



OCTOBER 6, 2024

3. WITH YOU MAÏN ON THE PATHS OF LIFE

3.7 Life that generates life – community dimension – College

(Chapel of Collegio)

Angelus

Entrustment *(alternating sides)*

Guide: We entrust our life to Mary, our Mother and guide so that she can help us to joyfully sing of God's love for us, to live our vocation with commitment, renewed in faith, in love with Jesus, eager to communicate with passion and coherence the beauty of the Gospel to the new generations:

O Mary Help of Christians,
we entrust our journey to you
of total donation to God.
Teach us to sing with joy and gratitude
our Magnificat to the Lord.

Make us attentive to the voice of the Spirit
because we know how to live with humility,
charity, simplicity, and trust in our daily life.

Like You, we desire to abandon ourselves to the Father
to continue to live chaste, poor, and obedient
and to be, with our life
transparency of God's love
and reflection of your maternal goodness
on the example of Mother Mazzarello
for the young people entrusted to us. Amen.

MASS

(meeting room Collegio)



VISIT TO THE COLLEGIO

(Before starting, a brief historical introduction is given about the beginning of the Collegio.)

Guide 1: Talking about the first Salesian community of Mornese, this College is about a house full of life, of a community coexistence in which relationships are marked by the family spirit that eliminates distances, facilitates familiarity, brings generations closer together, and creates a climate of trust in which people can grow in freedom and collaborate in reciprocity.

We now invite you to join us in visiting some places that recall not only the history but also the characteristic features of Salesian community life through the values lived by Mother Mazzarello as an example of life that generates life.

Let's go towards the *Old Gate*, where we can talk about acceptance

(The group moves to the different locations)

First Entrance to the Collegio *maternal acceptance*

Guide 1: For us, FMA, welcoming is more than paying attention to who comes to meet us and when we take the initiative to go out to meet others. It is, above all, an atmosphere that you breathe when you meet people. It is a state of mind that is perceived beyond what is said about the person of the other. One is capable of welcoming if one is capable of loving. Their sociability and affection have developed; in this way, they can encounter others. When we do not grow in the ability to relate to others (sociality) and do not develop the capacity to love (affection), we are probably indifferent to others and become sterile. The Salesian spirituality lived by Mother Mazzarello and the first sisters is the spirituality of welcome that generates life.

Guide 2: How did I experience the acceptance of my sisters, and how can I grow in this aspect so that my relationships are genuine places of mutual acceptance? If there are open wounds, today we are invited to try to heal them.

(brief pause)

Guide 1: An embrace is a sign of fraternal welcome and the desire to live it with who God places beside us.

Let's go towards the *orchard* and see what characteristics this place awakens in us.

Orchard, Place of good night

simplicity in daily routine, importance of the good night

Guide 2: Salesian tradition says that: "Every evening, after the usual prayers and before the pupils go to bed, the headmaster or whoever serves on his behalf should say some affectionate words to them in public (manner), giving them some advice on what to do or what to avoid. Look for the subject to relate to events during the day, at home, or outside (content). Still, these words should not exceed two or three minutes (duration)". Therefore, "the content" of the goodnight must always be about current facts of youth reality; "the way" must translate into a deeply respectful and affective relationship, not far from reality to impact the youthful spirit and, finally, "the duration" could never constitute a long discussion far from a youth thirsty for movement and incapable of long concentration without feeling bored.

For this reason, Mother Mazzarello learned this very well because she has the art of leading back to the essential with the intuition of the heart rather than with long speeches. The straightforward and essential ones reveal the depth of her lifestyle.

Guide 1: If I can understand the richness of this charismatic instrument that we have in our hands, we will be able to revive the vitality and charismatic effectiveness of the community. How did I prepare to say goodnight in the community, and how did I prepare to say it in the mission?

Guide 2: After silence, we pray a Hail Mary, asking Our Lady to teach us to be instruments of God's will wherever the Lord sends us.

Let's go towards the statue of *Mary Help of Christians* and see what characteristic this place awakens in us.

Statue of Mary Help of Christians (previously in garden) Marian Devotion *spiritual motherhood of our dear Mother Mazzarello*

Guide 1: In times of uncertainty, doubt, and fears, we need maternal support, and that is why we seek the hand of someone who supports us, comforts us, and gives us security. This experience helped Salesian spirituality rediscover Mary and rekindle the great love for her in the Salesian family. In life, we learn to recognize her as Helper, then we experience moments of transformation and uncertainty, and Mary shows us the path to take and gives us hope.

Guide 2: Mary is a faithful woman even at the foot of the cross, as Jesus asks of those who dare to share His cause. As FMA, we must learn to be spiritual mothers like Mazzarello did. This motherhood is expressed in maternal solicitude, intuition, and acting with a mother's heart, like Mary of Nazareth at the wedding in Cana and the foot of the Cross. Maria Domenica lived spiritual motherhood in her daughters' direct and continuous education through the oral and written word, with gestures, and with the example of life.

Guide 1: My relationship with Mary Help of Christians speaks a lot about my response to God's call to the Salesian vocation because I cannot be a good mother if I don't allow myself to be a good daughter. Is my relationship with Mary Help of Christians only a devotional or a truly filial relationship, always trying to learn from the Mother to be both daughter and mother?

(brief pause)

Guide 2: If anyone wants to share in a word or phrase how they live or try to live this spiritual motherhood, they can say so.

(after sharing)

Let us pray a Hail Mary, asking Our Lady to help us to be women who truly generate society life, for the Church and our Institute.

Let's go towards *the courtyard* and see what characteristic this place awakens in us.

Courtyard *joyful presence*

Guide 1: Salesian tradition says that "a young person knows himself better in the courtyard than in the classroom," this also happens with the sisters; therefore, we continue with moments of recreation in the community. The courtyard is the place of spontaneity, freedom, joy, informality, personal meetings, and spontaneous events, but above all, it is the place of the group and of being mutually present. We have accepted the style of God, a dynamic and creative presence of tenderness and mercy, who saves his daughters and sons, always giving joy and hope.

Guide 2: Today, we are called to live the prophecy of a creative and courageous presence that listens and walks together. By sharing the dream of our founders, we are called to rediscover with even more enthusiasm and responsibility the sense of "walking together" as a community, to be a spark of hope and joy, and to awaken in everyone who approaches us the sense of a life given out of love, the sense of missionary spirit, of being a protagonist of change and a more just and fraternal society.

Guide 1: How is my presence in the community? Am I capable of letting myself be enlightened by the presence of Jesus and Mary to be where I am, a prophetic presence?

(brief pause)

Guide 2: We can share with another Sister an experience in which we felt what it means to be a joyful and fraternal presence.

(after sharing)

Let us pray a Hail Mary, asking our Lady to recognize in my Sisters the presence of God, who helps me to be a joyful and prophetic presence where I am.

Let's go towards *the well* and see what characteristic this place awakens in us.

Well *importance of accompaniment*

Guide 1: Accompaniment is not limited to important moments but is carried out in everyday life. Mary, a teacher in the art of accompaniment, makes us understand that accompanying the life and journey of others means bringing Jesus into the homes of others, communicating, and spreading the joy that comes from Him. In our Salesian charism, we are aware that a relationship of accompaniment stimulates and encourages discernment in choices, providing the practical criteria for truly human and Christian life; therefore, we can never think of living in a community without thinking of being there accompanied both by community animator, and other sisters in the spirit of the true sense of synodality. This is what Mother Mazzarello also did. Often, we don't need much protocol to have a conversation, but it must be done freely. The **well** is, for us, a sign of spiritual depth; let's not forget that.

Guide 2: We must deeply experience the simplicity of daily life and community relationships. Am I able to let myself be accompanied by the one God has placed on my path to be an instrument and sign of His presence?

(brief pause)

Let's go towards *the chapel* and see what characteristic this place awakens in us.

Chapel *importance of discernment*

Guide 1: From the spirit of prayer, the first FMA transformed everything into love: every needle stitch, every leap, every gesture, every fraction of time. Everything was "kneaded" with love, and therefore everything was lived in a climate of daily prayer and discernment born of the profound presence of God. For Mother Mazzarello and us today, discernment presupposes an ability to listen, which mainly implies obedience to the Gospel, so prayer is indispensable.

Guide 2: In the Constitutions of the FMA, vocational discernment "requires prudence, prayer, open and loyal dialogue which helps to know the person and God's plan for him." The attitude of discernment is an urgent necessity since "current life offers enormous possibilities for action and distraction which are presented to us by the world as if they were all valid and good" (EG, 167). They say that "discernment is the art of reading in which direction the thoughts of the heart lead, without letting yourself be led by what takes you where you never wanted to go."

Guide 1: We know that prayer supports us in faith and faithful response to God's call, but in everyday life, we often relax in prayer and consequently fail to make good discernments and good choices. How am I living my moments of personal and community prayer?

(brief pause)

Guide 3: In this sacred place, sure of your faithfulness to the Lord, we renew our commitment of total dedication to you for the youth.

Formula of our religious profession

All: Heavenly Father, You consecrated me in baptism,
and now, through the power of the Holy Spirit,
You called me to follow Jesus Christ more closely,
in order to share more intimately
in His saving mission in the Church.

In response to Your love,
I bind myself to live
the Beatitudes of the Kingdom radically,
in communion with my Sisters,
proclaiming Christ to the young people
according to the spirit of Saint John Bosco
and Saint Mary Domenica Mazzarello,

Trusting in Your grace,
in the intercession of Mary Help of Christians
and of all our Saints,
I renew the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience
according to the evangelical way
traced by the Constitutions
of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

Trusting in your grace,
in the intercession of Mary Help of Christians
and of all our saints,
and with the support of my Sisters,
I want to live faithfully, for Your glory
the commitments I assumed in making my profession. Amen!

(brief pause)

All: Lord, we ask you that the first community of Mornese be for us an invitation and an encouragement to make our community the "house of the love of God," where the young people feel welcomed and where everyday life, lived in charity and joy, continue Mary's "Magnificat." Amen.

(The prayer moment has concluded and the sisters can use the remaining time for personal prayer.)



VISIT TO THE COLLEGIO *(continued)*

(afternoon in the bedroom of Mother Mazzarello; before starting a brief sharing is given about the bedroom, the pictures in the adjacent room and corridor.)



Bedroom - Spiritual depth

importance of self-awareness and community experiences

Guide 1: Only those who know themselves can go out without fear of getting lost. Throughout her life, Mother Mazzarello had this experience of recognizing her gifts and qualities and, above all, her limits and defects, to transform them not for herself but to respond generously to the call of God that burned in her heart. Her letters and the testimonies of those who lived with her speak of how much she could let herself be worked by the hands of God to be a true woman, an authentic Christian, a faithful religious, a genuine spiritual mother, and a true example of holiness.

St. Mary Mazzarello a Humble Flower

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ze7LIDwsbrE&t=53s>

St. Mary Mazzarello a humble flower
St. Mary Mazzarello a cheerful bloom
You thought of God at every flash
You raised your heart through every work
To God alone - you lived your life

Let's meet in the heart of Jesus
Let's be humble always cheerful
For God loves the cheerful giver
Was the message you gave to all

Practice all charity towards others
Help each other, love one another
Council one another
Is the message you give to all

Guide 2: We learn from her not to be afraid to leave our comfort zone and individualism and to take each other by the hand to give ourselves to those who need and wait for us. From this human and Christian solidity, we can become religious women capable of offering a spiritual depth and becoming a guide.

- A guide to clarity of motivation, without moralism.
- A prayer guide nourished by silence, listening, and simple and confident dialogue with Jesus.
- A guide to joy, a sign of a heart that loves the Lord so much, following a path of simplicity and detachment from itself.
- A guide to welcoming the cross as conformation to the Crucified Jesus who shares the cross with those he loves most.
- A guide to communion between sisters as a reflection of our love for Jesus.
A guide to the gift of self in the educational mission: it is the field of God entrusted to the FMA.

Guide 1: As a summary of Mother Mazzarello's spiritual depth, we can say from "a true disciple, she became a teacher." "If I love Jesus with all my heart, I will also be able to make others love Him."

The style of the community created and animated by Maria Domenica Mazzarello is based on the collaboration and involvement of everyone in synodality. Her way of animating the community has the character of a vigilant and good presence, flexible and attentive to the needs of each one, just like in a family where coexistence is pervaded by sweetness, kindness, joy, and a profound sense of God.

Guide 2: By visiting this house, drawing a parallel with the Salesian traits experienced by Mother Mazzarello and the first sisters, each one of us is invited to look at our life with great realism and also with the eyes of God, trying to recover moments lived and feelings that invited us to live a more authentic and prophetic consecrated life.

As we conclude our visit to the various places of the Collegio, we are invited to spend this afternoon looking at our life through the life of Mother Mazzarello and the first sisters.

(Sisters are free to go)



PRAYER

(Using string and scotch the shape of a large heart is created on the floor in the bedroom of Mother Mazzarello. Puzzle pieces are located nearby.)

The Heart of Community

Guide: Community life is a continuous challenge and a valuable treasure. It was no different with Mother Mazzarello and the first Sisters; when we read the news and some articles about the beginning of the Institute, we realized how demanding coexistence and the harmony of temperaments were. Still, you could feel the communion and synodality.

Voice: “The climate of the foundation of the Institute is a dynamism of charity that brings together fragile, poor, and poorly educated women in communion. Charity is a powerful force that pushes, animates, and brings together very different people and helps them overcome the inevitable conflicts and poverty at all levels; it makes them bold and far-sighted in announcing the Gospel beyond the borders where they were born, that is, towards the outskirts of the world. It is nice to think that from the small and remote community of Mornese, albeit with limitations, hardships, and weaknesses, an evangelical richness continues to flow, reaching all our communities on the five continents, generating them with ever new life.”

Instrumental Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAzKs9kvdrI>

(Each sister goes to receive a piece of the puzzle and return to their seat.)

Guide: Together we are invited to read the following:

- Like this puzzle, I, too, am part of the Salesian charism, and I bring the gift of life that generates life.
- I am also different from my Sisters, but together we bring the same gift of life, capable of receiving and giving love to each other.

Guide: You are invited to pause for a moment to reflect on the following questions:

1. What community events pushed you towards God?
2. What events have distanced you from God?
3. How can I build communion and be a presence that generates life in my community and my mission?

(After some time, each participant is invited to put the piece of the puzzle that they have at the center of the heart.)

Guide: We do not create communities alone, but we need the participation of our sisters who are next to us to build a synodal community where we work, pray, live, and share life and mission "together"... we need to unite our riches and weaknesses with them, to grow in holiness. Therefore, each takes another piece of the puzzle and puts it together with the piece they have inside this heart, remembering and praying for each person who experiences community with you.

Instrumental Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAzKs9kvdrI>

(after all the Sisters have placed their puzzle pieces in the heart the guide continues)

Guide: Each sister is invited to share in one word what this experience has inspired in her.

(The prayer moment concludes with a Hail Mary, thanking our Blessed Mother for the whole day and asking her to continue to place in our hearts that deep desire to remain her faithful daughter.)