

We are at Colle Don Bosco, the place where everyone in the Salesian family recognises our birthplace.

The 27th General Chapter consigns to the Rector Major, to his Council, to the entire Congregation, a page of dreams, that is, it gives us the possibility of rethinking Salesian places as spaces and times of personal, community formation, as groups for consecrated men and women, members of the Salesian family, lay people and young people.

I learnt that - what is it that holds together a family that today is present in 134 nations on five continents?

Basically its founder and the places of its origins, and so we try to enter these spaces that have begun to have a new face in the service of the congregation.

The idea that was close to the Rector Major's heart and that we have tried to use as a criterion for the redefinition of the rooms is a concept that is very dear to us in our Salesian tradition, that of home, so that everyone, young people, adults, those who are closer or further away from Don Bosco's charism, can feel and find themselves at home when they come to the Hill.

The courtyard spaces, the small rooms, the dormitories, everything wants to have the idea of the simplicity of home hospitality.

The recipients of the Salesian places project, and therefore of the Colle Don Bosco, of Chieri, of Valdocco, of Mornese, are young people, boys, Salesians, members of the Salesian family, educators, teachers, and so the spaces have been designed for all these recipients.

Places of prayer, places of silence, places of formation, places of play and entertainment, all those elements that make our being a house of Don Bosco, right here, in this unique and extraordinary place.

When Don Bosco wrote his dream he began it like this: 'It seemed to me that I was in a meadow close to home, and on this meadow a great number of boys: some were laughing, others were playing, not a few were swearing'.

In recent years, here at Colle Don Bosco, young people, educators, teachers, trainers, who come from many parts of the world, linger a few days to understand, study, deepen this dream.

Here is his vocation, his calling, here is his mission, his recipients, his educational style, his spirituality.

The element that has guided the project, its soul, is precisely the idea of home.

Here, more than anywhere else, because here we experience Giovanni's physical home, in which he grows up, lives, relates, first of all with his mother Margherita, with his siblings, with his fellow villagers, with the local people.

This little rosary chapel is embedded in Brother Joseph's little house.

It contains some little jewels, we can call them, of our spirituality.

First of all, Don Bosco's faith and devotion for Mary, and then that youthful protagonism to which we are so attentive, because here are two miracles, by two young people.

First of all because on this meadow, on this ground, there is the meeting between Don Bosco and Dominic Savio, because Dominic asks Don Bosco if he can be received at the Valdocco Oratory, and remember the dialogue between Don Bosco and this boy; this desire to be able to study, to be able to do something good; this cloth that is handed over into the hands of a tailor so that a beautiful dress can come out of it.

And then because this little chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary saw the clerical vesting of young Michael Rua.

That Michelino whom Don Bosco had welcomed to Valdocco and who was to become St John Bosco's first successor at the head of the congregation.

Then two Don Bosco boys became two masterpieces of the educational and Salesian system, then I think it is always nice to be able to pause for a moment here to look and also be accompanied by the simplicity and intensity of some places

Here, next to us, some important structures of pastoral possibilities: the yellow one, Casa Zatti, which is a self-management house for groups of up to 60, 65 people.

Next door, the tent city structure for young people, groups, who want to spend a few days, a few weeks, here at Don Bosco's, in a more spartan, simpler manner.

There are two meadows on the Hill that indicate Don Bosco's greatness: the meadow of the nine-year dream, and the meadow of the missionary dream of 1884, and it is precisely from that dream that the entire missionary experience of our congregation begins.

That 11 November 1875 marked the beginning of a charism that set legs and reached out to the world.

The missionary museum of Colle Don Bosco, revisited in its exhibition also thanks to the use of multimedia totems in languages that are not only Italian, allows us to take this journey through the nations where Salesians are present.

How was this museum born?

It was born from the heart, because the first Salesians to leave for the missions wished that in the place of Don Bosco's birth and childhood there would be signs of their missionary work.

And finally, since the end of June, the Salesian international novitiate community has arrived here at Colle Don Bosco.

Bringing the initial training of future Salesians here is an investment for today and tomorrow.

Don Leonardo Mancini, director and teacher, will guide us to get to know the new novitiate.

I am don Leonardo Mancini, director and novitiate master at Colle Don Bosco.

We arrived here in June, at the end of June.

We moved from the novitiate in Pinerolo and ... what were the reasons for the move?

Mainly a motivation related to the significance of the place.

Evidently having novices take the first steps of Salesian life in a place like this, that is, where St John Bosco was born and grew up, has a value that is absolutely unique in the world.

We will take a tour of the new novitiate rooms they have in the farmstead called Scaiota.

For several years before, this place was used to welcome youth groups, and now other young people, those who feel a vocation to the Salesian consecrated life, are called to live there.

It has therefore been radically restructured in several parts, precisely to allow the reception of these young people, novices and the life of the community that accompanies them. There are 6 brothers currently accompanying 12 novices.

As in recent years, and with the new impetus of this project entrusted by the 27th General Chapter, the "Colle" is therefore a home for retreats, spiritual exercises, days, times, weeks of formation, for our young people, boys, summer experiences for Salesians, sisters, moments of silence, of deepening, of regeneration spiritual, for so many lay members of the Salesian family who today are the face of Don Bosco throughout the world.