

August 30, 2010 - Brazil – The Rector Major meets up with Salesians, young people, and the Salesian Family



(ANS - Belo Horizonte) – On his visit to Brazil to be part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of Brasilia, the Rector Major set aside two days to meet the Salesians, young people, and the Salesian Family in the Belo Horizonte Province. These were a series of meetings where again he proposed topics such as education and evangelization, the primary concern for Salesians.

Having arrived in Belo Horizonte, capital of Minas Gerais State, the day before, Fr. Chavez began Friday, August 27, by meeting Archbishop Walmor de Oliveira de Azevedo. He then set out for Cachoeira do Campo, where he paused briefly at Retiro das Rosas, a spirituality and reception center run by the Salesian Sisters. After a warm and rousing welcome there, he lingered for a while with the girls of the Mary Help Choir, urging them to take their studies seriously and always be open to education. Then speaking to the Sisters and others who form part of the Salesian Schools Network, which was gathered at Retiro das Rosas for a meeting, the Rector Major shared his concern for the phenomenon of school truancy, which is common in Brazil.

The true mission of the Salesians is an exclusive dedication to the young. This was the central topic of the meeting that afternoon at Cachoeira do Campo, where the Rector Major spoke to 50 Salesians, including those in formation. As is now customary, a warm and familiar dialog ensued. After celebrating Mass there, Fr. Chavez returned to Belo Horizonte.

The morning of August 28 was given over to the Salesian Family and to young people. He reminded the former of the four challenges which this family, originating and developing from Don Bosco's charism, has been trying to address determinedly: fostering life, protecting family, commitment to education and human rights and, finally, efforts to evangelize.

Drug and dependency problems, proper education to sexuality and love, were the topics which featured most in his encounter with the young people. Fr. Chavez reminded them of the importance of the Salesian presence in the lives of young people. Here too the gathering had the usual warm, tranquil feel and left the youngsters suitably impressed by the Rector Major's style and simplicity.

After the celebration of Mass, which concluded the morning, the Rector Major headed for Brasilia. Here he met up with Fr. Natale Vitali, the regional councilor for America Southern Cone, and the six provincials of Brazil, who were meeting in conference (CISBRASIL). The day finished with Evening Prayer, in which the city's Archbishop João Braz de Aviz joined.