**GREETING FROM FR LEONARDO MANCINI**

**AT THE 2022 SALESIAN FAMILY SPIRITUALITY DAYS**

**VALDOCCO, 13 JANUARY 2022**

Dear members of the Salesian Family, it is a great honour for me to welcome you here to Valdocco, to Don Bosco’s house; welcome to all of you here in the hall, and welcome to all of you too who are following online. We are celebrating the 40th in the series of Salesian Family Spirituality Days, on the theme of the Strenna 2022 which our dear Rector major, Fr Ángel, has given as title: *Do all through love, nothing through constraint*.

My wish for all of us taking part in the Days, is that we may come to know and savour ever more deeply the beauty and depth of the roots from which our spirituality draws. And, after having better known and savoured these roots, to be able to make them our own, so that they can nourish our daily life.

In particular my wish is that we can all mature in the *ecstasy of action and life* proposed by St Francis de Sales and likewise relaunched by the *Charter of Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family* in articles 27 and 28. Especially in Article 28 of the *Charter of identity* where we find written:

*The mysticism of  Don Bosco finds its expression in his motto* Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*, and is identified with the “ecstasy of action” of Saint Francis of Sales. It is the mysticism of daily work in harmony of thought, feeling and will with God; so that the needs of one’s brothers and sisters, especially the young, and apostolic concerns are an invitation to prayer, while constant  prayer nourishes the generous and self-sacrificing working with God for the good of one’s brothers and sisters. /…/ The Salesian Family takes up this mysticism, lived so intensely by Don Bosco, and left by him as a precious heritage to all his spiritual disciples.*

The mysticism of action demands true love of God and neighbour. In this regard St Francis de Sales wrote to Mother de Chantal: *There are no souls in the world who love more cordially, more tenderly and, to put it bluntly, more lovingly than I do.* After stating this, Francis recognises that this great tenderness risks clouding the heart, disturbing it and distracting it from God in favour of self-love. And yet he concludes his reflection by writing to Mother de Chantal that one can love in this way and still be profoundly free from self-love: *I believe that all I love is God and all souls for God.*

St Francis de Sales way of loving seeks to imitate God’s way of loving; and the God of St Francis de Sales is *the God of the human heart*.

My wish, with all my heart, is that as members of the Salesian Family we commit ourselves more and more to the mysticism of action and life (i.e. the *Da Mihi Animas*), learning to love like St Francis de Sales and like Don Bosco; and to do all through love, nothing through constraint*.*

Enjoy being involved!