To the attention of
SDB Inspectors – FMA Inspectors
Africa – Madagascar
CIVAM and CIAM

Dear members and delegates of ACSSA Africa-Madagascar

In this month, as we celebrate the first missionary expeditions of the Salesians (November 11th, 1875) and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (November 14th, 1877), and as we commence the commemorative year for the SDB and the triennial preparation for the 150th anniversary of the FMA, we extend our warm greetings, thanking God for the missionary work of the Salesian Family worldwide. We reach out to you on behalf of ACSSA (ASSOCIATION OF CULTORS OF SALESIAN HISTORY), which seeks to promote knowledge of Salesian missionary history through studies, the preservation of Salesian cultural heritage, and thereby rekindling missionary zeal and Salesian identity. We invite you to participate in the third continental seminar, following those held in 2011 and 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya.

You have certainly received the message from the Secretary, Don Stanislaw Zimniak, regarding the selected theme: *Salesian Missions Worldwide.* Following this, five continental seminars will be held in 2025, culminating in the world congress in 2027 (please see the attached poster).

In Africa, Salesian missionary activity began in Algeria with the Salesians' arrival in 1891, followed by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in 1893. By 1975, Salesians were present in 15 countries, and the FMA in 5. However, the 1980s saw significant changes.

With the celebration of the first centenary of the Salesian mission, the 1977 General Chapter of the Society of St. Francis de Sales (GC 21) embraced a renewed missionary drive, recognizing that the Salesian missionary work worldwide was incomplete. From 1979 onwards, the "Hour of Africa" (1980) brought new Salesian missions to 10 nations, with brothers volunteering from various countries in Asia, Europe, and America[1], committed to significantly increasing their presence in Africa[2]. Similarly, the FMA's General Chapter XVII provided clear guidance: *We must "open ourselves to new horizons, making the 'Africa Project' our own, for a concrete missionary revival, while not neglecting existing missions. Let us, therefore, commit ourselves in collaborating with our Salesian brothers for a more concrete missionary action among the poorest young people of this promising continent."*[3]

Due to the complex reality of Africa-Madagascar, marked in some regions by an ancient past and in others by very recent missionary presence, we propose a theme that harmonizes this historical duplicity[4].

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[1] Atti del consiglio superiore, organo ufficiale di animazione e di comunicazione per la congregazione salesiana. Anno 62 (1981-n°299), Direzione generale, Opere don Bosco, Roma, 1981, 31-38.
[2] CG 21 n° 147 apud Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice, Atti del Capitolo generale XVII. Roma, 15 settembre 1981- 28 febbraio 1982, Roma, Istituto FMA 1982:122.
[3] Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice, Atti del Capitolo generale XVII. Roma, 15 settembre 1981- 28 febbraio 1982, Roma, Istituto FMA 1982: 136.
[4] Cf RATIO DEI SEMINARI CONTINENTALI E DEL CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE: Alcuni elementi metodologici e norme editoriali- Redatto a nome della Presidenza da don Stanisław Zimniak (segretario), 2024.

The chosen theme is: **The Salesian Mission in Africa, Before and After the Africa Project (1891–2020).** The seminar will take place at the "Mornese Formation Center" in Lusaka Makeni, Zambia, from March 23rd to 29th, 2025.

All ACSSA members and provincial delegates who have already prepared their reports for presentation according to the attached program are invited to this seminar. In provinces without members or delegates, we request that a secretary or someone interested in Salesian history be sent, with whom we can collaborate and who could join ACSSA on behalf of the province. Other brothers and sisters interested in joining ACSSA are also welcome to help grow our association in Africa and Madagascar.

To participate, each person covers their trip and visa costs and pays a registration fee of $50 or €50 upon arrival. ACSSA will cover accommodation expenses.
Regarding visas, each participant must research the necessary requirements, send a copy of their passport to the ACSSA Africa-Madagascar counselors by December 2024 to receive an invitation letter for visa applications (where required). By January 2025, participants must complete the flight form (attached) and send it to the counselors. Arrival is on March 24th, and departure is on March 29th.

Wishing all of us an effective collaboration, entrusting all our Provinces to the Lord during this time of grace.

Maputo, November 30th, 2024

With best regards,

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