mary is one with the immaculate conception, is restored to believers through baptism.

After sin, all creation is marked by violence. Indeed, St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, affirms that the whole creation suffers and groans to this day the pangs of childbirth, as it awaits the revelation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19-22). Indeed, the evil that human beings introduce into the world through their wrong choices undermines the harmony of the whole creation. Creation, too, therefore awaits redemption from God. But this redemption of creation can only come through the adherence of men and women to the salvation offered by God. Precisely for this reason, it is necessary and urgent that we work to educate and spread the Pope's teaching about integral ecology and ecological conversion, **because on the cooperation of each of us depends the fulfillment of the new creation initiated by the Father with the incarnation of the Son in the virgin and fruitful womb of Mary.**

Certainly Dante, in his time, could not have imagined the climate crisis and ecological catastrophe we are going through in this century. He did, however, know the heart of the human being and his need to be touched, saved by love in order to learn to love without envy, without selfishness, without violence. This is why Dante, at the end of the long journey that from the depths of human misery led him to the heights of holiness, turns precisely to Mary: because it is not enough to know goodness in order to practice it, we need someone to walk ahead of us and show us, step by step the way. We need a mother, a sister, a friend, who understands our struggle and is able to encourage us, console us and show us the goal. Here the Father, knowing this, thought of **Mary and placed her as the fixed star on our horizon, as the vanishing point toward which the sometimes twisted lines of our lives converge. *Let us once again entrust ourselves to her intercession, ask her for the gift of purity and fruitfulness in all our relationships, actions and intentions.***

Linda Pocher FMA

FAMILY EVENTS

Video Invitation to Congress at Fatima

We would like to remind you that **the registration is now open for the 9th Congress of Mary Help of Christians to be held in Fatima from 29th August to 1st September 2024: mariaauxiliadora2024.pt.**

In view of this important gathering of the Salesian Family, the organising team has promoted a **series of nine videos** in which various personalities from the Salesian world invite everyone to participate. They are available at [this link](#).

Portugal: *International Congress of Mary Help of Christians 2024 at Fatima*

It is with joy that we thank those who donated 15,000 euros to support groups in difficulty for their participation in the Congress of Mary Help of Christians.

The amount received will be distributed among the various requests for financial support.

“The Lord loves a cheerful giver”



I will
give you the
TEACHER
IX Congress of Mary Help of Christians

Fatima 29 August - 1 September 2024

Registration now open

www.mariaauxiliadora2024.pt

La preghiera, respiro dell'anima

Mornese. Welcomed by the beauty of the hills of Alto Monferrato and by the hospitality of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, a group of ADMA members from Turin, San Benigno Canavese, Nizza Monferato, Mornese and Lerma spent two days of retreat at the College of Mornese on 27th and 28th April.

They were intense days during which moments of



Family events

reflection and prayer alternated with moments of conviviality.

In the two reflections proposed by Sr. Lucrezia Uribe, world animator of ADMA entitled: ***'To pray well, pray from the heart and with the heart'*** and ***'Marian spirituality in Mother Mazzarello'***, the young Maín is presented as a woman assiduous in prayer and meditation on the Word of God. A prayer of the heart that is simple, very personal and spontaneous that allows her to enter into intimacy with God and transfigure her life.

Growing in devotion to Mary of Sorrows forged Maín's spirituality who, having become a Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, translated her conformation to Christ with the meaningful expression 'He is here and we are here', pointing to the crucifix hanging around her neck.

In the reflection by Fr. Pietro Mellano, sdb, chaplain of the FMA community of Mornese and coordinator of the CFP of Alexandria, entitled ***'Mary, Woman of Prayer'***, **Mary is an example of an open attitude, of a willing heart that in humble and simple prayer puts its life in the hands of the Lord: 'Lord, whatever you want and however you want'. Mary is the woman who in prayer makes us realise that every day given by God is a call.**

The days, spent in silence and meditation were marked by the hour of Eucharistic adoration, the recitation of vespers and the holy rosary with meditations on 'Mary Woman of the Beatitudes' led by Sr. Lucrezia Uribe and Sr. Gabriela Patiño, world delegate for the FMA Past Pupils.

ADMA Sicily: XVIIth Marian Day

On Sunday, 28th April 2024 at the FMA Madre Mazzarello Institute in Palermo, the **XVIIth ADMA Sicily Marian Day** took place. More than 260 people arrived from 11 centres of the region, who were welcomed by the provincial council led by president, Salvatore Di Maio.

"We are children of a dreamer and for this reason, we are called to dream big," said the young Salesian Fr. Stefano Cortesiano, who gave us a beautiful reflection on the theme ***'a dream that makes a difference'***. Inspired by Don Bosco's dream at nine, Fr. Stefano explained how the dream is a message that the Lord gives us, it is the link between the visible and the invisible, it is that star that invites us to walk.

The second speech was given by Fr. Salvatore Nicosia, spiritual animator of the ADMA of Florida, who emphasised how today it is difficult to dream because of the wounds that life inflicts on us, but that at the same time wounds enrich our lives and can ***transform pain into dreams***. There were also some ***testimonies***, starting with the presentation of a large group of very young people who recounted their experience of belonging to and actively participating in ADMA initiatives. Rosario and Pina from Florida (SR) shared their experience of taking part in the Salesian spirituality days for the first time, while Salvatrice and Giorgio from Ragusa, who are



deeply in love with Mary, told us how they had long wanted to spread Marian devotion in their parish, and how one day by chance they found a certificate of membership of Primary ADMA dating back to 1966 in the oratory, but no trace of associates. Mary probably chose them to revive a local association that had died out over time, and now, with God's grace and Mary's help, they will take their first steps with the support of the regional council. Lastly, Francesco and Deborah from the ADMA of Arese (Mi) and responsible for the Lombardy-Emilia province expressed how they live their devotion in total entrustment to Mary. This was followed by the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Stefano Cortesano in the institute's chapel and Eucharistic Adoration presided over by Fr. Paolo Cicala.

It was a beautiful day characterised by an atmosphere of family, friendship, welcome and above all love for Mary and Jesus in the Eucharist.

New Guideline – *Primary ADMA responds*

At the request of one of our readers, this new column '*ADMA primaria risponde*' (the *primary ADMA responds*) was created to offer insights into questions of general interest. Anyone who would like to suggest a topic or question can let us know by emailing adma@admadonbosco.org



Holy Mass for the Deceased members of ADMA

Every 24th of the month, holy mass is celebrated for all the deceased ADMA members from all over the world at 9 a.m. in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin.



INTENTIONS FOR MONTHLY PRAYER

We would like to join the prayers of all ADMA groups around the world for Pope Francis' intention.

In this month, together with the whole Church, ***we pray for those fleeing their country.***

We pray that migrants fleeing wars or hunger, forced into journeys full of danger and violence, will find acceptance and new opportunities for life in their host countries.



WE ARE ASKING EVERYONE TO SEND US AN ARTICLE, A PHOTO OF A FORMATION MEETING, THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 24TH OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, A VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY BEING CARRIED OUT. The article (.doc format, max. 1200 characters without counting spaces) and a maximum of 2 photos (.jpg digital format and no less than 1000px wide), with a title and/or brief description, must be sent to adma@admadonbosco.org. It is necessary to indicate in the subject line of the e-mail "Family Events" and in the text the author's data (name, surname, place of the shot, affiliation Adma, city, country). By sending, you automatically authorise Adma to process, publish, even partially, and disclose the article and photographs in any form. The images may be published, at the editorial staff's discretion, on the website www.admadonbosco.org, and/or in other Adma websites, accompanied by a caption.