



WORLD CONSULTING BODY 2001 – 2008

AUTONOMY IN COMMUNION

GUIDELINES FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF

THE ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS

*“If you remain in me, and my
words remain in you,
ask for whatever you wish, —it will
be done for you.
My Father is glorified,
in your bearing much fruit and
becoming my disciples.”
said Jesus.
[John 15: 7-8]*

INTRODUCTION

In the years following the Great Jubilee of 2000, the Pope invites the whole Church “to prepare for the departure from our own paradigm” [Nm: I] to live a new phase of evangelization with passion and with the spirit of the origin.

This is indeed a call for facing the great urgency of the world today: the poverty and globalization, the exploitation of children and human rights, the protection of the environment, the condition of women, peace, cultural interaction, secularization, education, etc..

In response to these challenges, of the Church and of the world today, the Association is aware of its duty to grow in autonomy and communion. It is all about these two elements of our value system, lived side by side, to develop and reinforce the Cooperators to engage in apostolic work, at a personal level and as an association.

Don Bosco has created the Association, which is co-responsible in realizing the apostolic mission, and is able to get involved today in common projects of the Salesian Family.

“Autonomy in Communion” has been in fact the theme dealt with in the 12 Regional Congresses around the world held from August 2000 to July 2001. The conclusions and final statements from all Regional Congresses were discussed in the recent World Consulting Body (WCB) meeting at Rome from the 22 to the 29 July 2001. They formed the base to develop operative guidelines, which cover 3 important aspects of the life and activity of the Association: Formation, Animation and Salesian Mission. Also, some indispensable conditions were indicated to facilitate the fulfillment of the objectives.

As a result of good work from the outgoing Members and the incoming Members of the new WCB, these guidelines give us a vision for the next seven years 2001-2008. They also set forth the direction for the next two years 2001-2003, which engage the whole Association; and they shall be integrated with other general directives emerging from the respective Regional Congresses.

FORMATION

The autonomy and communion, prior to being operational or organizational, are the inner attitudes in view of the Cooperators and the Association. These therefore refer to the first aspect — formation. Through formation, we find the root, our identities.

1. OBJECTIVES

To promote formation within the Association, which educates the Cooperators in autonomy and communion, and which is at the same time an experience of autonomy and of communion.

2. ACTION ITEMS

- 2.1 To foster an effective initial formation, which will help establish a clear personal and associative identity through:
 - a. awareness of the vocation and charisma;
 - b. development of the lay apostolic dimension;
 - c. acquisition of a true sense of belonging.
- 2.2 To realize a formative co-responsibility at all levels through:
 - a. investment in formation of the Leaders and the Formators¹;
 - b. formation of the Delegates;
 - c. utilization of the formative competence of different people.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the WCB, through the Central Executive Secretariat, to propose necessary revision of the Regulations of Apostolic Life (RAL) and the Manual of Leadership.

In 2001-2003, the WCB will:

- a. prepare for the implementation of revision of the RAL, in the following year of a World Congress;
- b. collect observations and proposals from the Provincial Councils on the Manual of Leadership;

¹ “**Formators**” are those in the Association responsible for formation.

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Provincial Councils:

- a. to develop a plan for initial formation, on-going formation and “formation of the formators”² (to be sent to the WCB Member of their own Region);
- b. to put in operation the role in charge of the Formation (Formator), in the same Provincial Council and all the Local Councils;
- c. to establish a School (or Course) of formation for the Formators and the Leaders.

In 2001-2003, the Provincial Councils will:

- a. ensure the nomination of a person to be in charge of Formation in all Councils;
- b. lay down the essential elements for a Provincial formation plan;
- c. formulate the project of Formation School (or Course) for Formators and Leaders, and begin to internalize and implement it.

3.3 It is responsibility of the WCB Member in each Region to motivate and give proper support to the Provincial Councils in fulfilling the responsibility of formation and performing the role of coordination as well.

B. ANIMATION

Animation is a lifestyle, a style of relationship and activity, which makes people grow. It promotes communion and participation; helps the spiritual formation; facilitates the apostolic commitment (both personal and as a group); and motivates discernment and fidelity to the vocation.

1. OBJECTIVES

To strengthen the existing structure of animation in the Association through renewal and accommodation of the present needs, towards better functioning and greater autonomy.

2. ACTION ITEMS

2.1 To incorporate, in the formation of the Leaders, the aspect of animation in relation to the various roles in the Association:

- a. by realizing personal potentials for the service to the Association;
- b. by developing the associative dimension at all levels.

2.2 To promote and to strengthen the communion:

² The expression “**formation of the formators**” refers to a general formation or a particular formation aimed at achievement of competence for specific responsibility in the Association.

- a. by creating to an authentic climate of a family at all levels of the Association;
 - b. by integrating the works among various associative structures of animation (between Local Councils, with the Provincial Council...);
 - c. by recognizing the richness and the originality of each Group in the Salesian Family.
- 2.3 To carry out the activities of the Association in all 3 aspects (formation, apostolate, animation) using the criteria and the method of a project:
- a. start with investigation of the current needs;
 - b. set up the objectives;
 - c. identifying people availability and competence, material and economic resources, strategy and action plan;
 - d. evaluate the results.

3. ***RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE***

3.1 It is the responsibility of the WCB:

- a. to program timely meetings;
- b. to propose the updating of formation;
- c. to produce a Guide to evaluate the structures of animation;
- d. to develop criteria in assessing Christian/Salesian acts and contemporary movements, which may have an impact on the life of the youth, the family and the poor.

In 2001-2003, the WCB will:

- a. produce necessary materials for the formation of the Leaders;
- b. prepare first draft of the Guide for evaluating the structures of animation.

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Provincial Councils:

- a. to study the Manual of Leadership, and to send integrational comments and proposals to the WCB;
- b. to visit and to meet with the Local Centres;
- c. to organize Salesian animation seminars/courses for Leaders.

In 2001-2003, the Provincial Councils will:

- a. encourage the Provincial and Local Leaders to foster their own specific formation so that their collegial responsibility may be enhanced;
- b. introduce to all Centers the structures of animation and coordination in the Association;
- c. promote the Communion relation between various levels in the Association and among the groups in the Salesian Family;

- d. publish a newsletter for Provincial and Local levels if necessary.
- 3.3 It is responsibility of the WCB Members to furnish newsletters periodically for their own respective Regions if necessary.

SALESIAN MISSION

Our identity finds its natural outlet in the mission, which is expressed through autonomy and communion. Autonomy refers to the ability to operate with one's own power. Communion is the way of living the missionary co-responsibility of the Association and the Salesian Family.

1. OBJECTIVES

To promote the associative apostolate with the richness of the Salesian charisma in order to adequately respond to the present challenges with well determined apostolic projects.

2. ACTION ITEMS

- 2.1 To favour associative apostolic work according to the needs and urgencies of the territory:
- a. by analyzing the actual situations, and by responding to the existing needs;
 - b. by taking part more actively in ecclesiastical and social initiatives;
 - c. by supporting the Cooperators who commit themselves to some tasks on behalf of the Association.
- 2.2 To work together as an Association and as a part of the Salesian Family:
- a. by participating in the Provincial or Local Councils of the Salesian Family to develop a co-responsible educational-pastoral project;
 - b. by properly promoting initiatives and tasks in common projects;
 - c. by setting up necessary structures for assigning new tasks or initiatives properly.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the WCB:
- a. to set up groups for the animation of the Salesian mission (youth, family and social apostolate);
 - b. to provide guidelines for of the educational and social apostolate;
 - c. to gather the problems of social interest from all Regions through the WCB organization and direct to the Central Executive Secretariat in

form of a statement or pronouncement of the Association agreed with other Groups in the Salesian Family.

In 2001-2003, the WCB will publish a report on the youth conditions in various regions of the world and on meaningful experiences from engagement with young people.

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Provincial Councils:

- a. to better understand the needs of apostolate and the pastoral plans of the Church in their respective Provinces;
- b. to animate and to help the Local Councils in their apostolic projects;
- c. to support some local projects;
- d. to promote the presence of the Association in the organization of communion and of collaboration with the Salesian Family;
- e. to express the position of the Association when facing the problems or issues of social interest in their own provinces, which should be in line with other Leaders in the Salesian Family.

In 2001-2003, the Provincial Councils will:

- a. delegate a position at Provincial level to be in charge of important apostolic affairs;
- b. establish the same role at each Local Council.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES

1. ***Realize the potentials of the Cooperators: competence, capacity, ability, and professional capability.***
2. ***Enable the communication through:***
 - a. creating a network of communication that links together different levels in the Association, which may be accomplished by a website (to be set up by WCB) that provides formation material, information, documentation, statistical data, etc;
 - b. resuming the publication of “Salesian Cooperators” magazine in printed graphic or electronic format;
 - c. putting in place a secretary position in every Council to manage records, documents, files, and to act as a historian of the Association;
 - d. updating the changes of all Provincial and Local Councils and statistical data from Census survey.
3. ***Sharing of material resources:***

Economic solidarity is necessary in order to reach the mission of the Association. This requires the Treasurers, at all levels, to assume the role of animator to achieve self-financing by resources from both inside and outside of the Association.

4. ***Promote the acquisition of a common fund of solidarity involved all levels for helping other members of the Association living in adverse conditions.***
5. ***Legal recognition:***

Where possible, legal recognition of the Association at various levels shall be pursued. The WCB Member and the Provincial Treasurer need to be well informed of the formality.

In conclusion, we affirm to you the availability and service of all Members of the new WCB. May autonomy in communion become always our point of reference for growing together with appreciation of the differences and the gift of unity.

Don Bosco be with us in our work!

**The Members of the World Consulting Body
together with the Rector Major**

Rome, 29 July 2001