

Youth Pastoral Document No.2

EDUCATIVE PASTORAL  
PLAN  
METHODOLOGY

DEPARTMENT FOR YOUTH PASTORAL WORK-ROME

EDUCATIVE PASTORAL  
PLAN  
METHODOLOGY

---

**Youth Pastoral Document No. 2**

DEPARTMENT FOR YOUTH PASTORAL WORK-ROME

For private circulation only

Original title :

Progetto educativo-pastorale: METODOLOGIA – 1978

---

The Gondals Press, P-12, Connaught Place, New Delhi

# THE PASTORAL EDUCATION PLAN

## CONTENTS

<b>PRESENTATION</b>	5
<b>I. PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS FOR GETTING THE WORK UNDER WAY</b>	6
1. Make the Patoral Education Plan the objective of each community's commitment to renewal	6
2. Work out in community the details of the plan	6
3. Create active animating group	7
4. Draw up a programme that is realistic and concrete	8
5. Keep the chief points and lines of study very clear, restating them when necessary	10
6. Reach forward-looking proposals endorsed by all	10
<b>II. ELEMENTS FROM SALESIAN TRADITION FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PASTORAL PLAN</b>	11
1. The point of departure: predilection for the young and a lively awareness of mission to be fulfilled	11
2. The subject of the exercise: The Educative Community	12
3. A fundamental attitude characteristic of the educative community: rapport and compatibility with the young	12
4. A pedagogical criterion which permeates the educational practice: anticipation and foresight	12
5. A way of understanding what is meant by education:total service	13
6. An overriding purpose which unifies and gives light and leaven to the educational Process: the salvation of the young person in Christ	13
7. A programme to ensure a Christian moturing proces	14
8. A constant dimension of the educational process: vocational the vocaitonal slant	14
9. Some lines for educational action	14

<b>III. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR DRAWING UP THE PLAN</b>	16
<b>1. Steps in the Salesian Educaitional Plan:</b>	16
1.1 Analysis of the situation	16
1.2 Drawing up the operational plan	17
1.3 Verification of the project in the light of Salesian tradition and Practice	18
<b>2. Pointer for Drawing up the Plan:</b>	18
2.1 Analysis of the situation	18
2.1.1 Establishing the facts	18
2.1.2 See the facts in the light of the guidelines of the GC 21	21
2.2 Drawing up the operational Plan	26
2.2.1 The educative community	26
2.2.2 The specific objectives to be achieved	27
2.2.3 The Method	28
2.2.4 The Educational style	29
2.3 Evaluation of the Plan	30
<b>Appendix: Hypothetical Formulation of some Specific objects</b>	31
<b>Supplement: "ANATOMY" of a Salesian Education Centre</b>	33
Preliminary Note	33
1. Introduction	33
2. Identity of a Salesian Educaitional Center	34
3. Objectives	35
4. The Educative Community	36
5. Methodology	37
6. Educative Style	38

## **PRESENTATION**

We offer this work to Provincials and Animators as an aid in connection with the Salesian Pastoral Plan for Education.

1. It is a reply to a request made by a group of animators from the Italian provinces at a meeting held in September 1978 at the Generalate, Rome, and endorsed by several provincials at their November meeting.
2. It is a first and simple aid. Although a request was made for a preliminary study of the whole question, what is here offered is material to enable first steps to be taken to the elaboration of a full Plan.
3. It may be that there are communities which have already got beyond this stage. We have had in mind those which are just beginning. For those more advanced it may be of use as an illustration of useful experiences elsewhere which can serve as comparisons.
4. This aid will in fact be of value only to the extent that it promotes discussions and deeper understanding. In this sense we await and shall welcome the comments of those who after reading it are proposing to adopt it as a guide.

## **I. PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS FOR LAUNCHING THE WORK**

### **1. Make the Pastoral Education Plan the objective of each community's commitment to renewal.**

The GC21 has given the Congregation a precise programme: to put into effect in practical terms Don Bosco's educational and pastoral Plan in our different fields of evangelization.

This task is a synthesis of our various initiatives aimed at renewal.

Hence, they involve:

- *the local community* which forms its own unified organic plan, to be checked and reviewed each year.
- *the provincial community*; its task is to indicate the pastoral directions and the educational objectives and interests which will provide unity of action and will serve as a basis for the programming and evaluation of our presence in various works.
- *the world community*; a common unified plan for the whole Congregation, based on experience and subsequent study, will promote and facilitate a creative approach in the various provincial and local communities.

### **2. Work out the details of the Plan in community, through a process of shared involvement.**

The educative community is "a decisive element in the total pastoral perspective of education." (GC21, 65). "Parents, lay-workers and the young themselves are active members," (GC21, 62) as are the animators of any sector or activity. (GC21, 76; Const. 39). In it lay people and religious must study and research together in a dialogue of partnership (GC21, 78) and together construct the pastoral educational programme (GC21, 104).

The fundamental requirement is that the programme be taken up and put into effect in a spirit of co-responsibility, and that the different groups that make up the educative community take part especially in both the drawing up and the realization of the Plan (GC21, 67).

In line with these recommendations the Department suggests that a stan be made by convoking the educative community and getting them interested generally in the following points:

- the specific nature of a Salesian center of education and its pastoral objectives;
- the need for all to take part in it;
- the desirability of making some definite decisions concerning its own Plan.

### **3. Create an active animating group.**

- Animation is a combination of initiatives and attitudes which by appealing to the need for collaboration, gets the whole community involved in a manner appropriate to each one.
  - Suggestion
- Animation is carried out through
  - motivation
  - persuasion
- The Plan needs a group who can stimulate, formulate, revise, coordinate, and help overcome obstacles without taking from the community their task of thinking and carrying out the practical details.
- Hence the necessity of constituting this group. In the local educative community, it will be up to the Salesian religious community to undertake the animation and promote reflection on the Plan.
- At provincial level the "group" can be made up of those who are most efficient at the job at local level, coordinated by someone from the Youth Pastoral Team with particular responsibility for animation.
- The special tasks of this group are:
  - \* to get others involved;
  - \* to explain and motivate;
  - \* to indicate appropriate methods;



- \* to help those who don't know how to get started, but without doing the job for them;
  - \* to draw up practical conclusions and pass them back to the confreres for further study and comments.
- According to the possibilities of each province it would be well to include in the animating groups men with different skills, experience and qualifications, but who are able to work together.

#### **4. Draw up a programme that is realistic and concrete**

The animating group of the province should draw up a clear programme for the communities to ensure common progress.

Such a Plan could be conceived in the following stages:

##### **1) *Awake the confreres themselves by action at the level of the whole province***

- to the Preventive System re-thought in theory and practised to meet the situation of the present day with its cultural changes, the evolution of sensitivity on the part of the young, the cultural make-up of our communities, and the new ideas in catechetics and education in general.
- to the need to express the present-day understanding and application of the Preventive System in a concrete Plan. This will imply
  - \* initial meetings of animators (Salesians and members of the Salesian Family) to go more deeply into the Chapter Documents on evangelization, especially the third chapter,
  - \* agreeing on a precise calendar of meetings, successive steps to be taken, etc.;
  - \* studying meanwhile at greater depth the different points concerning spirituality, pastoral method and educational practice that are grouped together under the term "Preventive System".

## 2) ***Get the local community involved***

Once the Salesians have been alerted to the situation, the next step should be to get them to form the local educative communities and involve them in the actual planning.

For this purpose, the local educative communities need to be helped:

### \* ***To know the reality of the local situation***

- by making appropriate requests for information, so that they are obliged to clarify their ideas concerning the mentality, needs and aspiration of the young and their families.
- by examining what kind of response, they are at present giving in terms of:
  - general and human formation
  - evangelization and Christian formation,
  - ability to commit themselves.
- by discovering what corresponds most closely with the Gospel in the desires and interests of the young.

### \* ***To understand what the facts imply and what response they call for***

A reconsideration of the experience of Don Bosco in pastoral education, of its synthesis in the Preventive System, of the practice of the Congregation which will certainly be alive and evident in the province and its communities, will help towards the finding of an adequate "Salesian" response to the expectations of the young at the present day.

### \* ***To decide on their objectives and how they are going to attain them***

These objectives must not be pious desires or unattainable ideals, but practical points that are achievable and that lend themselves to checking by observation of attitudes and behavior.

\* *To assess the results obtained and draw profit from them*

Meetings will be held periodically to check on the progress made or lack of it, and to reformulate objectives and methods if necessary.

## **5. Keep the chief points and lines of study very clear, restating them when necessary**

The project will gain in velocity and depth as the following key-points become clearer and more widely known:

- 1) Permanent elements of our pastoral and educational practice, that is, the Preventive System and its fundamental principles (cf. GC21, 30);
- 2) The real facts of the youth condition we are dealing with;
- 3) The new ideas in pedagogy and the pastoral sciences (an education that is liberating and caters to the individual and his insertion into society; a catechesis that is both evangelizing and with a community aspect).

## **6. Reach forward-looking proposals endorsed by all**

The purpose of the plan is not so much to provide workers in this field with a new instruction manual, but rather to help the group concerned to work consciously together in shared responsibility.

After a period of exchange of views and mutual enlightenment, formulations must be arrived at in which the participants can recognize their contributions and which represent their common starting point. These formulations will reflect the level of consciousness the community has reached.

- They are *provisional*, especially in their first draft, and they will be up-dated and better structured as deeper reflection by the community leads to new and richer ideas.
- The Plan is essentially a dynamic one, and will reach a certain stability only with experience and the passage of time.

## II. ELEMENTS FROM SALESIAN TRADITION FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PASTORAL PLAN

Salesians are inserted in a pedagogical and pastoral tradition which takes its rise from Don Bosco himself. It is impossible to put forward a *Salesian* educational Plan at the present day without starting from him and his experience.

Salesian pedagogy doesn't begin with a theory, but with the story of an educator who was both a priest and a saint

At his death Don Bosco left behind him a legacy of practical pedagogical wisdom. It was passed on by various methods rich in experience, confidential writings, exemplary biographies, short summaries, all written in simple language and with a practical slant. He left also a collection of initiatives and concrete ideas for meeting the problems of youth: technical and agricultural as well as academic schools, institutes for the formative use of free time, residential and youth communities. Above all he left behind him a *community of educators*, heirs of his patrimony.

Since then reflection and experience have sealed and enriched both tradition and practice, based on real contact with youth, on a more effective insertion into different contexts, and on a convinced fidelity to fundamental principles.

The pedagogical and practical patrimony has been enshrined in authoritative studies and documents. It defines our identity and is also the characteristic contribution of our charism to the Church and to humanity.

We offer the following frame of reference for the elements permanently present in Salesian tradition.

### ***1. The Point of departure: Predilection for the young and a lively awareness of a mission to be fulfilled.***

Like Don Bosco we must feel and express a predilection for the young and the importance and urgency of our educative mission among them.

The Young are in fact “the most delicate portion of the human race” and “the hope of a better future” (MB II, p.45)

It must be clear for us, as it was for him that the mission is not only applicable to the present time but has its roots and inspiration in the Gospel and the love of God who has called us to work in his Plan of salvation.

## **2. *The Subject of the exercise. - The Educative Community***

Salesians develop their work in and through communities. It was thus from the beginning, when a group of young religious formed with Don Bosco and the boys a "family".

The present reality, stemming from theological reflection and new requirements, has high-lighted the need for a pastoral and educational community with a central commitment to the Christian education of the young.

Its characteristic elements are: partnership, shared responsibility, a wise harmonization of different roles, fraternal relationships, and a sense of a common mission inspired by a common source.

## **3. *A fundamental attitude characteristic of the Educative Community: rapport and combability with the young***

This means the ability to share the life of young people, to create with them an atmosphere of confidence, of sincerity, of undisturbed straight-forwardness; “to love what they love without giving up our role of adults and educators" (GC21, 570).

## **4. *A pedagogical criterion which permeates the educational practice anticipation and foresight***

This means the effort to make people grow through projects which direct all their resources towards good and positive experiences, so as to prevent negative or deforming consequences (cf. ASC., 290, 5.1).

**5. *A way of understanding what is meant by education: total service***

"A service which invests all the true necessities and real needs of the boy in his body, in his mind, in his heart" (GC21, 87).

It implies therefore providing a reply to the multiple needs of the young: in the areas of culture, activity, living together, and a lively educational atmosphere.

**6. *An overriding purpose which unifies and gives light and leaven to the educational process: the salvation of the young person in Christ***

The concept of education as the integral formation of the whole boy calls for a hierarchy of values and proposals. Everything, in a Christian light, must contribute to the bringing to the young the eternal salvation that comes from Christ.

This must be the aim of the educators' contribution and the basis of all organization.

Salvation is the response to the idea of Christian liberation from sin and the many consequences of poverty, abandonment, social and cultural, so as to make of the young good Christians and upright citizens (cf. G C21, 14)

**7. *A programme to ensure a Christian maturing process***

The effort for the salvation of the young has as its goal growth in Christ to the level of holiness. For this purpose, it offers the youth spirituality featuring the following elements:

- A continual deepening of/airs so as to render this conscious
- and operative, relevant to life, and expressed in *hope* (joy, optimism, initiative) and in *charity* (piety, goodness of heart, service of neighbor);
- Liturgical and sacramental experience (Penance, Eucharist, a sense of feasts and Christian mysteries, etc.);
- Daily commitment (life as "mission" and "responsibility", work, sense of duty, professional preparation, etc.);

- The sense of the Church (mystery and visible community);
- Devotion to Our Lady, a glorious model of faith and help of Christian people.

## **8. *A constant dimension of the educational process. the vocational slam***

The young must be helped at every age to understand themselves, reach fulfillment, and find their place in life.

To give every boy the possibility of doing this and helping those called to a greater responsibility, especially to the priesthood, is for Don Bosco "the principal end to which the Congregation tends" (MB XII, p. 87)

## **9. *Some lines for educational action***

### **9.1 *The educational climate as a means of inculcating values***

We believe in the importance of this (cf. ASC 290, 3,2), for a happy atmosphere, a family spirit with easy relationship and common growth (GC21, 102).

### **9.2 *Personal relationship***

This means giving attention to every single boy according to his needs and requests. This implies individual attention on the part of the educator based on study, contact and dialogue.

### **9.3 *Appeal to internal forces***

Don Bosco summed up this in the saying: reason, religion, loving kindness. It implies a valid motivational process, understandable to the young, which is a *gradual* one based on the response they can give to increasing challenges as their growth proceeds.

### **9.4 *Experience of group life***

"Community experience in youth groups and movements opens up a whole world of unsuspected possibilities and values. It is not surprising that our Father with his keen intuition and the wisdom of experience reached such definite and fundamental conclusions" (ASC 290, 5,1).

### ***9.5 Supportive presence***

All the above lines of action are effected through “assistance”. This implies presence among the young, with the ability to animate youthful initiative and direct it toward growth in personality.

“The pedagogical concept of Salesian assistance needs re-interpreting in the light of the present conditions of the young and in accordance with the pedagogical needs to which these conditions give rise” (ASC 290, 5,1).



### III. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR DRAWING UP THE PLAN

#### 1. Steps in the Salesian Educational Plan

If a project is to be realistic and efficacious it must first include an analysis of the situation; this will be followed by the drawing up of the practical operation Plan itself, and this in turn will be followed by a verification of the results.

It must also be progressive, in the sense that these three steps are periodically re-studied and further developed. And the process may have to be repeated more than once to adapt the programme fully to the particular situation we may be facing.

##### ***1.1 Analysis of the situation***

This implies an accurate *knowledge* of situations, people and problems which make up our field of work, as well as a knowledge of the experiences of the young themselves in the area concerned, their tendencies, judgments, common reactions, solidarity, etc., which are embraced in the term "youth situation" (GC21, 13).

It also involves the *interpretation* of the aspirations, problems and tensions which stem from this reality, to discover the Gospel values of which the young can be bearers as well as the youthful expectations most in line with the Gospel (GC21, 21, 30 b).

The results of this analysis can become practical from a pastoral point of view and can suggest lines of action only if they are meditated on and thought out with the eyes of faith.

The facts therefore have to be assessed according to the contribution they can make towards making easier for the young the growth in faith of their humanity, or making it more difficult (GC21, 18). In fact, the ensuing attitudes can either prejudice or favour "the educative process and the very understanding and acceptance of the Gospel" (GC21, 20).

## **1.2 The operational Plan**

This represents the second step. It involves:

### **1.2.1 The formation and maturing of the educative community**

Every true educational plan is always a work of community and collaboration. From the community come the educational initiatives, *in* the community is realized the human and Christian meeting of the boy, and the growth of free personalities.

In the educative community the *religions* community assumes the role of group animator. This ensures the evangelizing nature of our education (GC21, 67).

### **1.2.2 Educational and pastoral options**

From the many operational lines of action possible, the community must make its basic options, in harmony with the objectives and reality deriving from analysis of the situation.

This requires:

- A reformation of the *educational and pastoral objectives*.  
They must be directed towards the human and Christian development of the young; a personal and social growth positively oriented to full maturity in Christ.
- A precise determination of *method* in its main lines, and keeping in mind the practical consequences:
  - \* A careful selection of educational *activities* and *experiences*, i.e., those indispensable for an understanding of the objectives and for their conscious realization;
  - \* Establish the precise roles and functions of the members of the educative community;
  - \* Decide on what concrete educative interventions are to be made.

- A study of the educative style, to see how to put into effect the reality and characteristics of
  - \* the educational environment, and
  - \* educative relationships.

### ***1.3 Verification of the Plan in the light of Salesian tradition and practice.***

This represents the third step. It involves:

- a revised and more accurate assessment of the permanent elements of the Preventive System and its more typical experiences;
- the evaluation of the results;
- determination of the causes of success or failure.

The verification is not a final operation to be carried out once and for all; it constitutes a permanent activity which gives the group a greater light and a deeper understanding of its work and so enables it to make constant progress.

## **2. Pointers for drawing up the Plan**

### ***2.1 Analysis of the situation***

This is a question of becoming consciously aware of what precisely we are doing for our boys, i.e.,

- how far we *understand* their problems, aspirations, expectations, crisis, etc.,
- how far we succeed in providing *educative and pastoral replies*.

It is a question too of making a first evaluation of all this in the light of the suggestions and directives of GC21.

#### ***2.1.1 Establishing the facts***

Underlying all our educative activity there is always a definite idea of the man and the Christian, more or less explicitly formulated.

We want to know, from the observation of the product, *what kind of man and what kind of Christian* our proposals tend to form.

### ***Our boys and young men***

- What kind of boys does our "work" reach? (those of the immediate locality, working-class or poor families, immigrant families, neglected children, young people of different social levels and extractions?).
- What is the level of religion and faith of our boys? (hostile, uncertain, open, committed?).
- What are they looking for from us?
- What traits do they exhibit which reflect the background from which they come?
- In our contacts with boys what do we find most significant in their attitudes, in their aspirations, in their criticisms?
- What attitudes do they have to our educational activity? (school, formative groups, free-time activity.).
- Which attitude do they adopt towards the society which surrounds them? (interested, indifferent, dependent, committed?).
- What is their attitude to the visible signs of faith? (Church, priests, religious institutions and attractions).
- Are they questioning their faith?
- How do they express their questions? (with regard to God, the Church, priests, sacraments?).
- In what way can it be seen that we are concerned about their ideas and what they are thinking, the concepts they have of life, the important decisions they are about to make in their own lives?

### ***Our replies: The human dimensions.***

- What dimensions of youth are taken greatest care of by our work? (intellectual, sporting, ability to relate to others, professional,

religious, social...).

- What concrete aids does our community offer the young as far as their human personal formation is concerned? (formal teaching, cultural activities, sporting and free-time activities...).
- How, in our opinion, do these aids help the young to clarify the meaning of their own life and to face it with real responsibility?
- Do we invite the young to accept responsibility in the face of society and in an attitude of service?
- Do these aids help the young to make a critical and positive comparison between their own and other ways of life?
- What kind of Christian model docs our community present to the young? (convinced and consciously Committed, or formal, resigned, insensitive to new requirements?)
- How does the life of the religious community and its Christian and religious commitment appear to the boys?
- What kind of Christian image is offered by the teaching staff? (traditional, colorless, militant?).
- How do parents manifest the option they have made for Christianity?
- What specifically Christian activities exist in the youth community and how are they seen by the young as a whole?
- Do the different forms of evangelization and catechesis (religious teaching, free-time catechetical activity, group activity, sermons and conferences...) take account of the situation of boys coming from families which are dechristianized or whose members are indifferent, hostile or prejudiced?
- What do we offer to those who are more ready to commit themselves so that they are able to deepen and live their Christian experience more intensely?
- What liturgical and sacramental activity do we offer to put the young on the road to meeting God as a person, and to what kind of youth are they directed?

- What possibilities are offered to the young to enable them to take part responsibly in an apostolate and in service to others.

### **2.1.2 See the facts in fate light of the guidelines of GC21**

This means reading the guidelines and suggestions of GC21 with regard to our educational and pastoral activity, with the efficacious intention of putting them into practice.

They give us an indication of the values emphasized by the Chapter with a view to the formation of a definite kind of man and Christian.

Of these various guidelines the following are fundamental as indicating how we can judge our work.

- 1) First and foremost our work must be *educative*, i.e., able to render the young capable of choices, choices which are personal and maturely motivated, choices in which they (with others) are the architects of their own lives and come to recognize themselves as such. *Education* is the growth of responsibility.
- 2) In addition to the work of specifically human development, developed as a real pastoral contribution, our action must also be an *evangelizing* one.

The education plan therefore bears witness and provides an explicit proclamation of Christ and the mystery of salvation. It does so as an invitation and call to the faith (conversion) and offers the possibility of a deepening of Christian commitment by a process of education in the faith.

#### **For this reason it seeks:**

- to arouse and cultivate the faith,
  - to initiate into an encounter with God and into liturgical-sacramental life (SGC 63, 64, 68),
  - to manifest the sense of the Church and human service.
- 3) Since "all educational activity is for us a commitment to evangelization" (ASC 290, p. 23), the substantial identity between motivation and pastoral objectives needs to be noted in all our

educational *work*, whether it be in the area of human promotion or in that of more direct and immediate witness and announcement of the word.

- 4) The unity between the educative and pastoral dimensions of the Plan can be summed up in the two ideas *evangelizing by educating; educating by evangelizing*.

*Evangelize by educating*: This means that there can be no authentic evangelization without a preoccupation for and serious attention to the promotion of integral human development (cf. GC21, 81; Const. 17, 18, 19, 20).

On the other hand, our educative action has certain characteristics which render it a work of evangelization (GC21,131).

**This involves:**

- a preoccupation for the "whole" boy, in his many and varied *needs* (GC21,87); an education which must provide also *liberation* from the many conditions of poverty and dereliction, of social and cultural subjection, so that the young may become "upright citizens" (GC21, 14). In fact Don Bosco's pastoral method " is not limited to mere catechetical or liturgical instruction but covers the entire concrete pedagogical and cultural situation of the young" (ASC 290 p. 30)
- Action with the professional and pedagogical competence required by any education activity.
- The Adoption of a step-by-step methodology based not only on the logical sequence of what is taught but more especially on the subject's capacity of assimilation (ASC 290, p.33).
- Maintaining the relationship between faith and the various manifestations of life, and making faith a dynamic and illuminating element in the growth of each individual person.

### ***Educate by evangelizing***

This means that the job of educating "is directed to the Christian goal of salvation, and filled with its light and grace" (ASC 290, p. 34).

#### **This involves:**

- Illuminating every educational initiative in a Christian sense, and directing the whole educative process to Christ (ASC 290, p.35).
  - Helping the boy to find his proper place in the Church and the world in the light of the Gospel values. (GC21, p. 111).
  - Developing a critical conscience in the boy, and a sense of duty in the light of the Gospel.
  - Educate by evangelizing means affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, mankind's criteria of judgement, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation" (ASC 290, p.38).
- 5) In the combined process of education-evangelization the following elements are of special importance:
- *Catechesis* understood as "illuminating the whole of existence by the light of the Gospel, and an introduction to the life of the Church" (ASC 290, p.36)
  - *The experience of life as a community against a Christian background*, and the promotion of Gospel-inspired groups among the young (GC21, 102);
  - *Introduction to arid deepening of the liturgical and sacramental life* (GC21, 93);
  - *The idea of Christian commitment* (GC21, 101);
  - *Guidance in the finding and choosing of a career or calling in life.*



In the light of these guidelines we can attempt a first evaluation of what we have done and where we have got to.

- Do our interventions reach the individual in respect of his problems, interests, expectations?
- What are the needs of our boys that these interventions actually meet?
- Are they appropriate to their concrete situation? (age, cultural and spiritual level, capacity for assimilation, school or factory background, kind of employment).
- In what way do they help boys to discover authentic human values and deep personal aspirations?
- Do they really help to integrate such aspirations into a mode of life?
- Do we leave boys enough scope for personal experiences, so as to let them develop their own creative instincts?
- Do our interventions coverage towards a single end, so as to produce an integrated personality?
- How do the different interventions support and reinforce each other?
- Do the boys have the idea that they are just being kept busy or having their immediate needs met, or are they conscious of becoming members of a young educative group with its own special characteristics?
- How far are the activities aimed at human development capable of being integrated into a Christian view of life?
- Are they progressive, in the sense that they are adapted to a process of Christian and human growth in the boys?
- To what extent does each of these activities find its proper place and sufficient space in the overall educational operation, in proportion to its importance?

- What is the attitude of the educators towards the boys? Do they have confidence in the boys' ability to respond and grow?
- Can we say that our activities are such as to facilitate a life and maturing of *faith*?
- By what signs can we judge whether our activities favour or not an attitude of openness to faith?
- Are our explicit Christian initiatives put forward with a wise discretion, but at the same time unequivocally and courageously?
- To What extent does the life of the boys find expression in religious celebrations?
- Do the problems, expectations and interests of the boys find a place in the liturgical celebrations?
- Do celebrations (whether liturgical or not) help the boys to live a deeper mature faith?
- What relationship is there between sacramental celebrations and professional, social or apostolic commitments?
- How do these celebrations help to discover and stimulate the commitment of the boys to service of others?
- How, and by offering what choices, do we set about giving a Christian slant to the choices open to the boys?
- In career guidance do we have the courage to put before them the careers which involve greater commitment as laymen, religious, priests, missionaries? (GC21, 113, e)
- Have we promoted in our works the formation of groups "as indispensable factors for the experience of living together and for a vocational search" (GC21, 115) and apostolic commitment?
- Do we follow them personally?
- Do we try to develop the group experience gradually into a true experience of what is meant by Church?

- Does our practice take into account the needs of the *local Church and* its directives in the field of youth pastoral work?
- In what does the insertion of our boys into the life of the local Church consist?

## **2.2 Drawing up the operational Plan**

The analysis and evaluation of the existing situation should culminate in an attempt at preplanning:

- our action with regard to the educative community, the specific objectives to be achieved,
- the method to be adopted, and
- the educational style.

### **2.2.1 dynamic *educative community*, made up of Salesians, collaborators, parents and boys.**

- What concrete proposals are there for fostering new relationships between those who form the educative community? (of a spiritual kind, concerning living together, as regards formation).
- What proposals are there for fostering the participation envisaged for the educative community? (plan, administration, verification).
- How, and in what sectors can we obtain the collaboration of Cooperators and past Pupils who have committed themselves to evangelization and other lay collaborators?
- Work out a practical way in which the parents can collaborate.
- Work out similarly a practical way for the boys to do likewise.
- Clarify and investigate more thoroughly the ecclesial and pedagogical motives on which collaboration is based.
- By what means do we intend to foster the "free adherence," and "convergence of desires and convictions" of all those who share the educational and pastoral work with us?

- What initiatives can we promote for the formation and up-dating of lay collaborators?
- What place will the boys' families have in our educational and pastoral programme?
- Programme periodic meetings with the members of the educative community.
- Decide how the educative community must be in contact with other agencies working for youth in the local Church.
- How can we promote communication and coordination of projects originating in different sectors of our work (school, parish, youth centers...) so as to integrate them into a unified project?
- Establish relationships in harmony with the new forms of decentralization and territorial organization (zones, regions, districts, etc.,) deciding on the individuals who will be concerned and how they will participate.
- How can the whole project be inserted into the educational and pastoral Plan of the local Church?

**2.2.2 Decide on the *specific objectives*** to be achieved. GC21 provides us

with a list of general and educational objectives, both on a level of personal and social growth and on the level of religious and Christian development. (GC21, 90,92,93,94)

They have to examine more closely to see how they can be applied practically to our own concrete circumstances.

In respect of each of the *general objectives* we must ask the following questions:

- What knowledge, attitude and abilities must our boys organize to make them really
  - \* free and responsible, both personally and from a social point of view,

- \* capable of making a right assessment of values,
  - \* capable of making a responsible choice of career for their own future,
  - \* capable of insertion into a community,
  - \* capable to commit ourselves to work for justice, etc., (cf. GC21 90, 92 and Appendix I, p.27).
- What results are we aiming at, in both boys and environment, that we can check up on afterwards?
  - Among these specific objectives, which need to be followed up with greater urgency in our own circumstances having regard to the importance of their fundamental values, and the concrete facts resulting from the analysis? (cf. Appendix II, p.28).
  - Formulate the specific objectives chosen for our own area in a clear and communicable form which will enable them to be tackled efficaciously.
  - How and according to what criteria can we verify what progress both the boys and the educative community are making towards the objectives?

### **2.2.3 *Specify the details of the method to be followed***

- Select and organize the educational activities and experiences (GC21, 87-94).
  - \* To which educational activities and experiences do we want to give preference so as to achieve the objectives?
  - \* Give preference to those experiences which are more in line with the thought of the Church and the Congregation and which correspond to the suggestions coming from the educational and pastoral sciences.
  - \* Seek out those experiences which best correspond to modern needs following the indications of GC21, 104.

- \* What particular values, truths and attitudes should be emphasized in these activities?
- Decide on the specific educational *interventions* to be made.
  - \* What would be the main lines of intervention
    - as regards the whole youth community?
    - as regards groups?
    - as regards individuals?
- Rethink roles and functions and lay down concrete responsibilities.
  - \* What are the *role and functions* of the "religious community in drawing up, carrying out and verification of the Plan?
  - \* Define the role and functions of those responsible for the main sectors (catechetical, cultural, recreational and social...).
  - \* What are the role and functions of Cooperators and of those Past Pupils who have committed themselves to evangelization?
  - \* What are the role and functions of the other lay collaborators (parents, teachers, animators) in the drawing up, carrying out, an verification of the Plan?
  - \* How are the different tasks and responsibilities to be concretely organized and distributed among the individuals concerned?

#### **2.2.4 Study the educative style**

In the style and spirit of the Salesian Plan (cf. GC21, 100--104.)

- Determine the fundamental characteristics of our educational setting.
- What are the concrete ways to create such an environment?

- How do we want to set up educational relationships? (between the educators themselves, between the educators and the boys, between the educators and the parents.)

In what concrete ways can they be realized?

### **2.3 Evaluation of the Plan**

Verification will be made from a double perspective:

The first method will be by making a comparison at every stage of development of the Plan from its first beginnings between its various items and the fundamental norms of *Salesian practice*.

The second method will be "a posteriori" by a careful examination of **the results obtained**.

- Do our environments and settings give proper importance to Salesian educational traditions?
- Do they try to preserve its undying values?
- Do they over-value aspects which are only secondary or transitory?
- How do the Salesian communities intend to periodically clarify and recall the essential elements of Salesian tradition to the minds of our non- Salesian collaborators, members of the Salesian Family, of the boys themselves and of their parents?
- Are the various options and activities of our Plan consistent with the frame of values stemming from Salesian tradition?
  - *objectives?*
  - *methods?*
  - *style?*

## APPENDIX

### HYPOTHETICAL FORMULATION OF SOME SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. By way of example we give a hypothetical formulation of some specific objectives stemming from the general objectives proposed by GC21.

**a) *At the level of personal growth GC2/ proposes:***

"To help the boy in particular to build a sound and balanced humanity fostering and promoting:

- a gradual maturing in *freedom*, in the assuming his own personal and social *responsibility*, and in the clear perception of values;
- the capacity to maintain a dynamic-critical attitude in the face of events, to be faithful to the values of tradition and be open to the needs of history, so as to *become* capable of making consistent personal decisions" (GC21,90).

As the specific objective we can propose:

**That the boys acquire:**

- \* an *objective knowledge* of their personal and associated realities, in the light of what is at present offered in formative or cultural programmes;
- \* a *critical attitude* which will cause them to look for the motives and underlying reasons for the educational activities of the Center concerned (school, youth center, parishes);
- \* the ability to make consistent and properly motivated personal *decisions* in certain fields (about religion, free time, etc.,).

**As a result, the boys:**

- \* must get to know their own temperament, the characteristics of the evolutionary phase they are living through and the expectations and difficulties they feel;
- \* must also get to know the chief positive and negative realities of



the Centre to which they belong, and know them in a "motivated" way, i.e., through reasons they have found out and discussed in groups with their educators;

- \* and they must make consistent choices with regard to their religious practices and the use of their free time...

**As a result, also**

- \* in the environment we must be able to discern a greater integration in the youth community through the use of the different kinds of participation they offer to the boys.

**b) At the level of social growth the GC21 proposes:**

"To help our charges to have a heart and mind own to the world and to the needs of others. To this end we are educating youth:

- to become involved in justice and the building of a more just and human society" (GC21, 90).

As the specific objective we can propose, that the boys acquire:

- a *knowledge* of the real and most urgent needs of the boys of their school, youth center, parish...;
  - a responsible *attitude* and participation in the existing activities or movements which are trying to meet these needs;
  - the ability to *commit* themselves concretely in their own setting (school, youth center, parish...).
2. It will be useful to list the objectives of our educative activity in order of urgency for our own particular environment.

In dechristianized slum areas the first objective will be a beginning of socialization and a first simple but serious plan for Christian initiation.

A much more mature setting will find urgent a more lively liturgy, more attention to cultural development, or a deeper religious commitment.

In every environment the overall values sought will be the same. But different zones may have different priorities and emphasis and require flexible programmes.

## **SUPPLEMENT**

### **THE ANATOMY OF A SALESIAN EDUCATION CENTRE**

#### ***Preliminary Note***

It may be of interest to give a brief description of the characteristics necessary for a Salesian education center which have been approved by the Spanish Provincial Conference, after much discussion, wide consultations at various levels, and several preliminary drafts.

The Spanish word "Ideario" used in the Spanish version, has no exact equivalent in English; it indicates the complex of basic principles of an educational Plan, the underlying traditions on which they are based and the general guidelines for translating the whole lot into practical action.

The English translator has adopted the word "anatomy" to express the idea.

The Spanish document was drawn up with an eye to parents and lay collaborators as well as the Salesians themselves.

#### **1. *Introduction***

- \* This document is an effort to clarify our identity in the Church and in today's pluralistic society.
- \* It indicates an ideal inspired by the charism of Don Bosco.
- \* It presupposes the acceptance of some fundamental principles:
  - Everyone has a right to an education adequate to his abilities.
  - Parents bear the first and chief responsibility for the education of their own children.
  - They have the right to choose the kind of education and school they consider most suitable.

- Society has a duty to improve and guarantee the work of education in response to the rights of the family. This is one of the subsidiary functions of the state.
- The Church can exercise her mission of evangelization in her own educational centers for the service of those families who freely request it.

## **2. *Identity of A Salesian Education Center***

2.1 The Salesian Congregation promotes and animates education centers for the education of the young in the sphere of the Church's mission.

2.2 The Salesians bear the ultimate responsibility for the education imparted in their own centers and this is based on and conforms to the spirit and pedagogical criteria of Don Bosco.

2.3 As an education center:

- Each Salesians enter draws up its own programme of action with a view to promoting the integral development of the pupil with a deep respect for the individual personality of each one.

2.4 As a Christian center:

- it develops its own proper mission, basing it on the principles of the Gospel which give life to its educative activity;
- the team of educators operates with Christian criteria and attitudes.

2.5 As a Salesian center:

- it is at the service of evangelization and catechesis;
- it inserts itself fully into the area in which it is situated so as to provide a service preferentially for the poor and working classes;
- it promotes pastoral action through free-time activity as a distinctively Salesian characteristic;
- it develops a family spirit in an atmosphere of homeliness, common concern and dialogue.

### **3. Objectives**

3.1 The Salesian education center aims at an integral education i.e., the harmonized, free and opportune development of the qualities of the boy.

3.2 As an individual being, the boy must attain:

- a sense of responsible freedom which will enable him to take personal and consistent decisions;
- a critical and creative spirit which will render him capable of facing new situations, and collaborating in the transformation of society;
- the development of his dimension as a member of a community;
- sensitivity to human values and world problems of the present day.

3.2.1 As a social being, he must:

- be able to open up to others and take part in group life;
- acquire a proper sense of responsibility about the need and value of his human, intellectual and technical formation as a means of authentic service and collaboration in the building of society;
- make himself able to assume social and political responsibilities in that same society;
- work for justice and peace, even at the risk and sacrifice of his own well-being;
- work assiduously to build up the brotherhood of man.

3.2.2 The team of educators in the Salesian center aims at creating a climate of witness and Christian experience, lived in the light of faith, so that

- all educational activity is illumined by Christian values:
- it becomes possible to impart the faith and dispose the pupils to accept it joyfully, and willingly correspond with it;

- to those who are already believers the necessary means are offered for the Christian maturing process, which will make them the leaven of salvation in society.

#### **4. *The Educative Community***

**4.1** The Salesian Congregation organizes its centers as authentic education communities whose members are all those who contribute in any way to the educative work . They are all called on to participate actively and responsibly according to the place of each one in the set-up. And hence:

4.1.1 The educators have the task of building up the educative community by trying to provide, through their competence and witness, an authentic image of the Christian educator, and to promote the collaboration and participation of the other members.

4.1.2 The parents, conscious of their own responsibility, create in their own families an atmosphere which ensures an integral education. They take part in the direction and activities of the center with the purpose of attaining the ends set out in this document

4.1.3 The boys play a leading part in their education and take part gradually and with increasing responsibility in the life of the center.

4.1.4 All those who collaborate in the activities of the center, at their own level, share in the spirit of this document which they make their own.

**4.2** The center provides a means of ongoing formation for its own educators, for its past pupils, and for parents.

## **5. Methodology**

- 5.1 The Salesian education center has an organization which derives from Don Bosco's way of providing an integral education in conformity with the objectives set out in this document.
- 5.2 The Educative Community, as far as the individual dimension in concerned:
- remains always open to the riches deriving from the pluralism of persons and situation;
  - respects and fosters the originality of every pupil who must develop his own personality in different ways;
  - establishes a sincere and authentic dialogue between educators, parents and pupils:
  - develops a sense of responsibility concerning study and work, as elements of self-training and of service to others;
  - educates through a system of personal and active work of constant review and criticism;
  - pays attention to the vocational and professional orientation of the pupils, in accordance with the plan of each one for his own life.

As far as the social dimension is concerned, the Educative Community:

- promotes a knowledge of social realities through analysis and concrete experiences;
- fosters a community spirit in the area of the life of the center by developing:
  - \* the capacity for personal relationships,
  - \* openness to and respect for others,
  - \* an attitude of service,
  - \* the acceptance of one's own limitations,
  - \* life in a family spirit,

- \* solidarity with one's own educational institute,
- \* team-work and group-life, sharing in educational activity.
- implants in the boy the desire for freedom from the multiple restricting influences, both individual and social, and inserts him into this struggle for freedom.

### 5.3 The team of educators promotes integral education by:

- thinking and acting in conformity with a Christian concept of man and of life;
- planning its own educative work and relationship with the boys with a view to the explicit announcement of the Gospel message, in suitable and progressive ways;
- sustaining and fostering the faith of those who are already believers and want to intensify their own Christian commitment:
  - \* through liturgical and sacramental life,
  - \* by facilitating their incorporation into the adult Christian community,
  - \* by helping them to share their faith-experience with other brethren and groups in the Church.

## **6. *Educative Style***

6.1 The Educational System of Don Bosco is founded entirely on reason, religion and loving kindness.

6.2 Its characteristics are:

- a constant recourse to reason and dialogue;
- a realistic view of life which leads to creative action without waiting for ideal conditions;
- a proper appreciation of work and austerity.

6.3 It is based on

- a welcoming attitude which is at once simple and natural, and

inspires confidence,

- friendship and a family spirit which facilitates understanding and being able to live together,
- optimism and joy which impress a youthful stamp on all activities,
- a cordial educative presence which makes it easy for the educator to remain constantly with the boys.

6.4 It promotes a living relationship with God through the conviction that:

- men are called to become mature and perfect Christians:
- the life of faith is simple and joyful;
- work completes the creative action of God;
- Christian life is manifested especially in:
  - \* the frequent reception of the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation,
  - \* filial confidence in God's Mother, the Help of Christians, a radical sense of belonging to the Church and adherence to its Pastors, especially to the Pope.