

## November 1, 2009 - Vatican – The Holiness of God: our vocation



**(ANS –Vatican City)** – “The holiness of God is our vocation,” was the introduction to the homily of the Rector Major on the solemnity of All Saints. Don Bosco’s ninth successor was opening the day dedicated to holiness by presiding at Mass at the altar of the cathedra in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. Concelebrating with him were several Salesians from Italy.

Present at the celebration were over 800 of the faithful, including young people and adults from some Salesian houses in Italy, ready to take part in the second in the series of the “Saints Race.”

The Rector Major recalled how holiness, “the high standard of ordinary Christian living,” is a vocation for everyone. God’s holiness becomes the goal with which we compare our own lives and toward which we are headed. Holiness is reached, Fr. Chavez observed, by putting aside the criteria of self-sufficiency and giving priority to self-giving. “A person achieves genuine self-fulfillment only through love, to the extent that he gives himself in love even to giving his life for others, for God and his neighbor, as did Christ the perfect man.”

“Salesian holiness,” the Rector Major said, “is expressed in the search for God as the Absolute in our lives, in the ongoing identification with Christ until we make his thoughts ours, his feelings, his words, his life, his attitudes, his death all our own.” Salesian holiness should be lived in a spirit of brotherhood and finds its true expression in the educating and evangelizing mission on behalf of the poor.

In the broad panorama of Salesian holiness, there are different models of its human and evangelical fulfillment: religious and lay people, adults and young people. “The word ‘holiness’ shouldn’t frighten us. It isn’t what we do ourselves but the free gift of participating in the holiness of God, and so it is a grace which draws our whole being into sharing God’s mysterious presence.”

At the end of the celebration the young Salesian athletes went to Pius XII Square, where the second “Saints Race” began.