



Salesian
Institutions
of Higher
Education

Conference of the Rector Major to the Board of Directors of the IUS

(Synthesis. Rome 9/1/2019)

On Wednesday, January 9, we have the presence of the Rector Major, who develops his conference in three aspects: the meaning of the next GCXXVIII, the shared mission of SDB-lay and the IUS-provincial and world government relationship.

1. GCXXVIII will be a step forward in the path of the Congregation. About the contents, two are totally necessary for the IUS: What Salesians for today? and the shared SDB-lay mission.

In the reflection on which Salesians for young people today, the theme of the preferential option for the poorest occupies a central place. This is the background horizon.

At the level of our IUS we are not here to facilitate the responsibilities of the governments or just to offer academic quality. We are here to give young people a formation with quality, with a human and Christian worldview, a formation with an identity in Salesian values; but with a clear option for the poorest.

We need to be conscious that young poor people have our institutions as their only option. IUS are called to change the lives of poor youth.

As institutions of higher education, it is important to think that they are justified by the possibility of forming social, political, and academic leaders that contribute to overcoming the serious realities of today's world.

2. The shared mission of SDB-lay people leads us to a change of mentality of the Salesians with respect to lay people, also in the IUS. There are SDBs that resist the participation of lay people when today there is no other way. It is not enough to have lay people, we need mature lay people with charismatic identity.
3. Finally, the Rector express his preoccupation about some IUS that have taken more protected decisions in national laws than in a sense of belonging to the Congregation. The risk is that behind these particular situations there may be ideological tendencies that encourage a misunderstood "autonomy". For this reason, it is important to strengthen a clear affirmation of the Salesian identity and belonging of the institutions; without this, our presence and the resources made available would not make any sense.

He ends his speech with some questions that constitute real challenges:

What young people and with what conscience are we forming?

What values do we transmit? What ethics?

What is the "plus" that we offer?

The Rector Major concludes his speech thanking for the work of animation and coordination of the IUS.