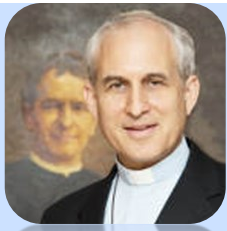


## Newsletter

## January 2020



**Dear Friends!**

“**May God bless you!**”, “May the Lord bless your family!” With these or other similar words, Don Bosco (yesterday) and his successor (today), Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, express their Christmas best wishes for us. But the “problem” is that quite often the Lord has some ways of blessing us and blessing our families, which if not “strange”, are at least very unexpected. A few days ago the family of one Salesian missionary in Africa visited the Rector Major and our Generalate in Rome: Patri, Juani and Juan Carlos, from Spain, sisters and brother of Fr César Fernández, who was one of the pioneers of the Salesian presence in Togo and who was shot dead last 15 February in Burkina Faso. We invited them to Rome as a sign of gratitude for the gift of their consecrated brother and as a deep gesture of consolation and encouragement for them. Their Roman and very Salesian experience was strong and profoundly touching, especially the personal meeting they had with Pope Francis. “The Lord has blessed our family so abundantly,” they did not cease to repeat, “...but in such an unexpected way.” While opening the doors of this year 2020, we will certainly beg for blessings from the Lord. Blessings upon us, blessings upon our homes, lives and work. Let us be ready for his unexpected blessings. Which undoubtedly are the best ones!

In Don Bosco,

**Fr. Guillermo Basañes, Councilor for the Missions**



**Dear brothers and sisters in Don Bosco!**

A few weeks ago I had opportunity to attend the “**Forum of Catholic Inspired NGOs**” in Rome. Seven Don Bosco organisations took part in this Forum. The subject was “**Toward a more inclusive society**”. I was impressed during the working group sessions by the idea that we are all on the same journey – faith based NGOs and civil society organisations – for the sake of human dignity and leaving no one behind! This is exactly what Don Bosco asks of us on behalf of the young vulnerable people of our countries. And, as he used to say, “alone I cannot do it!”. Another important meeting was the **Energy Forever Conference**, organised by the Mission Department; DBN took part in it as well. I would like to quote a sentence from the Final Statement: “The Preventive System integral to the Salesian educative approach brings together four dimensions: the educative, religious, cultural and vocational. Ecology and care for our common home are constituent parts of this approach with its aim of holistic human growth and development.” This year is a very important year, with the XXVIII General Chapter of the Salesian Congregation, in Turin. The title of this GC seems very prophetic to me: “**What kind of Salesians for the youth of today?**” Looking at inclusion - which is rather different from integration - I would like to express our wishes for 2020 to reach better unity and brotherly partnerships, with all the partners of the DBN, the DBN members, the Mission Offices, FMA, SDB, the PDOs... Looking forward to continue our journey together this year. With Kind Regards,

**Peter Annegarn, DBN President**

### FORUM OF CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS



**5-7.12.2019 The Forum of Catholic Inspired Organizations** took place in Rome. The Forum meets every two years and works closely with the Vatican Dicastery for Human Integral Development. The last two years’ Forum worked in seven working groups: 1) Human Rights, 2) Development and environment, 3) Health, 4) Education, 5) Family, 6) Migration, 7) Youth. The expert working groups prepared a publication: **Towards a More Inclusive Society** which will guide Catholic organizations in advocacy work in relevant topics on national and international level. 135 participants from over 100 Catholic organizations and networks took part in the Forum meeting which was concluded with the audience with Pope Francis. Representatives from Don Bosco Network, Don Bosco International, Don Bosco Youth Net, VIS, Misiones Salesianas, IIMA Human Rights Office of the Salesian Sisters and Don Bosco Green Alliance took an active part in the work of the working groups and in the Forum meeting in Rome.

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## ENERGY FOREVER



**26-27.11.2019** The Economist General's Office together with the Missions Sector organized an international Salesian conference on green, clean and renewable energy in Rome; its title: **"Energy Forever"**. 38 representatives of various Don Bosco Network members, Mission Offices and Salesian institutions from circa 20 countries from across the globe, including the Economist General of the Congregation, Br Jean Paul Muller, attended the conference. Inspired by the Encyclical letter **Laudato si'** the conference participants - the leaders and directors of many Salesian organizations - reflected on the topic of climate change and discussed possible sustainable development strategy for the educational programmes of the Congregation worldwide. Specialists in the field: Mr Hans Josef Fell (former German parliamentarian and current President of the Energy Watch Group), Fr Joshtrom Kureethadam (Coordinator of the Ecology and Creation Sector within the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development) and Fr Martin Poulsum (Senior Lecturer in Theology in the Humanities Department of the University of Roehampton) provided expertise and inspired the work of the working groups. As an outcome the participants prepared a Statement of Commitment (available on ANS website: <http://www.infoans.org/en/sections/news/item/9373-rmg-energy-forever-salesian-institutions-publish-their-final-declaration>) and gathered materials and good practices of Green Energy programmes and projects carried out so far in the Salesian World. This will help the Salesians to include this urgent issue in a more systematic way in pastoral and educational work with young people.

## PDO "TOOLBOX"

Don Bosco Network would like to introduce to you online **"Toolbox"** for a comprehensive capacity development of Salesian PDOs.

You can download documents directly from the PDO platform in the link below: <http://pdo.donbosconetwork.org/en/toolbox-en/> The **"Toolbox"** gathers useful materials in five thematic groups: 1) Capacity development guidelines and tools; 2) Capacity building and training materials; 3) Sectoral manuals and guidelines; 4) Networking and good practices exchange tools; 5) Experiences. We thank VIS for leading the work and financing the **"Toolbox"**. If you need help to use the toolbox you can contact DBN Coordinator at [mroczek@donbosconetwork.org](mailto:mroczek@donbosconetwork.org)

## HLPF/VNR NEW YORK

**9-18.07.2019** The annual **High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)** took place at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. It is the main UN platform for follow-up and review of the progress made toward the 2030 Agenda, consisting of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were set out in 2015. In this context the Salesians, through Fr Thomas Palithanam, SDB representative at the UN, proposed two side events during the main forum, on 10-11 July, in partnership with other institutions, such as Misesan Cara from Ireland. The two side events: 1) **"Addressing Inclusion, Inequality, and Institutions,"** and 2) **"Youth Aspirations and Climate Urgency"** had connections with the SDGs selected for review this year. For the first side event, the panel of experts included selected representatives from Salesian projects in Ghana, Sierra Leone and a Three2six project funded by Misesan Cara in South Africa. In the second side event facilitated by Don Bosco Green Alliance young people from Salesian programmes in Panama, Papua New Guinea, Ghana, and Germany called on World leaders to take concrete action on climate change. The keynote address was delivered by Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations. After this UN programme participants organized follow-up activities in their countries. Don Bosco Network members and Mission Offices provided funding for this advocacy work.

