

5/5/2009 - Spain - Devotion to Mary Help of Christians an essential element per the Salesian Family



(ANS – Alicante) – The Seventh National Congress of Mary Help of Christians, held May 1-3 in the Salesian houses of El Campello and Alicante, was brought to a fitting conclusion by a solemn concelebration in the co-cathedral of Alicante at which the Rector Major, Fr. Pascual Chavez, presided.

The Congress was attended by 420 representatives of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) from Spain and Portugal. It opened with a Mass at which Bishop Rafael Palmero of Alicante presided. The first conference was given by Fr. Juan José Bartolomé, secretary of the Rector Major: “The path for a commitment to God: Mary of Nazareth.” He was followed by Fr. Eusebio Muñoz from the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome (UPS), who spoke on “Don Bosco’s faith in Mary: foundations for a spirituality of commitment.”

On May 2 Fr. José Luis Moral, lecturer at the UPS, spoke on “Mary and the commitment of the Salesian Family today as it looks to the future.” This was followed by workshops coordinated by representatives from the various groups of the Salesian Family. In the evening the Salesian bishop of Vitoria, Miguel Asurmendi, presided at a Marian vigil in the sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians in Alicante.

Among those present at the Congress were also the councilor for the West Europe Region, Fr. José Miguel Nuñez, some SDB and FMA provincials including Fr. Juan Bosco Sancho of Valencia, and, representing the ADMA Primary Center in Turin, the President, Mrs. Giuseppina Chiosso, and the Spiritual Animator, Fr. Pier Luigi Cameroni.

The Rector Major, who had arrived in Alicante the previous evening, gave the final address. “Devotion to Mary Help of Christians is a charismatic, essential element,” Fr. Chavez said, pointing out the importance of forming young people and leading them to devotion to Don Bosco’s Madonna.

This was followed by a concert involving the various groups from the different provinces of Spain and Portugal. Outstanding was the choreographed contribution of the Juan XXIII Youth Center from Alcoi.

Among the future commitments approved at the Congress were: being witnesses to essential values such as life and the family; starting from Don Bosco to look at young people through his eyes; renewing devotion to Mary Help of Christians by emphasizing social commitment and the need for formation.

The Congress was organized by the Salesian Province of Valencia, which this year is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its foundation.