

May 1, 2009 - Belgium - VIII Assembly of DBN



A solidarity network around the world

(ANS - Kortenberg) - On April 27-28 at the Oude Abdij monastery in Kortenberg, Belgium, the 8th General Assembly of the Don Bosco Network (DBN), an association of European NGOs involved in the human and social development of poor and marginalized youngsters and young people throughout the world.

Present at the meeting, attended also by the councilor for the Salesian missions, Fr. Vaclav Klement, were the seven NGOs which make it up: Jugend Dritte Welt, Jugend Eine Welt, Jovenes y Desarrollo (until 2008 Jovenes Terzer Mundo), Noi per loro, International Volunteer Movement for Development (VIS), COMIDE, DB International—20 people in all, 12 Salesians and 8 lay people.

In the message he sent, the Rector Major encouraged the members to strengthen their collaboration because “it is important to work together so as to become what we want to be, that is a sound, valuable, significant, and effective means to represent and coordinate the outreach of the image, the mission, and the projects of the Congregation.”

There were several new elements in this 8th Assembly of the DBN. The session was opened up to new groups, including the SAVIO NGO from Bratislava and the Center for Missionary Promotion/Mission Office in Warsaw (SOM) and, for the first time, to a non-European member: Salesian Missions from New Rochelle. The expansion required a modification to the Statutes, which will be officially approved at the next general assembly, planned for October 15-16 in Rome.

The central office of DBN will move from Bonn to Rome, to the historic house of the Sacred Heart on via Marsala, where a new executive secretariat will be established.

The new virtual platform was presented for the exchange of news and the presentation of projects. At the end of 2008 the previous structure had collected 2,030 projects. At the end of the assembly the participants met a

representative of the Don Bosco Youth Net, a European network of Salesian youth NGOs.

Fr. Klement presented a new vision for the coordination of solidarity for the missions which emerged from a meeting of the Congregation's mission offices at Rome in March.

Founded in 2003, DBN is working in four main areas of cooperation – the general coordination of policies (development with a Christian-Salesian style), advocacy, formation of its own NGO members/team, and internal and external communication.

In association with the assembly there was also a technical meeting of the mission office directors present to prepare for the meeting of province mission offices to be held at Rome in November and to draw up some plans for the accompaniment of the first mission office in India, agreed upon by the South Asia Region last March.