



SOCIETÀ DI SAN FRANCESCO DI SALES
SEDE CENTRALE SALESIANA
Via Marsala 42 - 00185 Roma
Il Rettor Maggiore

Prot. 26/0051
Rome, 22 February 2026

To all confreres,

To members of the Salesian Family,

To all those who, in various ways, are involved in the shared responsibility of education according to the heart of Don Bosco

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED SALESIAN FORMATION

Dear brothers and friends,

in my closing speech at GC 29 (ACG 446, April 12, 2025), my first public address looking to the future, I wrote in the second point:

Getting to know Don Bosco not only loving Don Bosco

We are aware that one of the central challenges we have as Salesians is to communicate the good news through our witness and through our educative and pastoral proposals in a culture that is undergoing radical change...

With this change affects every area, it is positive to see how, since the SCG (1972), the Congregation has been on a continuous journey, until today, rethinking and reflecting on its educative and pastoral proposal. It is a process that responds to the question “what would Don Bosco do today, in a secularised and globalised culture like ours?”...

All this sounds very easy to say, and it comes across as a friendly exhortation. In reality, it conceals within itself an urgent invitation to us, the sons of Don Bosco, to re-present the Salesian charism in a suitable and meaningful way.

*However, there is an essential condition that allows us to undertake this journey: a true and profound knowledge of Don Bosco. We cannot say that we truly **love** Don Bosco if we are not seriously committed to **knowing** Don Bosco.*

Following this, in the **Six-Year Plan 2025-2031** drawn up by the Rector Major and his Council (ACG 447, July 2025), we read:

*The field of **Salesian studies** should be pursued with greater attention, in line with the efforts that the Congregation has been making in recent years to **promote the Salesian places**. These are not just physical places, but places where the encounter with the charism by many groups of collaborators is bearing positive fruit.*

*The **synergy of study proposals and presence between UPS and the Salesian places** should be strengthened in a planned manner in order to enhance the positive experiences of ongoing formation that already exist and also to be able to respond to other opportunities that may arise. The heart of this journey is to move from imagining Salesian places as places to visit, to a vision that prioritises the in-depth study of Salesianity, that is, to move from mere information to formation.*

This line of governance, present in the **Six-Year Plan 2025-2031**, should also be read in light of the invitation made during GC 27, n.92, where there was a clear invitation to consider “the historical and charismatic importance of Salesian places, which are the heritage of the entire Congregation to be preserved, promoted, and enhanced” and therefore “considering the need for a project that fully enhances the places of Salesian origins in a pastoral and vocational perspective, for young people and for the Salesian Family.”

Dear brothers and friends, I am sharing these statements to announce the creation of a **CENTRE FOR ADVANCED SALESIAN FORMATION** that coordinates and supports various initiatives and experiences in the field of Salesianity

It is a priority for all of us, for the entire Congregation and the Salesian Family, which is already clearly evident from many positive experiences that are appreciated and increasingly in demand. Saying that it is a priority means two fundamental things.

First: we are all convinced that we cannot do without this path of ever deeper knowledge of the charism that is already underway in various parts of the world in

various ways. The fruit of these experiences is already enriching the Salesian mission. In fact, the current situation, which sees Salesian formation paths in many parts of the world, is an incentive for the next step to be that of building it as a Congregation in a more organic and structured way around and in relation to our “Salesian holy places.”

Second: the charismatic identity of our educational and pastoral proposal requires continuous study, reflection, and formation so that the pastoral heart continues to promote meaningful dialogue in the encounter between faith and culture. The cultural, social, and scientific changes that characterize the current phase of human history require us to make a continuous effort and adopt a permanent attitude in order to find new ways that allow the charism to remain a gift of the Spirit for the good of young people, especially those most in need.

We feel the urgency that **the call to “know” Don Bosco in order to “love” him better** is an invitation that touches the heart of every Salesian and every member of the Salesian Family. It is an invitation that must be lived in dialogue with the Lord who calls us, with the history of the young people who await us, and with the times in which we are called to live.

The **CENTRE FOR ADVANCED SALESIAN FORMATION** aims to **respond** to these needs as well as to young people’s demand and search for spirituality, which brings with it the need for quality training in the areas of spirituality, pedagogy, and youth ministry.

The creation of the **CENTRE FOR ADVANCED SALESIAN FORMATION** is a **strategic step** that must be taken with competence and depth, with a vision of the future rooted in its origins. Above all, it must be built with the participation and collaboration of all those who today are called to offer their knowledge, expertise, and love of Don Bosco’s charism.

The **CENTRE FOR ADVANCED SALESIAN FORMATION** will be based at Colle Don Bosco (Castelnuovo Don Bosco) and will be coordinated by a dedicated team that the Congregation will make available for the project. It will be promoted, supported, and accompanied by the central government of the Congregation, the Salesian Pontifical University, and Colle Don Bosco, which will carry out the project.

Colle Don Bosco is universally regarded by all of us as the ideal place, together with **Chieri** and **Valdocco Turin**, as the cradle of Salesian charism. Many of us who have passed through it, who have already had formative experiences there, know that it is there, in his house, that we draw the energy of our “Father and Teacher.”

We all recognize that Don Bosco's places encourage a more direct experiential immersion in what he lived and passed on to us. The indispensable contribution of our **PONTIFICAL SALESIAN UNIVERSITY** will enable the launch of appropriate advanced training courses (with the acquisition of university credits) on topics related to spirituality, pedagogy, and Salesian youth ministry. The wise dialogue with our origins must be carried out with all the strength that the Congregation has developed, with its experience accumulated over these years of encounter between charism and history, with its challenges and opportunities.

To build this path, I have set up a ***working group*** that includes all the entities involved, so that they can construct an appropriate and structured path. We want it to be a path that already takes into account the various training experiences that have emerged in recent years and that are well attended and appreciated.

Our intention, and I say ours because it includes the intentions of all of us, is that new paths will gradually and progressively be proposed starting in 2026.

As I take this opportunity to assure you all of my prayers, let us ask Mary Help of Christians to accompany us on this journey with her maternal protection.

Fabio Attard SDB

Don Fabio Attard SDB

Rettor Maggiore