



CAGLIERO 11

newsletter for Salesian
Missionary Animation



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Dear friends,

Today's world is increasingly dominated by technology. It comes as no surprise to anyone that we live in a hyper-connected environment. New digital media provide us with more information every day, but this does not mean that we receive an accurate and adequate interpretation of the reality around us. The paradox of all this is that we have more information and less communication.

The deepest meaning of communication is linked to two concepts: *communio*, that is, sharing, and *communitas*, the sense of community. Human beings are essentially communicators; we were created to share our visions and seek to unveil the reality of the world around us. But we also face the challenge of building a community, of establishing bonds that go beyond superficiality.

Dear brothers and sisters, as Christians, let us not forget our mission: to communicate our experience of the Risen Lord, who reveals to us the truth of the Father and unites us in the grace of his Spirit.

■ Fr Carlos Mendez SDB
Member of the Youth Ministry
Sector

In Mission Lands, We Play as a Team



In the vibrant atmosphere of a World Cup like the FIFA World Cup, one thing becomes clear: no player wins alone. Having great individual talent does not automatically make a team world champion. Personal talent shines, but it is not enough. It reaches its fullness only when placed **at the service of a common project**. Coordination, strategy, mutual trust, sacrifice, and a shared vision are what lead to final victory.

Something similar happens in mission lands, whether in the heart of the Amazon with our missionary communities or in large urban centres with our educational and pastoral communities. Community life is not just practical organization; it is a fundamental requirement and a sure path for living our vocation in service of the young (C.49). As Pope Francis often repeated: **"No one is saved alone... we are all in the same boat."** We are made for encounter, to walk together. He strongly emphasized the importance of a true "mystical fraternity," built on Christ. In mission lands, where challenges are greater, "playing as a team" is not optional—it is essential. Like in football, each of us has a role, but always in service of a common goal: the integral salvation of the young, being signs and bearers of God's love. Jesus left us his testament of unity in the Gospel of John: "Father, that they may all be one... so that the world may believe" (Jn 17:21). When we are one, we become a credible sign of the Gospel. We proclaim without words.

This is our greatest victory. Without teamwork, even the best player loses effectiveness. As Saint Paul reminds us, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize?" (cf. 1 Cor 9:24). At the end of the World Cup, only one team lifts the trophy. But in the mission, **the true victory is not a cup of gold**. It is a united community that becomes, for the young, a "theological place" where they can experience God's love.

■ Fr Jorgé Mario Crisafulli, SDB
General Councillor for the Missions

FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- Which group or community in your life has served as a 'theological space' — a place where you have been able to experience God's love in a tangible way?
- What would you like to ask God about the way you relate to others?



SPORT – AN ACTIVITY THAT FOSTERS POSITIVE VALUES



Dear Antonello, the theme of this issue is the values of sport. Do you see any links between the values of sport and Salesian values?

First of all, I am delighted that sport is being discussed in the "Cagliero11" newsletter; sport is an activity that fosters values: strength, courage, skill, loyalty, dialogue and service; these are some of the core values for anyone involved in sport, whether as a participant or an organiser. I would add to what has been said a spirit of community, cohesion and inclusion. In short, it is an activity that begins with the individual and opens up to others, even if they are competitors on the field. This is why everything that St John Bosco embodied and taught to young people can be found in sporting activity. It is no coincidence that in the recent Sky Sport documentary, Don Bosco is described as the "Saint of young people and sport". In the time of 'our' Saint, there was no codified sport yet, but over time the Salesian oratories have given continuity to the educational experience, including through sport, in a completely natural way.

When we look at today's sports stars, who serve as major role models for children and young people, it seems that for many of them, nothing matters more than money and fame. What can be done about this?

As with all positive human endeavours, there are instances where fundamental values are violated. Unfortunately, sport is no exception to this; much depends on the individuals involved and the roles they assume. Professionalism is not a distortion, but it cannot be regarded as the primary objective or benchmark in sport. Yet there are many positive role models that can be cited. Unfortunately, 'a falling tree makes more noise than a growing forest'. What can we do? We must work hard on training for managers, coaches and athletes; not just focusing on technique, but constantly working on behaviour, on managing competitive situations, on respect for the opponent, and fostering a culture that embraces both victory and defeat.

And you, have you ever played any sports, or do you still play any? Which one is your favourite?

I played various sports when I was younger: basketball, football and table tennis; then I realised that the best path for me was to dedicate myself to helping young people, first as a coach and then as a manager. These days, I still keep active through adult exercise classes, recreational swimming and fitness walking in Rome's parks. Favourite sports? All of them!



Antonello Assogna ASC

Married with two daughters. He holds a Master's degree in **International Relations** and has always been committed to Catholic social teaching, with extensive experience in trade unionism and politics. He has been a **Salesian Cooperator since 1996**.

In sport, he came up through PGS **Borgo Don Bosco**, a historic multi-sports club in the Centocelle district of Rome, of which he has been President since 2006. From 1998 to 2001, he was Vice-President of the Lazio Regional Committee of the FIP.

Since March 2019, he has been **Secretary General of the PGS**. Awarded the Gold Star for Sporting Merit in 2022.



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The most popular sports in the world

Source: www.FocusJunior.it

Its popularity is driven by accessibility, tradition and cultural influence across different regions.

- Football: The most popular sport, with around 3.5–4 billion fans and players all over the world.
- Cricket: Extremely popular in Asia (India, Pakistan), the UK and Australia, with around 2.5 billion fans.
- Basket: Widely played in the USA, China and Europe, with over 2 billion fans.
- Swimming: Practised at both amateur and competitive levels by around 1.5 billion people.

Other sports with a large number of participants include tennis/padel, badminton, table tennis, volleyball, running, handball and cycling.

JUNE SALESIAN MISSIONARY INTENTION

SPORT

For the values of sports
[Prayer intention of Pope Leo XIV]

Let us pray that sports be an instrument of peace, encounter, and dialogue among cultures and nations, and that they promote values such as respect, solidarity, and personal growth.
[Salesian missionary prayer intention]

BOTSWANA