

August 12, 2010 – Salesian GHQ – Asia is also preparing to welcome Don Bosco



(ANS – Rome) – In November the relic of Don Bosco will reach the Salesian provinces of the East Asia and Oceania Region. Communities are preparing to welcome the saint, arranging the tour according to their different traditions and cultures.

In July a team from Don Bosco Missions in Turin, led by Fr. Pierluigi Zuffetti SDB, visited the 10 provinces of the region to meet local superiors and arrange the logistics of the arrival, very soon now, of Don Bosco in Asia.

Keeping to the methods already used in organizing the journey of the casket in other countries, Fr. Zuffetti and his team visited the provincial centers in Asia with a broad agenda and a spirit of collaboration. The discussions served to clarify all the practical matters that preoccupied those sent from the Missions Office: planning of the route, means of transport, timetables of activities, video and photographic documentation of the event, publication of news, and official formalities.

All the other aspects, building up enthusiasm, spirituality, prayer, and sharing, were left to the local Salesians, so that the provincials and the members of the provincial councils, aware of the local situations, can arrange the tour of Don Bosco's relic in a manner corresponding as closely as possible to the way their people live their faith.

These discussions have produced some interesting results. For example, while in Korea the relic will be taken around in the casket, in China and Japan there will be a statue of Don Bosco to bear the remains of the saint, and to be offered to the devotion and affection of the small but fervent Christian community.

The statue which will tour these two Asian countries will be life-sized and made of fiberglass, which is lighter than bronze and suitable for carrying in procession on a litter. The relic will be displayed in a recess in the statue with a transparent cover, so that it can be seen by the faithful.

During the visit to Japan there will be a short text in Don Bosco's handwriting, with a Japanese translation, next to the relic. In this way the tour of the relic of Don Bosco will become an even clearer opportunity to spread the message of hope and joy which characterizes the Salesian charism.

In order to provide the necessary media coverage of the arrival of the casket in Asia, great attention has been given to training young people involved in communications. To this end Salesian Bro. Antonio Saglia and the technician Luca Periotto are visiting communities to strengthen and develop the local human resources.