

# GUIDELINES ON THE PRESENCE OF THE FMA IN SOCIAL NETWORKS





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## PREFACE

I am happy to present a long-awaited document from the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, as an actualization of the Salesian educative charism in contemporary times. Awareness of the call to reach out to young people in the digital courtyards where they meet daily, challenges us in our Salesian vocational response.

In this time of the historical reality of the Covid-19 Pandemic, solicitations for inter-connectedness have become increasingly strong. The Social Media made it possible to maintain connections, to meet each other, to meet young people and families in Network of relationships that are always broader, to form ourselves by allowing ourselves to be strongly challenged so that our 'being there' is not neutral, but leaves the imprint of the Salesian spirit, education, and Gospel proclamation.

Sr. Maria Helena Moreira, General Councilor for Communication, and Sr. Nieves Reboso, General Councilor for Formation, through work shared with the Sector Collaborators, gathered the rich reflections and suggestions of the Interprovincial Conferences that met in these years. They valued what had emerged from the reports of the Canonical Visits and from the discernment made by the General Council. They gave ample space to the expectations expressed by young people and they studied and reflected with various experts.

The *Guidelines on the FMA Presence in the Social Networks* were born from the in-depth analysis of the Institute and in the Institute. It is a document of great importance for our life as consecrated women and educators in this time broadly marked by digital communication. For some time we have been studying in the Institute the profound relationship between Communication and Education and we are becoming more and more aware that we cannot think of a quality education without qualified formation to and in communication, to assume the commitment of Educommunication as a prophetic force of the Preventive System today.

The *Guidelines* are a concretization of the *FMA Institutional Communications Plan* and are intended for the formation of all the FMA, the youngest and the less young, those who have been using the social networks for a long time and those who inhabit it to remain with the young people;

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those who are diffident towards a yet little-known reality and those who risk entering it without sufficient knowledge to make educational spaces in it.

We all want them to be places in which to express the authentic motivations of our charismatic presence. Being present in the social networks is, in fact, a response to our educommunicative vocation: networks are often the most frequented courtyards by young people of our time. *With what intention do we access them?* We cannot forget that we are educators of the faith, bearers of evangelical and charismatic messages to share with people belonging to different cultures.

To communicate on the social networks, it is necessary to know and choose the language that can be understood and accepted by the interlocutors, that arouses interest and openness, that conforms to the different communication channels. The need to form ourselves is increasingly felt as an indispensable need. The digital continent needs *new arts and new crafts* to be inhabited. We can be the “sign and expression of the foreseeing love” of the Father (C.1) in many ways, including on *social media*, inhabiting them as digital citizens.

The communications dimension has been present in our charism since our beginnings. In his time, Don Bosco understood that the press was a powerful tool to reach a wide audience. The *Catholic Readings*, the *Salesian Bulletin* were created to reach as many people as possible, preferably from the humblest classes of society, those who barely knew how to read and would not have understood a text that was too elaborate. They were also born with the aim of making the Salesian work known and involving people in the Salesian educational mission

Mother Mazzarello always perceived the need to communicate. She used the modalities of her time (letters) to establish contact with the sisters, with the young, with the people. She certainly was a skilled communicator in her life, in her interpersonal relationships, showing wisdom, attention to the person, ability to listen, a keen attentiveness in caring for every sister and young person. Today, her Letters are reproduced in podcasts to study her spirituality and her educommunicative style in depth.

Today young people are present in social networks where they express their ideas. Sometimes they risk getting lost between a ‘like’ or a ‘new follower’, which is why formation in critical thinking and ethics is required to responsibly inhabit the digital spaces.

Social networks are a space in which we are called to be in order to help the new generations to choose and decide independently, to become *honest*

*citizens* open to universal fraternity, active subjects in building a society that is more just, more in solidarity, and *good Christians*, consistent with their faith and actively present in the Church.

It is not enough to be in the social networks. One has to communicate well, know the languages and interests one’s “followers” in order to be able to influence them. It is necessary to form, understand, and know how to manage communication tools, know how to welcome divergent thinking, respecting the opinions, cultures, and religions of others. For all of us who have responsibility for animation and governance at different levels, it is even more necessary because of the need to be formed to be able to plan formative itineraries in the educating communities.

We hope that the *Guidelines on the FMA Presence in the Social Networks* will be taken on, enculturated and integrated in the different contexts, in the concrete experience of our communities and the world of youth. The Document requires our openness and continuous updating so that it can respond to the rapid changes of contemporary society.

I pray that you may live as Salesian interlocutors in the world of communication with the educational passion of the *Da Mihi Animas Cetera Tolle!*

I thank all the people who collaborated directly and indirectly in the drafting of the Document and I invite the entire FMA Institute to make it an effective formation tool.

Sister Yvonne Reungoat  
Superior General of the FMA Institute



## ON THE WAY

*“The Community is the space in which concerns and hopes are shared work in view of the mission. This requires a willingness to participate, co-responsibility and reciprocal communication in a loyal confrontation”.<sup>1</sup>*

The XXIII General Chapter urged the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA) to look at the digital communication ecosystem as the environment in which life grows on the foundation of evangelical and charismatic values. We are called as FMA to acquire a deeper *«awareness of communication as a mission [...] to enter the digital world not only as users, but as seekers of meaning and promoters of a new culture»*.<sup>2</sup>

Young people ask the FMA Institute to learn more about the culture of communication, because the presence of the FMA is significant for understanding them, for weaving with them a network of relationships in which they are interlocutors, creating spaces for dialogue in a family atmosphere.<sup>3</sup>

Living in the digital communication ecosystem requires audacity and competence, so that it can be *«a place rich in humanity, not a network of threads but of human people»*.<sup>4</sup>

The Net is not a parallel world; it is part of everyday reality, where it is possible to meet even the most distant. The socio-relational dimension is also expressed in the Net, which has become a place inhabited by millions of people who, going beyond their borders, meet, express their individuality and weave planetary interrelations. The Net, therefore, is the place for relationships to be lived with wisdom, competence, responsibility, realism and creativity.

<sup>1</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, C 51.

<sup>2</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Allargate lo sguardo. Con i giovani missionarie di speranza e di gioia*, Atti del CG XXIII, Roma 2014, n 47.

<sup>3</sup> *Ivi*, nn 15-17.

<sup>4</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 48ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2014). *Comunicazione al servizio di un'autentica cultura dell'incontro*, Città del Vaticano.



Being present in the digital environment is not an optional choice. It is, rather, an opportunity: to be with young people as digital citizens, listening and talking to understand people's expectations and hopes.

Training oneself and training others in the digital age is fundamental. «The attention and presence of the Church in the world of communication is important to dialogue with the man of today and bring him to an encounter with Christ»,<sup>5</sup> as Pope Francis urges. On the Net we talk about ourselves, we tell about life and reality. For this reason it is necessary to develop communication skills to respond to the needs of the contemporary context.

The FMA is called to live in a continuous exercise of evangelical discernment to recognize the passage of God along the paths that humanity travels, marked by rapid changes in all fields, to promote networks of solidarity, justice, inclusion.

The assumption of continuing formation is an “indispensable priority” for the present and future of the FMA Institute, a condition of renewal and missionary fruitfulness.<sup>6</sup>

The FMA Institute therefore undertakes a path of sapiential reflection in the new existential context, offering clear principles, charismatic and operational institutional criteria to “be generative communities in the heart of contemporaneity”.<sup>7</sup>

This is the intent of the *Guidelines on the Presence of the FMA in the Social Networks*: to form them in the responsibility of inhabiting digital environments and Social Networks not only personally, but also as institutional subjects at the service of the Salesian mission; to encourage a mentality of change and knowledge of the “norms and dynamisms of digital environments”; to openness and to working in synergy to be present in the Social Networks as

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. ISTITUTO FMA, *Nei solchi dell'alleanza. Progetto formativo delle Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Torino, ELLEDICI 2000, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *In preparazione al Capitolo Generale XXIV*, Circolare n. 985, Roma 2019. «Fate tutto quello che Egli vi dirà» (Gv 2,5). *Comunità generative di vita nel cuore della contemporaneità*.

Salesian educators”;<sup>8</sup> to educate to digital citizenship, to be creative and responsible interlocutors and actors, with the intuition of Don Bosco to form “good Christians and honest citizens”.

Pope Francis encourages us to continue this journey with a quick and joyful step, “guided by the Spirit, always open to the voice of God who speaks, who opens, who leads, who invites us to go towards the horizon”.<sup>9</sup>



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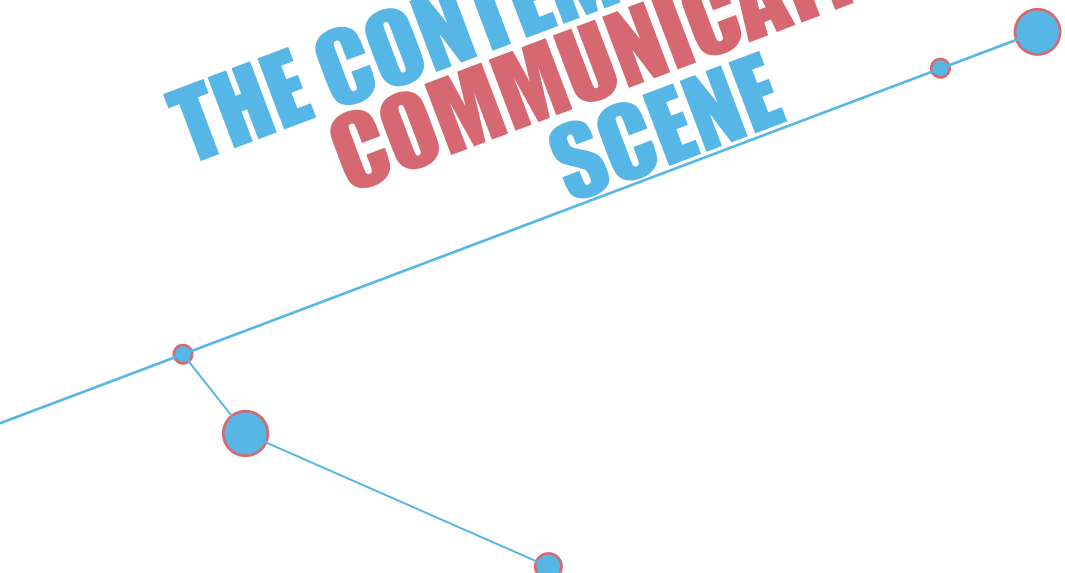
<sup>8</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Piano di Comunicazione Istituzionale delle Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Roma VICIS Srl 2017, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> PAPA FRANCESCO, Omelia per la Festa della Presentazione del Signore - XVIII Giornata Mondiale della Vita Consacrata, Roma 2 febbraio 2014.





# THE CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION SCENE





**“Only what is loved can be saved.  
Only what is embraced can be transformed”**  
(Pope Francis, Twitter January 27, 2019).

The *Digital Age* is a new era in the history of humanity. Everything is changing, *we are all connected always and everywhere* and it is good to understand how much it is transforming.

*Web 2.0* recognizes media as social environments and places in which all users are interlocutors and co-authors of the contents. *Web 3.0* examines the fact that content is spreadable in all directions and can generate relationships, sharing, and participation.

*Internet* is the backbone of the *digital communication ecosystem* with the spread of *devices* and *Social Networks*.<sup>10</sup> Each user is, at the same time, producer and user of content, on any *device*, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and anywhere. The way of communicating changes and takes on a civic dimension, of attention to the needs of the interlocutors and to social causes (*related marketing*).

*Internet* is the lever of consensus and significant participation, especially for the youth groups of the population. Today the main communicative act is *conversation*, which presupposes cooperation between the participants and collaborative interactions.

In the era of *Revolution 4.0*, of *cyberspace*, of *Infosphere*, and of *Robotics*<sup>11</sup>, the processes of change and transformation of society, emerging cultures and the universe of youth have a strong impact. “The complexity and rapid change are placed in a context of fluidity and uncertainty never experienced before”.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, we are also witnesses of extraordinary scientific developments that have a direct influence on the self-understanding of the person,

<sup>10</sup> Cf. CHIEFFI Daniele (a cura di), *Comunicare digitale. Manuale di teorie, tecniche e pratiche della Comunicazione*. Centro di Documentazione Giornalistica. Roma 2018, p. 84 «La rete sociale (*social network*) descrive le relazioni tra individui, gruppi e organizzazioni; si tratta di un insieme di persone che decidono di costruire una community, comunicano in maniera reticolare, includono l'ascolto e l'interazione. Le reti sociali sono luoghi digitali, ambienti da vivere e di cui far parte».

<sup>11</sup> Cf. «La Robotica è una tematica in grande sviluppo in cui *hardware* e *software* si fondono con l'Intelligenza Artificiale, ad imitazione dell'uomo o parti o funzioni di esso. Nel funzionamento sono di base le potenzialità delle applicazioni di reti neurali» (<https://intelligenzartificiale.unisal.it/robot/>, data di accesso novembre 2020).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. PAPA FRANCESCO, Lettera Enciclica *Laudato si'*, Città del Vaticano, Editrice Vaticana 2015, n. 18.



in particular, in the fields of Genetics, Neuroscience and Artificial Intelligence.<sup>13</sup>

**Digital culture** offers great and efficient communication potential. “Young people live naturally on *social networks*, making it their usual courtyard of meeting and exchange, friendship and grouping between peers. The virtual is a challenge that does not exhaust the profound question of meaning, especially of young people, but it is the indispensable place to reach and involve them”.<sup>14</sup>



*“How to discern and take a stand  
in this world of accelerated change?”<sup>15</sup>*

In the culture of *distraction* in which we live, fundamental questions are in danger of being stifled or removed. What is happening requires rethinking the anthropological and ethical categories, to express existential and evangelical values in the current context. “We must take an integral and positive view, aware of the condition of vulnerability, social and economic malaise of large sections of the population”.<sup>16</sup>

The contemporary scenario reflects digital culture. In the heart of this world, man fixes his tent, inhabits it and weaves relationships in an increasingly convergent, post-media environment and in perennial inter-connection. The epochal change “was caused by enormous leaps which, in terms of quality,

<sup>13</sup> Cf. DI TURI Nicola, GORI Marco, LANDI Marco, *Guida per umani all'Intelligenza Artificiale. Noi al centro del mondo*. Ed. Giunti 2019, pp. 21 ss. “L'IA è una disciplina che studia i fondamenti teorici, le metodologie e le tecniche che consentono di progettare sistemi *hardware* e sistemi di programmazione *software* per fornire all'elaboratore elettronico prestazioni di esclusiva pertinenza umana. L'IA è dedicata allo sviluppo di sistemi di elaborazione dati che effettuano funzioni normalmente associate con l'intelligenza umana, come il ragionamento, l'apprendimento e l'auto-miglioramento”.

<sup>14</sup> SINODO DEI VESCOVI, *Instrumentum Laboris della XV Assemblea Ordinaria*, 19 giugno 2018, nn. 57-58.

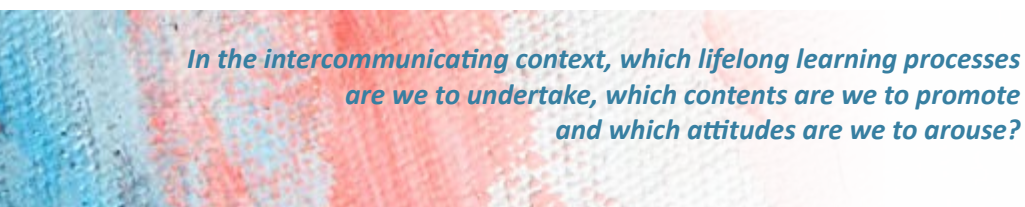
<sup>15</sup> Cf. ROGGA Giuseppe M., *Vivere la vita come vocazione*, in *Sequela Christi*, 54 (2018) 2, pp. 89-99.

<sup>16</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 100ª Giornata Mondiale del Migrante e del Rifugiato (2014). *Migranti e rifugiati: verso un mondo migliore*, Città del Vaticano.

quantity, speed and accumulation, occur in scientific progress, technological innovations and rapid applications in various areas of nature and life”.<sup>17</sup>

We are facing the Fourth Epochal Revolution, the era of the *zettabyte* and *big data*.<sup>18</sup> Our challenge is to live the *Infosphere*<sup>19</sup> with awareness. New approaches to knowledge and solid communication skills are necessary to be able to interact with the world in constant transformation. The competence does not refer to the use of technological devices, but to the responsibility of living in this world as witnesses of evangelical and charismatic values.

*Veritatis gaudium* proposes some fundamental criteria for a formative project that responds to the challenges of the present: «spiritual, intellectual and existential contemplation, the *Kerygma*, wide-ranging dialogue, trans-disciplinarity exercised with wisdom and creativity and the need to “network”». <sup>20</sup>



*In the intercommunicating context, which lifelong learning processes  
are we to undertake, which contents are we to promote  
and which attitudes are we to arouse?*

<sup>17</sup> PAPA FRANCESCO, *Evangelii Gaudium*. Esortazione Apostolica ai Vescovi, ai Presbiteri e ai Diaconi, alle persone consacrate e ai fedeli laici sull'annuncio del Vangelo nel mondo attuale, 24 novembre 2013, n. 52.

<sup>18</sup> “Con la parola **Big Data** viene definita una mole di dati così estesa da necessitare applicativi o *software* per estrarre, gestire e lavorare il valore delle informazioni in esse contenuto; Lo **zettabyte** è l'unità di misura dell'informazione o della quantità di dati”. Per un'accurata trattazione, cf. AGCOM (Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni), *Relazione sul fenomeno dei Big Data*, giugno 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. FLORIDI Luciano, *La Quarta Rivoluzione. Come l'Infosfera sta trasformando il mondo*. Raffaello Cortina Editore, Milano 2017, p. 24. «L'Infosfera è la globalità dello spazio delle informazioni, che include sia il *cyberspazio* (*internet*, telecomunicazioni digitali, ecc.) sia i *mass media* classici (biblioteche, archivi, ecc.)».

<sup>20</sup> PAPA FRANCESCO, *Veritatis gaudium*. Costituzione Apostolica circa le Università e le Facoltà ecclesiastiche, 29 gennaio 2018, n. 4.

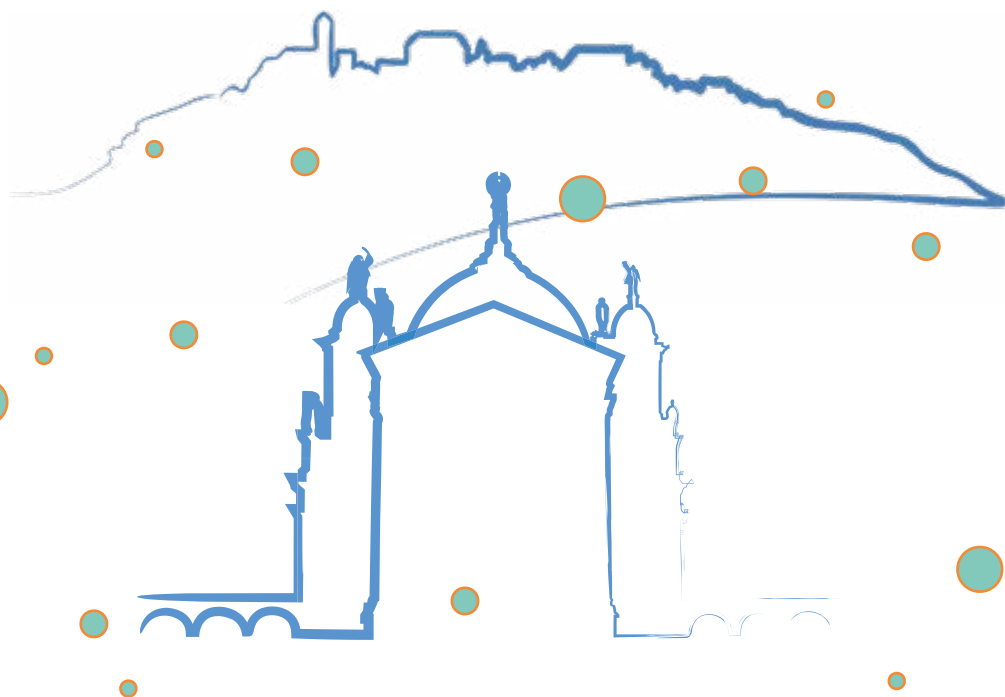


# THE SALESIAN CHARISMATIC COMMUNICATION ROOT



***"We live in times when it is necessary to act.  
Therefore it is necessary to work and make known the good that is done.  
The world needs to see and touch"***

*(Memorie Biografiche XIII, 126-127).*



From the very beginning, the FMA Institute allowed itself to be challenged by changes in reality, by cultural turning points, by the expectations of young women. Valdocco and Mornese - Salesian educommunicative roots - urge us to look at contemporary reality with openness and trust, responsibility and lucidity.

St. Maria Domenica Mazzarello and St. John Bosco were able to grasp in communication the educational path for the integral formation of young people. They left an indelible mark of a communication that has its foundation in the *Incarnation* and in the *Communion of the Trinity*.

A communication inhabited by a Presence, aroused by the Spirit of God who is the Author of the Father's authentic communication. It is he who imprints the face of Jesus on each person. A communication based on relationships aimed at the common good, openness and cooperation to respond to the educational mission that finds its source in the very heart of Christ.

Christian anthropology considers man «a being open to the transcendent», a being in relationship that is realized to the extent that he is open to others and builds communion.<sup>21</sup>

A woman of her time, "Mother Mazzarello did not learn science from books, but from life, and she became a *teacher* in it. In it the Holy Spirit had to weave his design, transforming it into an embroidery".<sup>22</sup>

Attentive to the Spirit of God present in the reality of Mornese, the FMA are called, in the today of history, to discern the voice of God in the confusion of the voices and messages present and to promote, as Pope Francis says, "*a narration that knows how to look at the world and events with tenderness; that tells about our being part of a living fabric; that reveals the intertwining of the threads with which we are connected to each other*".<sup>23</sup>

On the looms of communication, Pope Francis invites us to share constructive stories that consolidate social ties and the cultural fabric, making strong

<sup>21</sup> Cf. PRADES López Javier Maria, *Antropologia cristiana*, in «Oasis», 2 (2006) 3, pp. 109-113.

<sup>22</sup> KO Maria - RUFFINATTO Piera, *La mano di Dio lavora in te. L'accompagnamento nella vita di Don Bosco e di Maria Domenica Mazzarello*. Istituto FMA - Ambito per la Formazione. Roma 2014, p. 117.

<sup>23</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 54ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2020). "*Perché tu possa raccontare e fissare nella memoria*" (Es 10,2). *La vita si fa storia*, Città del Vaticano.

the threads of coexistence, of information ethics. Through his narration, God calls the FMA Institute to life. He, the Narrator-Creator, created us free interlocutors, generators of stories together with him. We were not born complete. We need to be constantly “woven” and “embroidered” by God, weaving with young people, in the immense ecosystem of contemporaneity, the history of the Salesian charism.

The educational charism of the FMA Institute urges us to pay attention to formation in communication in all its facets, to understand it as a phenomenon that involves the whole human-relational reality, with a holistic vision required of those who are called to be a «response of salvation to deep expectations of the young women».<sup>24</sup>

The Institute is challenged by training in the knowledge of youth culture and languages, of their horizon of meaning and awareness of the impact on an ecclesiological, theological, anthropological and charismatic level.

*Comunicare è educare,  
educare è comunicare.*

In Salesian practice, Educommunication is carried out through relationships and propositional processes that are reasonable and loving, that call upon the interlocutor's response. It creates reciprocal and intergenerational relationships, open and deep, in interaction with social, cultural, institutional and economic forces. It responds to the needs of knowledge, identity formation, confrontation with diversity, exchange and collaboration that extend from the I-you relationship to the group, the Educating Community and the social reality.

The educational environment is configured as an educational communication ecosystem, where a favorable climate is created for the integral growth of the person.

<sup>24</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, C 1.

For this reason, it is important to educate the younger generations to interpersonal dialogue, to openness to the other while respecting the originality of each one, to group life as a laboratory of authentic relationships, to the rediscovery of the family, to sharing the experience of faith, the positive use of social media, the enhancement of theater, music and art.

Today, educational communication deals with new technologies, which are no longer reducible to just tools, they are environments that affect mentality and daily life. The meeting and exchange places for young people are, in fact, more and more media places, where it is possible to build bonds and enrich one's experiences.

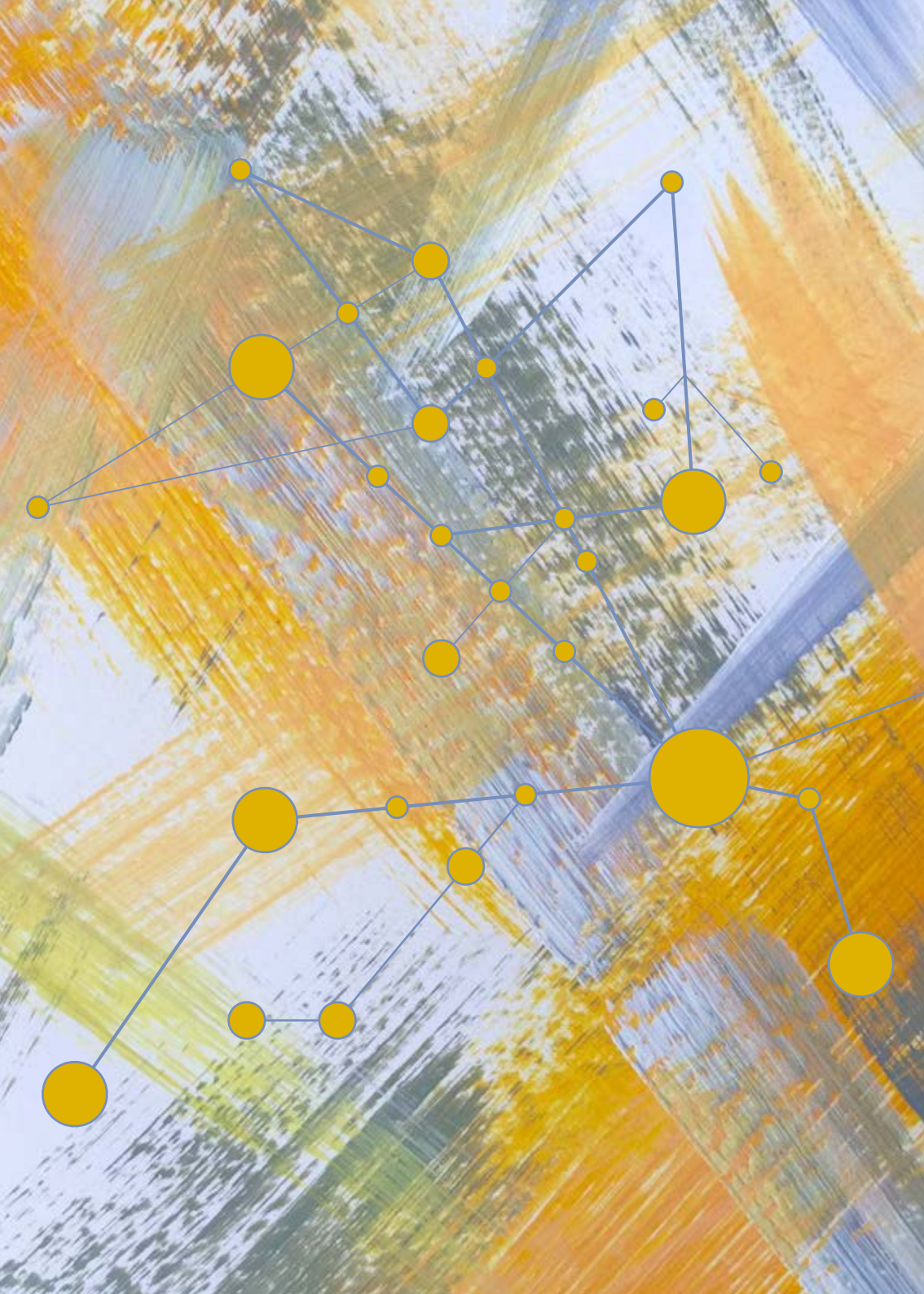
In the XXIII General Chapter the FMA Institute reconfirmed, in the Educating Communities, «the commitment of *Educommunication [as a prophetic force]* to live, today, the Preventive System, in the light of the anthropological vision and pedagogical perspectives of reference»,<sup>25</sup> *of the educational mission of the FMA* (LOME).<sup>26</sup>

In fact, Educommunication is a practice that crosses the mission and inculturation of the Salesian charism. In educating to conscious digital citizenship, Don Bosco's imperative to form “good Christians and honest citizens” resounds, capable of acting in the world as social, creative and responsible actors.

The challenge is, therefore, to make Educating Communities, and especially young people, active subjects and competent interlocutors, digital citizens committed to bearing witness to evangelical values in the contemporary world.

<sup>25</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Allargate lo sguardo. Con i giovani missionarie di speranza e di gioia. Atti del CG XXIII*. Roma 2014, n. 66, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. ISTITUTO FMA, *Perché abbiano vita e vita in abbondanza. Linee orientative della missione educativa delle FMA*, Torino, ELLEDICI 2005.



# THE CHALLENGES AND IMPACTS OF COMMUNICATION ON FORMATION





***"It takes more strength to repair than to build,  
to start over than to begin"***

*(Pope Francis, Twitter September 21, 2016).*

*What does the Lord ask of us  
at this time?*

Each generation challenges with its signs and changes. To be able to perceive them, it is necessary to live in permanent discernment, listening to the Holy Spirit in order to understand the impact that the culture of communication has on formation. There is a need for connectivity and convergence, for a reciprocity rich in humanity, with the humble awareness that we need each other. The need is to recognize the other in the image and likeness of God, who makes his home in each one and in the contexts we build and live. Relationships give life to words and actions, they are nourished by unconditional acceptance, weaving a dialogue on truth.

*How can we look at the new times  
to form women and men,  
who give themselves to others,  
where they are called to serve?*

Today we are also called to live in digital environments with a clear intentionality, as responsible people, in continuous training, with communicative competence. It is essential to be aware of and present in the new culture of communication which, on a daily basis, expands with the rapid development of advanced sciences and technologies. Digital environments require integrated Salesian educators, open to listen and to dialogue with contemporary reality.

It is important to promote critical thinking to address the complexity of the world; to understand in depth the anthropological, cultural, economic and religious implications of the digital communication scenario, where relationships are essential and encourage a path of maturation. This implies that digital environments be part of consecrated life and be spaces of evangelization for mission, with an evangelical lifestyle capable of weaving

an interlocution with society, overcoming distances, creating communicating communities.<sup>27</sup>

The FMA Institute, attentive to the many signs of the contemporary scene, feels called to contribute, with the strength of the Salesian charism, to the transformation of society, to be a generative presence of life together with the young. With them, he undertakes to “look at what is happening inside the *wineskins* of consecrated life and take stock of the quality of *new wine* and of *good wine*. This wine, of which we are loving guardians, called to mix it for the joy of all and, in a very special way, for the poorest and the smallest”,<sup>28</sup> responds to Mary’s invitation: “*Do whatever the Lord will say*” (Gv 2,5), in the present and in the future, for the fruitfulness of vocations, for the formation and accompaniment of young people and of the FMA.

### 3.1 - THE COMPLEXITY OF THE WORLD OF COMMUNICATION

The FMA Institute, “in the spirit of Don Bosco, is called to pay particular attention to the reality of social communication, to have a clear formation in this field, in the light of the Church’s teaching, to qualify for the understanding and knowledge of the many languages in an evangelizing key”.<sup>29</sup>

New technologies, says *Gaudium et Spes*, have an impact on the way of thinking of the person and of humanity.<sup>30</sup> The Net has an impact, in particular, on the search for God, on community life, on the modalities of witness and evangelization, on interiority. You need to know the digital culture to announce

<sup>27</sup> Cf. ARNAIZ José M., *Le grandi sfide della vita consacrata oggi*. In occasione del 10° Capitolo Generale delle Figlie di San Paolo, Roma 2013. ([http://docplayer.it/28459-Le-grandi-sfide-della-vita-consacrata-oggi-jose-m-arnaz-s-m.html#show\\_full\\_text](http://docplayer.it/28459-Le-grandi-sfide-della-vita-consacrata-oggi-jose-m-arnaz-s-m.html#show_full_text), data di accesso giugno 2020).



<sup>28</sup> CONGREGAZIONE PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA. *Per vino nuovo otri nuovi. Dal Concilio Vaticano II la Vita Consacrata e le sfide ancora aperte. Orientamenti*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2017, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, R 60.

<sup>30</sup> PAOLO VI, *Gaudium et Spes*. Costituzione Pastorale sulla Chiesa nel Mondo Contemporaneo, 7 dicembre 1965, n. 5; cf. SPADARO Antonio, *Per una fede matura nel mondo digitale* (<https://azionecattolicarino.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sabato-Pomeriggio-Quali-informazioni-e-quali-linguaggi-Padre-Spadaro.pdf>, data di accesso giugno 2020).



the Gospel of Love today. It is urgent to deepen their possibilities and limits, so that the presence and mission of the FMA in the Social Networks can be qualified, evangelically significant and bold.

The Formation of the FMA and, in particular, of the new generations requires a sensitive attention to the current context. To look at reality is a personal, community, charismatic, and institutional responsibility. It allows us to respond with a clear evangelical option to the profound expectations of humanity, especially of the neediest young people. In fact, *looking, discerning and acting* intersect with one another.

Digital culture is a formation challenge at all levels. Digital environments ask people for wisdom, prudence, an interlocution matured in silence and prayer, an exercise of digital citizenship based on Christian ethics, characterized by truth and evangelical action, which leads to an «integral maturation of the person, in a progressive configuration to Christ»<sup>31</sup> and with attention to the needs of the contemporary world.

To enter the culture of communication requires the knowledge of communication languages and styles, the integration of one’s thinking and acting, the appropriation of strategies, symbolic codes, the rules of coexistence, with a critical and creative intentionality and mentality, while comparing the shared messages. Social Networks are not just an environment in which one lives and shares, it is the person herself who becomes a systemic part of this environment, with its significant anthropological impacts.

The Net is increasingly becoming “*the place of questions and answers*”; contemporary man is often bombarded with answers to questions he has never asked himself and with needs he does not perceive.

Pope Benedict XVI has invited the world to walk the path of the *Word and of Silence*<sup>32</sup> to educate to attentiveness to the other and to the context, in a permanent state of discernment. Educating oneself in communication means learning to remain silent in order to contemplate and listen. Silence and the Word are essential elements of the Church’s educational communication action, for a renewed proclamation of Christ in the contemporary world. Silence is vital to foster the necessary discernment between the many stimuli

<sup>31</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, C 78.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 46ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2012). *Silenzio e Parola: cammino di evangelizzazione*, Città del Vaticano.

and the many answers that are received, precisely to recognize and focus on the truly important questions.

*"In this complex world of communication,  
the ultimate questions of human existence emerge:  
Who am I? How can I relate?  
What can I know? What should I do?  
What can I hope for?"*

"It is important to welcome persons, opening the possibility of a profound dialogue, made up of words, discussion and an invitation to reflection and silence. It is a question of deepening the link between silence and word as two moments of communication called to balance, succeed and integrate, to obtain an authentic dialogue and a concrete closeness between persons".<sup>33</sup>

## 3.2 - THE ANTROPOLOGICAL-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS

*What are the anthropological and cultural changes  
in the contemporary scenario  
that closely challenge the FMA Institute,  
in the responsibility  
of formative accompaniment?*

Some of the most relevant changes are: "education, evangelization, the family, poverty, peace, integral ecology, sustainable development, social justice, interculturalism, freedom of thought, digital presence. At the root of these realities it is possible to trace the anthropological matrix of Christian humanism, attentive to the person in his fundamental ontological

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem.*

dimensions".<sup>34</sup>

The FMA have always been on a journey with young people, attentive to their contexts, in particular, "to young people who begin the journey of formation and who often find themselves living complex experiences due to the widespread ambivalence of values and proposals. It is important, for those called to form the new generations, to know the communicative dynamics and to be able to interpret the various social phenomena. The young people who come from the digital world bring cultural innovations. It is, therefore, an opportunity to be seized in order to be able to form in the sense of experiences, in the significance of the paths, in knowing how to navigate the many nodes of the Net".<sup>35</sup>

The FMA Institute is called to face with clarity the changes brought about by technological innovations, among which the categories of *speed* and *relationships* have a strong impact. "Speed redefines the parameters of society and culture, behaviors, attitudes, cognitive processes, learning, intuitive versus analytical skills, the logic of speech and thought. The understanding of space and time, existence, identity, social relations, formation and consecrated life itself change".<sup>36</sup>

These changes must be understood as an anthropological issue that inaugurates a new sociability, a *new way of living*, a new communicative style of interpersonal and social relationships

The network and *social media* have brought about fundamental changes in relationships and require new methods of implementation, new languages and styles of storytelling. There are boundless informational and relational territories available, as if the world were always live. One stays connected, sends messages, spends hours chatting, thus experiencing a gradual

<sup>34</sup> GALEAZZI Giancarlo "Quale uomo per un nuovo umanesimo", in *Per un umanesimo prismatico*, Relazione per la IV edizione dell'annuale Incontro di Docenti universitari delle Marche, 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. CRISTAINO Anna Rita, *La Società dell'informazione. Sguardo al contesto e implicanze formative*, in DEL CORE Pina - FISICHELLA Maria (a cura di). *Il noviziato tra vecchi e nuovi modelli di formazione. Contesti e percorsi formativi per una responsabilità condivisa*. ROMA LAS 2008, pp. 473-483.

<sup>36</sup> RICCIERI Pina, *Formazione alla portata di un click. Comunicazione digitale e santificazione della mente*, Roma Ed. Paoline 2011, pp. 19-60.



weakening of the face-to-face conversation that makes one more human, expresses closeness and allows one to deeply perceive the expression, the gaze, the reactions, the emotions of the interlocutors.

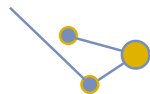
The network can contribute to the growth of an anthropology aimed at strengthening human and social relationships and, at the same time, is careful to cultivate the transcendent dimension of existence, which makes it fully human. The desire for communication and human relationships, in fact, is rooted in the very nature of man and is a reflection of participation in the communicative and unifying love of God, which makes all of humanity one human family.

Sometimes, however, there is also the risk of making personal choices and remaining perennially connected to the detriment of availability for the family, for young people, for the community, for school, for work, and for those whom we meet in the reality of every day. The consequence is that the person isolates him/herself, interrupting the real human and social interaction.

The relationship, however, is not an end in itself. It is necessary to support and encourage each other in developing the gifts that each has received to put them at the service of good. *“Social networks can promote peace and justice, respect for life and the good of creation; they can facilitate forms of cooperation between peoples of different geographical and cultural contexts, allowing to deepen the common humanity and the sense of co-responsibility for the good of all”*.<sup>37</sup>

The presence in social networks, therefore, can be the sign of an authentic search for a personal encounter with the other and the construction of networks of relationships aimed at seeking the common good and human solidarity.

<sup>37</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 43ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2009). *“Nuove tecnologie, nuove relazioni. Promuovere una cultura di rispetto, di dialogo, di amicizia”*, Città del Vaticano.



### 3.3 - INTERPELLATIONS TO CONSECRATED LIFE

The Church recognizes the significance of the presence of consecrated persons in the Social Networks, because there they are called *“to build a true citizenship. Access to digital networks involves a responsibility for the other that cannot be seen, but it is real and has a dignity to respect. The network can help to grow a healthy society open to sharing”*.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, social networks contribute to satisfying the desire for meaning, truth and relationship present in every person.

People can meet across the boundaries of space and cultures and build networks of relationships. This is a great opportunity, but it requires vigilance and also awareness of possible risks, because digital environments can become a «territory of loneliness, manipulation, loss of contact with concrete reality, they can create parallel worlds and identities, hinder development of authentic interpersonal relationships, up to the extreme case of the ‘dark side of the net’ (*dark web*)<sup>39</sup>. New forms of aggression and violence are spreading through *social networks*, such as *cyberbullying*. The *Web* is also a channel for the diffusion of pornography and the exploitation of people for sexual purposes or through gambling».<sup>40</sup>

The Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit*, n. 89, points out that “economic interests operate in the digital world, creating mechanisms for the manipulation of consciences and the democratic process. The functioning of many platforms often ends up favoring the encounter between like-minded

<sup>38</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 50ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2016). *Comunicazione e misericordia: un incontro fecondo*, Città del Vaticano.

<sup>39</sup> Il *dark web* (in italiano: web oscuro o rete oscura) è la terminologia che si usa per definire i contenuti del *World Wide Web* che non appaiono attraverso le normali attività di navigazione in *Internet* ma richiedono specifici *software*, configurazioni e accessi autorizzativi. Il *dark web* è la patria di *hacker* e *cybersecurity* (Data and Reputation Specialist, Andrea Baggio <https://baggioandrea.com/dark-web/>, data di accesso luglio 2020).



<sup>40</sup> CONGREGAZIONE PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA, *Il dono della fedeltà. La gioia della perseveranza. Manete in dilectione mea* (Gv 15,9). Orientamenti, Città del Vaticano Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2020. Parte Prima, cap. 2° *Gestione del mondo digitale*, p. 36. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/synod/documents/rc\\_synod\\_doc\\_20181027\\_doc-final-instrumentum-xvassemblea-giovani\\_it.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20181027_doc-final-instrumentum-xvassemblea-giovani_it.html).



people, hindering the comparison between differences. The proliferation of *fake news*<sup>41</sup> is the expression of a culture that has lost the sense of truth and bends the facts to particular interests”.

The young people involved in the preparation of the preparatory document for the Synod of Bishops on Young People recognize that *online* relationships can become inhuman and that digital spaces can blind the frailty of the other person. The new and overflowing life of young people, who press and try to affirm their own personality, challenges consecrated life to interact in the still little known digital continent. Young people today are the first to synthesize what is personal, what is specific to a culture and what is global. This requires that the transition from online contact to face-to-face communication be committed to promoting unity, welcoming diversity and managing conflicts.

Pope Francis recalls that slipping into social isolation, favoring only *online* relationships on *social media*, impoverishes and exposes to being a «*spiritual orphan*». “*The loss of the bonds that unite increases this sense of being orphan, emptiness and loneliness. Lack of physical contact causes one to lose the capacity for tenderness and awe, pity and compassion. It makes one lose the memory of the value of playing, singing, laughing, resting, and of gratuitousness*”.<sup>42</sup>

«Who is the ‘neighbor’ in this new world?  
Is there a danger of being less present  
towards those one meets in ordinary daily life?  
Is there a risk of being more distracted,  
because attention is fragmented and absorbed  
in a “different” world  
than the one in which one lives?

<sup>41</sup> “Le *fake news* sono informazioni infondate, basate su dati inesistenti o distorti e mirate a ingannare e persino a manipolare il lettore. Sono, dunque, menzogne che mirano ad alterare la nostra percezione delle possibilità e della realtà del mondo e della vita”. Cf. Costa Giuseppe, *Le fake news come comunicazione difettiva*, nel volume *Fake news e Giornalismo di Pace* a cura di Ivan Maffei e Pier Cesare Rivoltella. Editrice Skolè, Brescia 2018.

<sup>42</sup> PAPA FRANCESCO, *Omelia alla Santa Messa nella Solennità di Maria SS.ma Madre di Dio*, 1° gennaio 2017.



Religious life requires organizing one's life according to the needs of consecration: prayer, study, work, listening to people, fraternal life in community, mission. Many times one thinks of solving problems by finding easy answers on the *Internet*, which does not favor deep thinking and makes long-term memory more difficult. “The word to be rediscovered today is *discernment*. It is up to every Christian, and above all to those called to dedicate themselves to formation, to distinguish true religious questions from the answers that the *Internet* continually offers. It is a complex work and requires preparation and spiritual sensitivity”.<sup>44</sup>

Therefore, the question to Consecrated Life is not how to «*use*» the Net well, as is often believed, but how to «*live*» well in the time of the Net. This is the real formative challenge: learning to be connected in a fluid, natural, ethical and spiritual way; to bear witness to one's Christian faith and the Salesian charism by living in social networks as environments of life and of evangelizing mission. Christians and consecrated religious, hyper-connected and immersed in social networks, are called to an authenticity of life that directly affects the value of their communication skills. In fact, «*when people exchange information they are already sharing themselves, their vision of the world, their hopes, their ideals*»<sup>45</sup>, thus becoming «witnesses» to the values on which they base their existence.

<sup>43</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 45ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2011). *Verità, annuncio e autenticità di vita nell'era digitale*, Città del Vaticano.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. SPADARO Antonio, *Spiritualità ed elementi per una teologia della comunicazione in rete*. 1° seminario di Comunicazione per i Vescovi del Brasile. Rio de Janeiro, 12-16 luglio 2011.

<sup>45</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 45ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2011). *Verità, annuncio e autenticità di vita nell'era digitale*, Città del Vaticano.

### 3.4 - THE FORMATIVE ATTENTION OF THE FMA INSTITUTE

“Formation is the first attention of the FMA Institute which constantly takes care of its quality, in a continuous confrontation with the changes and demands of the contemporary world, in order to grasp its formation needs”.<sup>46</sup> In the Institutional Documents on Formation of the FMA the need is often expressed to evaluate, to orient, to review the formation itineraries in order to continue, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to propose a formation that awakens the potential of the person and makes her responsible for her own journey of maturation in the today of history and of its socio-cultural context.

Formation challenges the reflection and action of the FMA Institute on various fronts and requires a *fine attention*<sup>47</sup> to the motions of the Spirit of God in us and in the reality of the contemporary world.

In dialogue with reality, the FMA Institute questions itself on how to respond to the questions of meaning of young FMA and young people, whose existence is largely shaped by digital culture. The world is faced with an anthropological revolution that calls into question the human person in his need for meaning and hope. A formation in *docibilitas* is needed which helps to respond to the challenges that arise in order to live in the future. It is important to live as people in a state of permanent discernment to identify not only the risks and opportunities of digital environments, but also to be capable of confrontation, creativity, innovation, alternative proposals to the hegemony of thought, of political-economic power.

<sup>46</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Nei solchi dell'alleanza. Progetto Formativo delle Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*. Torino, ELLEDICI 2000, p. 32.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. BIANCHI Enzo, *Lessico della vita interiore. Le parole della spiritualità*. “La tradizione cristiana ha definito «l'attenzione», l'atteggiamento di «concentrazione», di «tensione interiore verso», di «fissazione della mente su» – nel latino *attentio* – con una connotazione dinamica per cui chi fa attenzione è colui che è teso verso qualcosa. In profondità essa non è l'atto di una particolare facoltà dell'uomo, ma un movimento dell'intero essere umano, corpo e spirito. Scoperto il senso, il centro, lo scopo di un'esistenza, l'attenzione è la condotta unificata dell'uomo alla luce di tale meta, è la dedizione profonda a tale centro. Crescere nella capacità di attenzione significa crescere nell'unificazione personale”. <https://www.monasterovirtuale.it/download-del-monastero/download/3-autori-contemporanei/13-enzo-bianchi-lessico-della-vita-interiore-le-parole-della-spiritualit%C3%A0.html>



The Formation Sector takes care of and accompanies the forming processes, with attention to the need for authentic interpersonal relationships, the request for accompaniment, the need for ethical communication even in digital environments, so that they are at the service of the good of the person and the community.<sup>48</sup> The complex reality of these digital environments requires sharpness to re-read the formative path of young consecrated women and the formation of those who have the mission of accompanying them.

Digital culture is not a *threat*, but an *opportunity* to be seized with discernment and wisdom, because it opens up new formative perspectives for consecrated religious life. The risks and limits are real, but the renunciation of the presence in *social networks*, which have a strong impact on people, is not justified. Communication, in fact, touches the human more than the technological.

*In the digital environment, therefore,  
what helps to grow in humanity  
and in mutual understanding?*

It is important to understand the digital culture in order to accompany the new generations of women religious in their formative paths, elaborating with them itineraries such as to activate processes that help to discern, enhance and form themselves together as critical and responsible interlocutors, who communicate the Good News of the Gospel to the world of today.

Formation in Communication is an integral part of the formative curriculum for religious life. “Throughout the life of the consecrated person and, in particular, in the time of initial formation, it is important to offer systematic formative proposals that ensure the organic nature of the contents and favor their vital assumption, taking into account the cultural, social, anthropological and pastoral implications. *Social networks* characterize the environment in which we live, defining new *anthropological* situations (with questions of

<sup>48</sup> Cf. ISTITUTO FMA, *Ambito per la Formazione. Orientamenti per la tappa Formativa dello Juniorato*, Roma 2017, nn 1, 12, 13, 19.



meaning on human reality), *theological* (with questions of meaning on the understanding of God) and *pastoral* (with multiple questions that arise in everyday life)".<sup>49</sup>

"Awareness of the educational implications and the need for communication skills to inhabit contemporary spaces - the community, courtyards, oratories, schools, universities, cities, streets, economics, organizations, digital environments - call us to live in them as consecrated women with an explicit evangelizing edu-communicative intentionality".<sup>50</sup>

Attention to formation requires looking at the person in its entirety and complexity. The anthropological gaze must be enriched with interdisciplinary approaches that allow for an ontological understanding and acceptance of the mystery that everyone is and carries with them in the contemporary context.

The digital environment urges every FMA to rethink the ethics of reciprocity and respect for the other, the exercise of digital citizenship, a dialogue based on the Gospel and attention to an evangelization that touches the life of young people and speaks their own language. In this sense, consecrated life is called upon to *root* its living in Christ, the reason and the deepest meaning of life, in total availability for the mission of evangelization of young people, walking as a community along the path of holiness and redefining interpersonal relationships with new communication modes.

Relationships, in today's society, are built on the archetype of the Network that establishes broad connections, fostering collective and collaborative learning where everyone is called to be co-authors and apprentices. In this sense, "formation *in* and *to* communication is a continuous and creative process that enhances the personal, charismatic, social and professional identity of people in a continuous openness to learning".<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> LACEDONIO Donato, *Linee per una Formazione alla Comunicazione*. Relazione ai novizi salesiani, Roma 2016.

<sup>50</sup> SECONDIN Bruno, «Ecco, ho aperto davanti a te una porta...» (Ap. 3,8). Esperienza spirituale nell'era digitale: riflessioni teologiche, ecclesologiche, antropologiche in *La vita consacrata e il nuovo ambiente digitale*. Bologna EDB 2015, pp.167-185.

<sup>51</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Piano di Comunicazione Istituzionale delle Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Roma

"The Salesian *Preventive System* considers relationships, living online as an expression of the dignity of the person in its being in the image of God and as a possibility to influence social situations, because it allows the coordination of forces, the exchange of values, the maturation of a mentality of communion, the change of reality, through greater visibility and a more incisive social impact".<sup>52</sup>

The edu-communicative mission requires the maturation of the identity of Salesian Educators, in assuming the spirit of Don Bosco's Preventive System, «in an attitude of continuous discernment, of personal relationships based on ethics, in permanent self-formation, professional formation, knowledge of the digital culture that generates new ways of learning and knowledge. Therefore it asks the person to be aware of being communication, or «communion,» called to safeguard the interiority which is the foundation of all authentic and intimate communion, guarding it to communicate what the Spirit arouses in each one». <sup>53</sup>

The FMA Institute pays a lot of attention to the formation of young women in the social context in which they are inserted as consecrated women: community life, lifestyle, way of organizing, interpersonal relationships, communication culture in communities. The young woman prepares to live and share as a Salesian educator, aware and responsible, personally and as a community, in all environments, including digital ones.

Formation is aimed «not only at personal growth, but also at its final perspective: the people of God. In forming people, we must think of those to whom they will be sent. Administrators are not formed, but are companions on the journey. It is necessary to form people who are witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus. The person in formation will be called to care for the people of God». <sup>54</sup> And the portion of the people of God for the FMA is the young, especially the poorest.

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VICIS Srl 2017, pp. 7-9.

<sup>52</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Perché abbiano vita e vita in abbondanza. Linee orientative della missione educativa delle FMA*, Torino, ELLEDICI 2005, n 50.

<sup>53</sup> *Ivi*, nn 41-57.

<sup>54</sup> PAPA FRANCESCO. *Illuminate il futuro*. Milano, Ancora 2015, p. 28.

The question asked of Jesus puts the FMA Institute in search of how and where to find the Lord in the contemporary context. The Lord allows himself to be found in the reality of the new generations of consecrated women who today inhabit multiple spaces: the daily life of community life, the social spaces of the edu-communicative mission, the digital environments. It is therefore fundamental that «at the center of the formative itinerary there be always an authentic spiritual experience, a daily and conscious encounter, made possible by the Holy Spirit, between one's freedom and the person of Christ. [...] He who knows he is recognized by Christ in the concreteness of his own spiritual experience does not change his identity on the net; those who serenely belong to an effective communion will find in the network a propitious opportunity for narrative expression, constructive interaction and growth».<sup>55</sup>

The challenge of formation is, therefore, oriented to the person, to how to influence the spaces she inhabits, with what intentionality to move in digital environments. The FMA, in entering these environments, in the use of information and communication technologies, in the choice of readings, is guided by criteria of righteousness, prudence, the good use of time in view of personal and community apostolic enrichment<sup>56</sup>. The FMA Institute considers *social media* as spaces of transforming and supportive citizenship, of commitment to promote dialogue, to produce knowledge, to generate cultural and anthropological changes, making a critical reading of the signs of the times to announce the Good News to contemporary man, in the Salesian style of the Preventive System.






Benedict XVI, in the Message for the 43rd World Communications Day (2009), exhorts young people to bring the witness of their faith into the digital world, to introduce the values on which their life is based in digital environments, to evangelize the “digital continent,” sharing with other young people the Good News of a God who became man, suffered, died and rose to save humanity.

<sup>55</sup> MARTINELLI Paolo, *Prefazione in La vita consacrata e il nuovo mondo ambiente digitale, Sfide e opportunità formative*, (a cura di Schmucki, Albert e Forlani Donatella). Bologna EDB 2015, p 11.

<sup>56</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, R 6.

This is why «*there is a need to recover that sense of slowness and calm, to allow oneself time for reflection, for the maturation of the message, to get to know each other in depth, to have the courage to communicate by putting oneself on the line. Personal involvement is the very root of a communicator's reliability. Precisely for this reason Christian witness, thanks to the network, can reach existential peripheries*».<sup>57</sup>

Faced with the complexity of the digital world and its impact on consecrated life, it is required to form FMA:

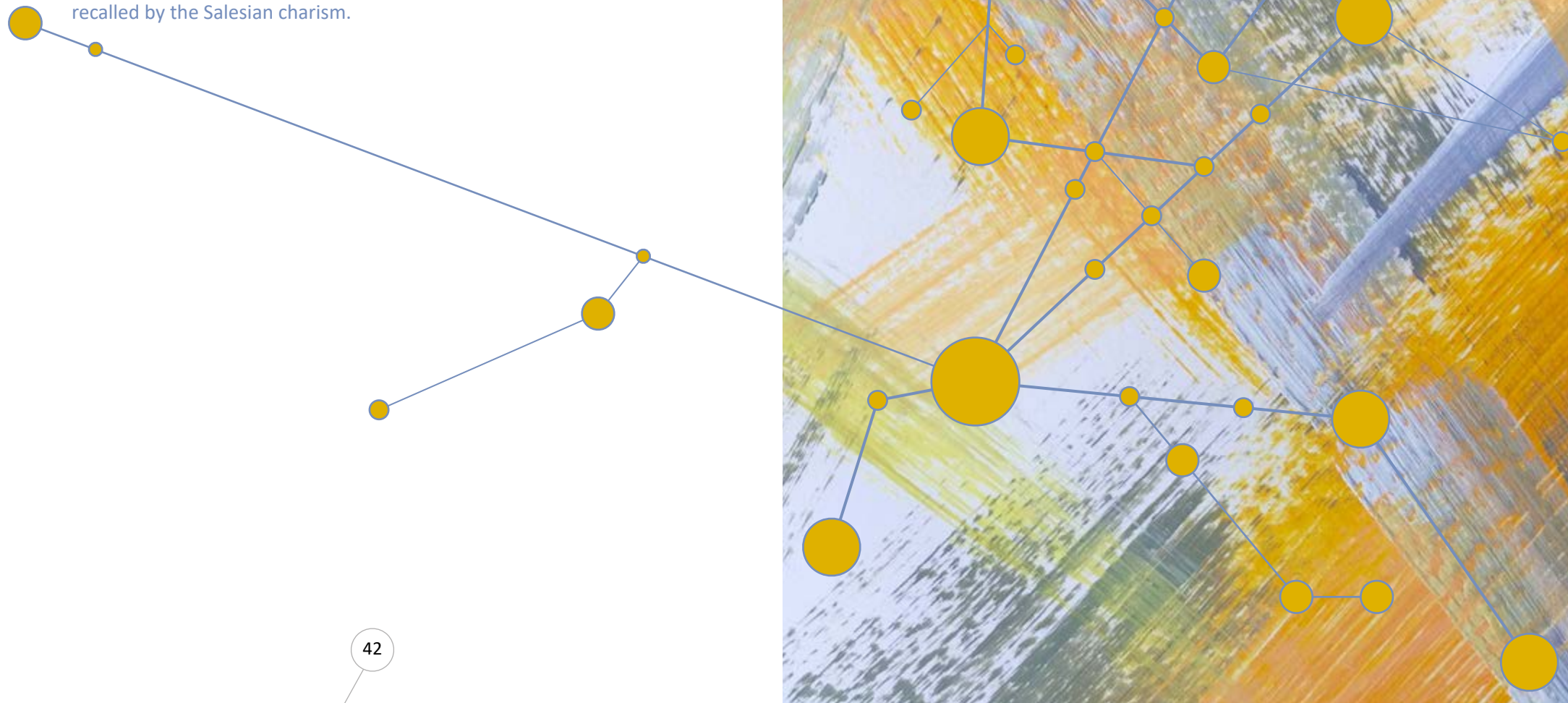
-  capable of coherence of life, of making the profound choice to live in God and for God with young people, on the way to holiness, as witnesses of a reality rich in opportunities and, at the same time, crossed by individualism, competitiveness, profit and power;
-  able to live in the present and the future as Salesian consecrated women and educators, promoting the development of the Salesian charism, letting themselves be guided by the Spirit of God, in an attitude of permanent discernment;
-  with a strong sense of identity and belonging in the awareness that their actions reflect the values and image of the FMA Institute;
-  who know how to seize the opportunities offered by the digital environment to be an evangelizing presence that weaves a profound dialogue, that raises questions of meaning, welcomes diversity, promotes actions for peace, and reveals openness to share and to learn;
-  who are aware of the limits and challenges present in the Social Networks, who are capable of making mature choices and not be imprisoned by permanent connections, canceling the times to live a fruitful interiority that requires silence, reflection, solitude inhabited by God;

<sup>57</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 48ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2014). *Comunicazione al servizio di un'autentica cultura dell'incontro*, Città del Vaticano.

who gradually acquire a solid cultural education in order to contribute with a mature, creative reflection, without compromise with the standardized performance of social networks, who have the courage to disengage from likes to offer a message that reveals the meaning of life, which promotes discussion on relevant and significant issues;

who have the courage and clarity not to be caged in a closed, selective digital environment, in which one relates only to those who have the same preferences and opinions, assuming an attitude of digital narcissism, becoming immune to confrontations, falling into radicalisms and exclusions;


who are capable, as consecrated women, of weaving a valid dialogue with society, aware of the exercise of active and evangelical citizenship recalled by the Salesian charism.







# **THE MISSION OF THE FMA INSTITUTE IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS**



***“In the digital world  
there can be no announcement of a message  
without consistent testimony  
from the one announcing”***

(Pope Benedict XVI).<sup>58</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 45ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2011). *Verità, annuncio e autenticità di vita nell'era digitale*, Città del Vaticano. «Comunicare il Vangelo attraverso i nuovi media significa non solo inserire contenuti dichiaratamente religiosi sulle piattaforme dei diversi mezzi, ma anche testimoniare con coerenza, nel proprio profilo digitale e nel modo di comunicare, scelte, preferenze, giudizi che siano profondamente coerenti con il Vangelo, anche quando di esso non si parla in forma esplicita. Del resto, anche nel mondo digitale non vi può essere annuncio di un messaggio senza una coerente testimonianza da parte di chi annuncia. Nei nuovi contesti e con le nuove forme di espressione, il cristiano è ancora una volta chiamato ad offrire una risposta a chiunque domandi ragione della speranza che è in lui (cfr. 1Pt 3,15)».

In the *digital age*,<sup>59</sup> being part of the social world is fundamental for the Salesian edu-communicative mission. “The ease of access and use of the means of communication and Social Networks challenges the sense of responsibility, sobriety, consistency of life of each FMA. In the spirit of *da mihi animas coetera tolle*, we consider them as opportunities for evangelization and the educational mission among young people. This guides us to always act in fidelity to the Gospel, to the Salesian charism and to the Magisterium of the Church, remembering that, even when we intervene in a personal capacity, we represent the Institute to which we belong”.<sup>60</sup>

The FMA Institute is called to understand in depth the digital culture, the complex phenomenon of *social networks* and the impact they have on personal, community and institutional life, preparing to make responsible choices aimed at evangelization, in harmony with the expectations of the world of youth. The FMA Institute urges us to enter, with an evangelical and missionary heart, the culture of social networks, to know its challenges and to embrace its possibilities. «These spaces, when they are valued well and with balance, help to foster forms of dialogue and debate which, if carried out with respect, attention to privacy, responsibility and dedication to the truth, can strengthen the bonds of unity between people and promote effectively the harmony of the human family. The exchange of information can become true communication, the links can mature into friendship, the connections into communion. If the networks are called to implement this great potential, the people who participate must strive to be authentic, because in these spaces not only ideas and information are shared, but ultimately one communicates oneself».<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> “L’era digitale è una realtà. Le reti sociali, attraverso *Internet* e i terminali della telefonia mobile, hanno cambiato rapidamente lo stile e il nostro modo di relazionarci. Le nuove generazioni trovano oggi nelle reti sociali e nei messaggi di testo la loro fonte primaria di socializzazione, passando dalla relazione “faccia a faccia” alla relazione attraverso il *cyberspazio*. Le generazioni più giovani sono affascinate dal mondo dei cellulari e da *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter*, *MySpace*, ecc. Se c’è un luogo in cui i giovani amano abitare, questo è, senza dubbio, *Internet*. Una nuova cultura è sorta tra noi e ha già caratterizzato il mondo in cui viviamo e quello verso il quale ci muoviamo. I progressi dell’Intelligenza Artificiale e della Robotica, dell’*Infosfera* e della Telematica, spingono a nuovi approcci alla realtà, all’agire, a nuovi stili di vita”. Per approfondire: BENANTI Paolo, *Digital Age. Teoria del cambio d’epoca. Persona, Famiglia e società*, Milano, Editrice San Paolo 2020.

<sup>60</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, R 60 bis.

<sup>61</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 47ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni So-

The FMA are therefore called to inhabit *social networks* with knowledge and communication skills, with a critical sense and knowledge of cultural diversity, with discernment and responsibility, with personal and institutional awareness in order to be able to manage the changes in progress.

## 4.1 - THE MISSION IN THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM

To navigate responsibly in this global space populated by millions of contemporary men and women, it is essential to “form oneself and form others to be on the Web and on social networks, which are considered an institutional, educational, apostolic and evangelizing space”.<sup>62</sup>

**Institutional social networks**<sup>63</sup> are living environments in which it is required to build and experience true relationships, to enhance the value of communion; make it a place of exchange and sharing of identity and information, to shape a true digital educational communication ecosystem.

The FMA Institute is encouraged to dialogue with the various speakers: young people, lay people, Educating Communities, the Salesian Family by networking with civil and ecclesial bodies and organizations, information agencies, non-governmental organizations, to promote the interaction of educational communication ecosystems, responding to the missionary mandate to announce the *Good News of the Kingdom of God*.

### 4.1.1 - Why be part of the Social Networks

The educommunicative intention of the FMA Institute is to invest time, energy and resources to be an educative-evangelizing presence in *social networks*: “To walk, with the young, on the educational and evangelizing paths, in the

ciali (2013). *Reti Sociali: porte di verità e di fede; nuovi spazi di evangelizzazione*, Città del Vaticano.

<sup>62</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Piano di Comunicazione Istituzionale delle Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Roma VICIS Srl 2017, pp. 8-9.

<sup>63</sup> Con il termine *Social Network* Istituzionali si fa riferimento alle piattaforme che permettono all'Istituto FMA lo scambio di informazioni e di contenuti come foto, video, racconti, esperienze ed opinioni: *Siti Web, Blog, Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, YouTube, Twitter* e altri che possono essere inclusi in questa esemplificazione.

*spirit of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello, assuming the “oratorian heart”<sup>64</sup> as a fundamental criterion for expressing one’s own enculturated educational identity, committing oneself to generate life and culture, announcing the beauty and joy of the Gospel to young people and, above all, to the poorest”.*<sup>65</sup>

Institutional *social networks* are one of the possible ways to achieve the communicative objectives of the FMA Institute, a space of solidarity citizenship and social transformation. *Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, Flickr, WhatsApp* and many other social media are an opportunity to work in synergy, in continuous innovative learning, to encourage the co-production and creation of knowledge, communication and information.

Being part of the *social networks* for the FMA means spreading the evangelical, cultural and charismatic values of the FMA Institute and getting in touch with the various speakers, especially with the young people.

In this digital mission, we are called to educate in the Beautiful, the Good, the True, contributing to the formation of a full humanity, shaped by the Creator Spirit and we are committed to:

● give visibility to the identity of the charism of the FMA Institute, as a religious community of consecrated women;

● promote the knowledge of the Founders Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello, of the identity of the Salesian Family in order to make the spirit and mission of Don Bosco visible in the contemporary world, «in various forms, expressing its perennial newness»;<sup>66</sup>

● inspire trust and credibility with a transparent, open and creative communication, faithful to the message of the Gospel and the Salesian charism;

● be a significant presence in the *Infosphere* environment, the network of interconnected information that challenges every FMA to live in the pedagogical perspective of the Preventive System of Don Bosco and the

<sup>64</sup> «L’espressione cuore oratoriano vuole precisamente significare la consapevole accoglienza della propria identità educativa, insieme all’impegno di vivere costantemente lo spirito del *Da mihi animas*». Cf. ISTITUTO FMA, *Oratorio cantiere aperto*, Roma LAS 2013, pp. 116-132.

<sup>65</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Perché abbiano vita e vita in abbondanza. Linee orientative della missione educativa delle FMA*. Torino ELLEDICI 2005, cap. 2° *Il dono della predilezione per le giovani e i giovani*, pp. 27-40.

<sup>66</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, C 3.



educative spirituality of Mother Mazzarello, in order to generate of life, meaning and culture;

-  collaborate in the educative and evangelizing, socio-political and ecological mission in the Church and in contemporary society, promoting *formative* experiences of life and culture, of meaning and opinion, of dialogue and participation;
-  form critical thinking, inspired by the Gospel and culturally founded, proactive and aware of the social impact of communication in social networks and in the promotion of the common good;
-  educate, in the era of *cyberspace*, to an evangelical digital citizenship, active and co-responsible, capable of having an impact on society, even in times of crisis;
-  accompany young people in communication on all levels, getting to know the languages and emerging youth cultures;
-  tell and disseminate news, considering the impact on society of the life and mission of the Provinces / Vice Provinces in the different contexts in which they are present;
-  promote a culture of encounter by living relationships as an experience to reflect, think, decide and generate change.

#### ● 4.1.2 - *How to be part of the Social Networks*

*Social networks* are not only “*technological devices, articulated information mechanisms and complex algorithms, but they are also the result of human action, reflection and hosting place*”.<sup>67</sup> They configure new communication languages, characterized by *multimedia*, *hyper-text* and, above all, by *interconnection* and *interaction*.




<sup>67</sup> CERETTI F. - PADULA M., *Umanità mediale. Teoria sociale e prospettive educative*, Pisa ETS 2016, pp. 26-29.

As digital citizens, it is necessary to keep in mind the anthropological and spiritual primacy that reorients *social media* to live at the service of the person. The FMA commit themselves, with the awareness of digital, communicative and cultural dynamics, to undertake the digital mission with courage and daring to raise questions of meaning and educate to the profound meaning of life, in the conviction that «*education is a thing of the heart*». <sup>68</sup>

#### Identity and institutional awareness

The *online profile* of each FMA reflects belonging to the FMA Institute with the values and principles it bears. Acting on social networks is not only personal, but it is a mission that touches all the FMA and the Educating Communities, because in this digital place everyone is co-responsible in communicating the Good News. This takes *vigilance*, *awareness*, *competence*.

*Social networks* are *doors of truth and faith, new spaces for evangelization*. Their value is in connecting, in creating bonds and weaving relationships. What is posted, tweeted or shared is done as FMA Institute, because the digital mission is always community, requires care and respect, one is not an owner, rather one is a custodian and manager. Therefore it is fundamental that each FMA and the people with whom the Salesian mission is shared:

-  mature the awareness of personal and collective institutional responsibility, because any action that is done in social networks has a direct impact on the FMA community to which they belong, on the Province / Vice Province, on the FMA Institute and on the world;
-  present themselves with a profile, whose Salesian charismatic identity and belonging to the FMA Institute are clear, explicit and not misunderstood;
-  enter to become part of social networks with a clear educative and evangelizing identity.






<sup>68</sup> BOSCO GIOVANNI, *Dei castighi da infliggersi nelle case salesiane*, 1883.

## Communities and authentic relationships

In *digital networks* we meet, connect with people and are convinced that communication has the power to create bridges, to foster encounter and inclusion. Words such as *like, add, share, comments, posts, links* are part of community life, a creative way of interacting, of weaving networks of relationships, of generating changes in life and in society.



«*The culture of social networks and the changes in the forms and styles of communication pose demanding challenges to those who want to talk about truth and values. Social media needs the commitment of all those who are aware of the value of dialogue, reasoned debate, logical argumentation; of people who try to cultivate forms of speech and expression that appeal to the noblest aspirations of those involved in the communication process*».<sup>69</sup> Here it is possible to weave authentic relationships, according to the educative style of the Preventive System in which the harmony between optimism and realism, freedom and rights / duties, innovation and interdisciplinarity, ethics and professionalism is strengthened. «*It is not technology that determines whether communication is authentic or not, but the heart of man*».<sup>70</sup>

Each FMA and the Educating Communities are called to:

-  manage times and spaces in the Network with maturity;
-  communicate the experience they live as consecrated women;
-  be salt and yeast, a network of interaction and participation;
-  raise questions of sense and meaning;
-  strengthen the quality of human relationships, the attention to people and the respect for human dignity;






<sup>69</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 47ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2013). *Reti Sociali: porte di verità e di fede; nuovi spazi di evangelizzazione*. Città del Vaticano.

<sup>70</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 50ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2016). *Comunicazione e misericordia: un incontro fecondo*, Città del Vaticano.

-  privilege intercultural and interreligious dialogue;
-  spread the culture of tolerance, coexistence and peace.

## Knowledge and skills

The complexity of the digital scenario shows how much it is a priority today to develop formative itineraries to render people aware of the responsibility of their presence on social networks, combining humanistic and scientific culture and deepening the anthropological, theological and spiritual vision. The FMA Institute, prompted by the invitation “*to proclaim the Gospel*” (1Cor 9:16) and by the appeals “*I study for you, I work for you, I live for you, and for you I am also willing to give my life*” (Don Bosco) and from the mandate “*I entrust them to you*” (Mother Mazzarello), it commits each of its members to:

-  learn more closely about digital culture, its requests and opportunities, the languages and emerging youth cultures;
-  acquire personal, relational and professional communication skills;
-  know the digital dynamics that regulate communication and information flows, in order to be able to influence the processes of learning and social transformation;
-  form the critical conscience for an ethical and responsible management of *social networks*;
-  “transform the network into an extension of the face-to-face encounter, where union is based on truth, with which one adheres to Christ, welcoming others and promoting communion”;<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 53ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2019). «*Siamo membra gli uni degli altri*” (Ef 4,25). *Dalle social network communities alla comunità umana*», Città del Vaticano.

- know how to distinguish between what is public and what is private, between a personal relationship and a friendship in *social media*;
- know and discern on which social channels to be present according to the charismatic intentionality and the educommunicative mission;
- know the functions of the *social networks* on which the Community, the Province / Vice Province chooses to be present;
- discern every decision to be made, being careful not to 'click' too quickly on the 'like', 'dislike' button or get in touch with people before looking at their profile and views, as one could go against the convictions and values of the FMA Institute.

### ● 4.1.3 - What contents to communicate

*What is the FMA Institute called to communicate to ensure reliability and reputation for the charismatic vision and mission?*

In *social networks* «it is the content that assumes its own autonomous and independent subjectivation even from those who created it, it itself becomes an inhabitant of the network. Therefore, the information takes the social form of the network, the news will have the same transmission speed, but the visibility and capacity of dissemination will depend only on the interest it will meet with the various audiences».<sup>72</sup>

In times of *post-truth*<sup>73</sup> those who communicate, in addition to authority and

<sup>72</sup> PALERMO A., *La Chiesa Mediale. Sfide, strutture, prassi per la comunicazione digitale*. Roma Ed. Paoline 2017, pp. 93-95.

<sup>73</sup> «La post-verità può essere definita come una argomentazione, caratterizzata da un forte appello all'emozione, che basandosi su credenze diffuse e non su fatti verificati, tende ad essere accettata come veritiera, influenzando l'opinione pubblica». Cf. COSTA Giacomo sj, *Orientarsi nell'era della post verità*, in *Aggiornamenti sociali*, febbraio 2017. Cap. 3 p. 31; cf. DEL MISSIER

credibility, are asked to **inForm**, process the contents and make them relevant and performative. In the digital scenario it is essential to create content of value and truth.

In the FMA Institute, in the Church and in the world there is a large amount of information available on topics of different nature and interest for most people. The contents, systematically shared, must contain topics related to the Institution and transmit evangelical and charismatic values. The conversation should be proposed on values that involve everyone, so that it can help answer existential and universal questions. «*Siamo chiamati a essere testimoni della verità, a dare un contributo civile, a far emergere il racconto della realtà e a generare cambiamento. Grazie alla rete abbiamo la possibilità di raccontare ciò che vediamo, ciò che accade sotto i nostri occhi, di condividere testimonianze*».<sup>74</sup>

Not all content is the same. The Net is a very complex system of contents and meanings interacting with the interlocutors who, in turn, generate and share them. In the logic of the network, content is any media object that has a meaning and an accomplished meaning.

The visual content - videos and images - with different communication logics are privileged. *Social networks* differ on the basis of the needs of their interlocutors and communication strategies, which is why even the contents must be processed on different channels and with different formats.

The *Twitter* page offers a synthetic and continuous type of communication, suitable for provoking and stimulating reflection. The *Facebook* page, on the other hand, prefers a relational communication made explicit by *likes*, *comments* and *shares*. The production of content is not a foregone conclusion, it requires constant listening to the needs and interests of users and monitoring their communication actions. In *social networks*, it will not be the quantity of messages that will ensure good communication, but the regularity of sharing, the quality of the content and the ability to know how to involve users in the life of the institution.

«*A profound reflection helps us to discover the relationship existing between events that at first sight seem unrelated to each other, to evaluate, to analyze the messages. This means that thoughtful and relevant opinions can be shared,*

Giovanni, *Vite digitali. Comportamenti umani e sfide della Rete*. Bologna EDB 2020, pp. 31-40.

<sup>74</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 55ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2021). «*Vieni e vedi*» (GV 1,46) *Comunicare incontrando le persone dove e come sono*, Città del Vaticano.



giving rise to authentic shared knowledge. For this, it is necessary to create a propitious environment, almost a sort of ecosystem that knows how to balance silence, words, images and sounds. [...] Social networks can help today's man to live moments of reflection and authentic questioning, to find spaces for silence, opportunities for prayer, meditation or sharing the Word of God. In the essentiality of short messages, often not longer than a biblical verse, profound thoughts can be expressed if each one does not neglect to cultivate one's own interiority».<sup>75</sup>

## 4.2 - THE CONVICTIONS OF THE FMA INSTITUTE

The FMA Institute has assumed communication as a mission in digital spaces with clear educommunicative convictions.

Websites, *social networks*, e-mails, text messages, *chats* are fully human forms of communication, they are the agora of education and evangelization, a large digital courtyard to be part of with the clear identity of Salesian consecrated women. Social networks are the space for interaction, for dialogue with *divergent thinking*, a new way of sharing stories and experiences. They are the environment for the production and use of information and can be a place for personal and institutional formation and in-depth study.

To assume these beliefs, it is necessary to develop media skills for digital citizenship education oriented towards a critical and responsible awareness of one's actions, the duty to care for others, the principle of confidentiality and respect for *privacy*. It is essential to implement an educational action facilitated by the authorship of participatory culture on the net, capable of educating along the way.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all peoples” (Mk, 28, 19-20). With these convictions, the FMA take on the educommunicative commitment of the *Proclamation* in the *social networks*, as a performing force of society, culture, and the person in the heart of the contemporary world.

<sup>75</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI per la 46ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2012). *Silenzio e Parola: cammino di evangelizzazione*, Città del Vaticano.

Are we, today, capable  
of walking with the existential pilgrim,  
as Jesus walked with those of Emmaus,  
warming the heart,  
making them find the Lord?

Are we capable  
of communicating the face of a Church  
which is the “home” for everyone?

Are we capable of becoming companions  
until the encounter with Christ?

## 4.3 - THE INSTITUTIONAL CRITERIA FOR LIVING IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

The institutional criteria are indications of a charismatic and operational nature that guide us to be a conscious presence in *social networks*, to learn to share and relate evangelically and ethically while safeguarding the reliability of the identity and mission of the FMA Institute.

### 4.3.1 - Charismatic criteria

Have your gaze fixed on Jesus Christ present in the world. Communicate him as Good News.

Support the vision and mission of the FMA,<sup>76</sup> Institute, sharing its life, faith, culture, experiences, pastoral and missionary action.

<sup>76</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Piano di Comunicazione Istituzionale delle Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Roma VICIS Srl, 2017.

- Promote, in cyberspace, the knowledge and appropriation of the Salesian charism, the culture of encounter and the culture of vocations.
- While being online put one's communication and professional skills, based on Christian ethics, at the service of the common good.
- Accept divergent thinking, respecting the opinions of others, of cultures and religions.
- Be in constant listening to the expectations of the interlocutors, especially young people.
- Attribute to the messages meaning and beauty, consistency and testimony of life.

#### ● 4.3.2 - Operating criteria

- Know and proceed in accordance with the legal regulations of your country regarding the information to be published on websites and social networks.
- Find out about the legal regulations for the use of photos and images, whether they accompany the text or an explanation video.
- Do not publish explicit or implicit political statements without an appropriate critical evaluation in agreement with the competent authorities of the FMA Institute.
- Publish contents and / or opinions that express the values of the Gospel and the charism of the FMA Institute.
- Know the language, the grammar of each social network and the target to which it is addressed.
- Use clear, short and simple language.
- Define the linguistic style, take care of words to overcome differences,

overcome prejudices and break down the walls of misunderstanding.<sup>77</sup>

- Be capable of textual and synthetic criticism.
- Ensure the technical and content quality of what is published (text, images, audio, video).
- Choose images and sounds (video and audio) that respond to the communicative intention of the FMA Institute's production.
- Select content (messages, images and videos) that are consistent with the principles, image and identity of the FMA Institute.
- Preserve copyright: take care to cite the source every time an author's text is published.
- Check the sources and accuracy of information before sharing and disseminating content.
- Ensure the correctness of the content and respect for the dignity of the person and human rights, before publishing.
- Think before posting content on personal and institutional websites and social networks.
- Pay the utmost attention to the publication of photos, videos and audio on *social media*, in particular when people are involved, especially minors, obtaining authorizations first.
- Publish information on social networks in accordance with the Editorial Plan for Information of the Province / Vice Province.

<sup>77</sup> Il Manifesto della comunicazione non ostile e inclusiva. Cf. CREMIT (Centro di Ricerca sull'Educazione ai Media all'Innovazione e alla Tecnologia) <https://www.crem.it/parole-ostili/> data di accesso novembre 2020.



● Monitor the flow of information on your own *social network*. The *overload information*<sup>78</sup> non concede all'utente il tempo di riflettere, la giusta appropriazione e il discernimento, non favorisce la percezione del reale, distrae l'attenzione dal focus, può portare all'anestesia delle coscienze.

● Keep in mind that any pornographic content is morally unacceptable and its publication is prohibited.

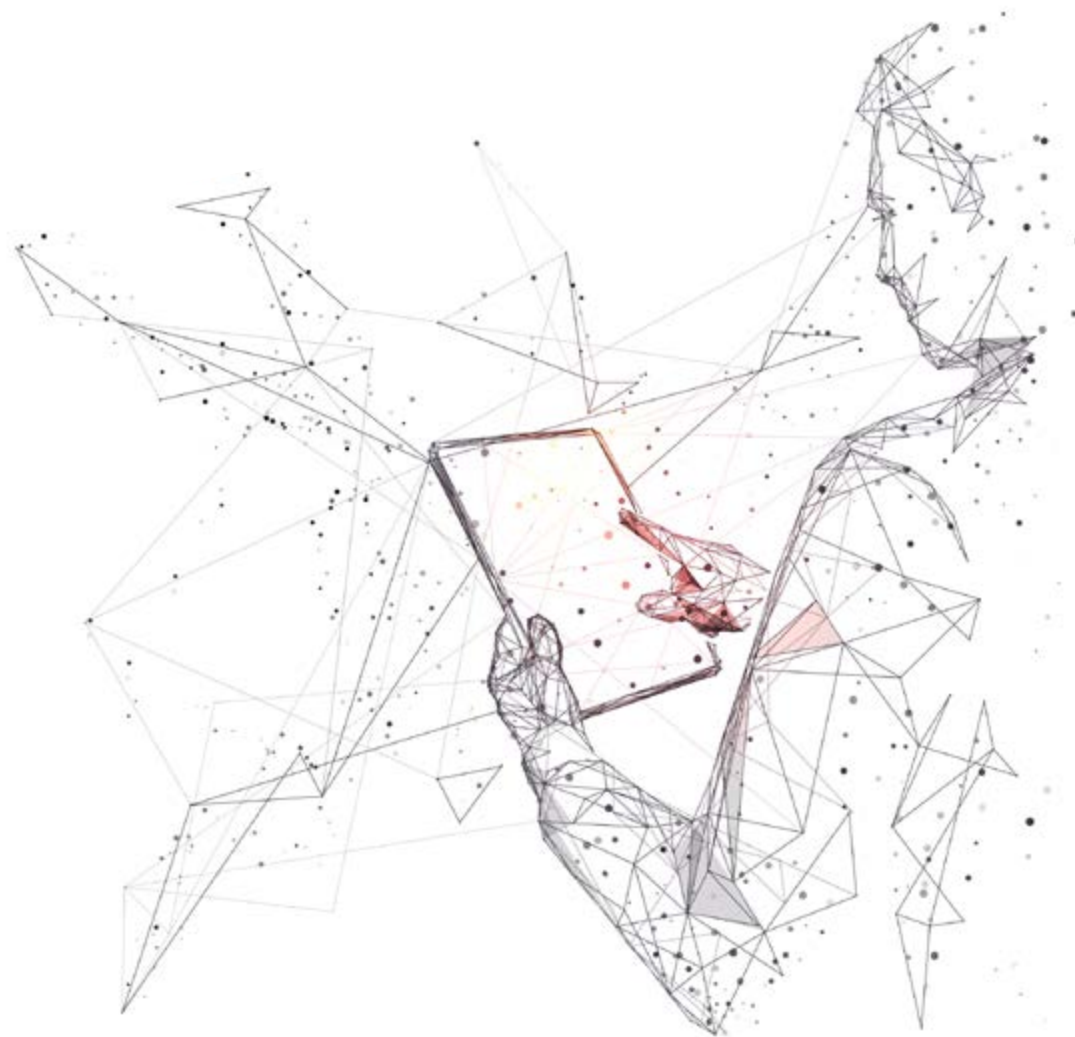
● Do not post personal problems, especially on *Facebook* diary and the like.

● Remain strangers to ironic messages and language, which easily ignite tempers and create controversy.

● Be aware that the personal social profile expresses belonging to the FMA Institute.

The institutional and charismatic criteria presented do not exhaust the complexity of digital environments in continuous transformation, with their challenges and opportunities. It is important to be vigilant, to be aware and to act according to the indications of the FMA Institute and according to the legislative regulations on the social networks of the various countries, to collaborate in creating a society committed to ethically building relationships and connections of communion and respect for people, according to the evangelical and charismatic values.

<sup>78</sup> "Il sovraccarico cognitivo, meglio conosciuto come *Information overload* (inglese), si verifica quando si ricevono troppe informazioni per riuscire a prendere una decisione o sceglierne una specifica sulla quale focalizzare l'attenzione". *Affrontare l'information overload*, una riflessione sulle patologie da eccesso di informazione di Salarelli Alberto: <https://bollettino.aib.it/article/view/7138/6729>, data di accesso novembre 2020.







# **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF THE FMA**

**“To build a true citizenship also online”**

(Pope Francis)<sup>79</sup>

«The *Internet* can foster the growth of a healthy society that is open to sharing. The Internet is at the service of formation processes which are the fertile ground on which to germinate a mature, responsible and creative digital citizenship». <sup>80</sup>

Social networks generate in people's lives a series of fundamental issues concerning the opportunities and risks associated with access, with privacy and confidentiality, with security and rights and duties. There are many international initiatives<sup>81</sup> on the protection of human rights in the digital age.

As Institute of the FMA we are urged to be responsible and aware, to be attentive to the National and International Legislation on the rights and duties on the Internet and on the guidelines of the Church.

## 5.1 - PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The dignity of the person and the right to privacy are also relevant on the web and on *social networks*.

- Take care of the image of the FMA Institute in front of public opinion.
- Respect the criteria expressed by the FMA Institute and/or by the Province/ Vice Province on what can be public and/or private on *social networks*.
- Keep the information of the FMA Institute and/or of the Province/ Vice Province, which is part of the protected institutional data, and do not publish without the necessary authorizations.
- Be careful not to release personal information, especially for the availability of data by search engines. On the *web*, the exploitation of

<sup>79</sup> Cf. GISOTTI Alessandro, *Il Decalogo del buon comunicatore secondo Papa Francesco*. Torino, ELLEDICI 2016, p. 40.

<sup>80</sup> *Ivi*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>81</sup> Il Rapporto ONU di Frank La Rue del 2011 alla “Dichiarazione africana sui diritti e le libertà di Internet” approvata al Forum di Nairobi nel 2013; il Marco Civile, la legge statale brasiliana del 2014 traduce nel mondo *online* i principi costituzionali in tema di rete e di partecipazione; la “Dichiarazione preliminare dei diritti umani digitali” - Parigi, 2014; la “Dichiarazione dei diritti in Internet” approvata dal Parlamento italiano nel 2015, ecc.

data for multiple purposes could also be hidden behind the offer of a free service.

- Pay attention to the custody and confidentiality of personal and institutional *passwords*. Institutional *passwords* should not be communicated or disseminated without appropriate authorization.
- All members and collaborators of the Institution are morally and legally responsible, personally, for their actions on personal and institutional *social networks*.
- “Agree with the Provincial or the Superior of the Vice Province before giving an interview, participating in radio or television broadcasts”.<sup>82</sup>
- Manage a *social network* as an information platform, using the Trademark/Logotype of the Province/Vice Province, follow the rules of use and application of the Trademark/Logotype of the FMA Institute.<sup>83</sup>
- Know accurately the *privacy* and confidentiality regulations of the *social network*.
- Ensure the respect and *privacy*<sup>84</sup> of all in social networks.
- Before creating a *social* profile, read the contractual terms and conditions of the relevant *social network*.
- Check the types of *privacy* of the profiles created: who can contact, who can read what you write, who can comment on pages, what rights users have.
- Know and evaluate the consequences of entering personal data online, when subscribing to *websites, social networks, mailing lists, etc.*,

<sup>82</sup> Cf. ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, R 60 bis.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. ISTITUTO FMA, *Manuale di Comunicazione Visiva*. Roma, VICIS Srl 2019.

<sup>84</sup> Sulla *privacy* si suggerisce di conoscere le legislazioni internazionali e dei propri contesti di appartenenza.

because the data could be recorded by all the contacts and members of the groups to which it is adhered, reworked and disseminated, even after many years.

- Be careful not to release personal information without careful analysis.
- Take care of the photo of the personal *social profile*, so that it expresses consistency with the personal and institutional identity.
- It is not allowed to publish *online* photos of members of the Institution - educating community, young people - and to *tag*,<sup>85</sup> if you do not have the consent and legal authorization of the persons involved.
- Watch out for false profiles that may be present on social networks.


## 5.2 - RIGHT AND DUTIES


- Know and respect *copyrights*<sup>86</sup> regarding the publication on websites and social networks of texts, photos, images, music, video clips, without having the Author's license and / or permission.
- You must have the permission and/or legal authorization of the parents and/or guardians of children and adolescents, before publishing their images and photos on websites and social, personal and institutional networks.

<sup>85</sup> “Il termine *taggare* (in italiano “etichettare” ed è utilizzato nell’ambito dei *Social Network*) è la possibilità di associare un profilo linkabile ad un’immagine oppure un video postati su *Facebook*, antepoendo al nome della persona che si vuole menzionare il simbolo della chiocciola “@”: basterà cliccare sulla foto in corrispondenza del *tag* per risalire al profilo della persona” (<https://www.sapere.it/> data di accesso luglio 2020).

<sup>86</sup> «La disponibilità di contenuti nella Rete non rende lecito qualsiasi loro uso, anche quello commerciale vero e proprio. I *diritti «moralì»* (paternità, integrità e pubblicazione) comprendono l’obbligo di citare sempre l’Autore e il rispetto della sua volontà circa la pubblicazione o meno di quell’immagine. I *diritti «patrimoniali»* consistono nel diritto esclusivo di utilizzare economicamente l’opera in ogni forma e modo (riproduzione, esecuzione, diffusione e distribuzione), nei limiti fissati dalla legge». Cf. PARTIPILO Michele, *La deontologia del giornalista ai tempi dell’informazione digitale*, Centro di Documentazione Giornalistica, Roma 2018.

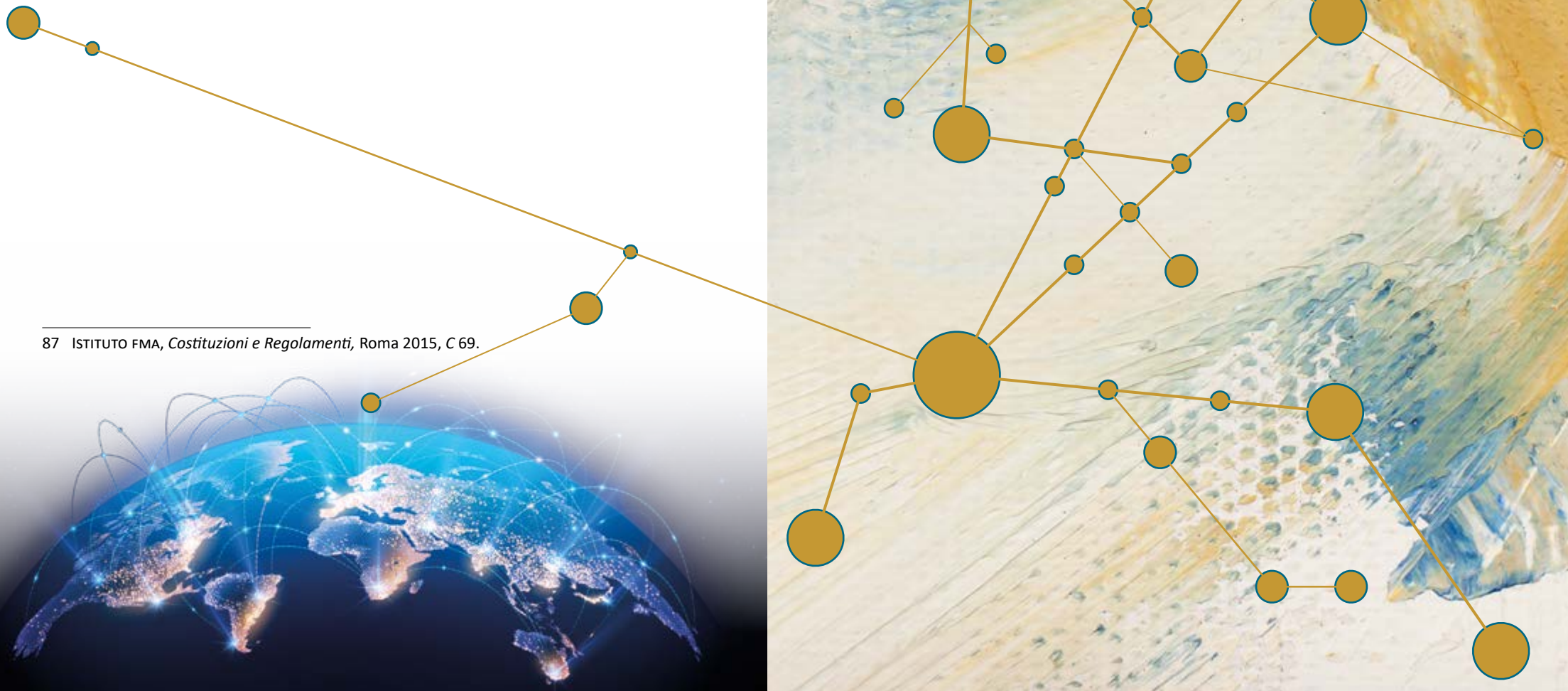


 You cannot take pictures from your personal and institutional Facebook profile, or publish them, without having made a request to the interested parties.

 You can take pictures of *institutional* people in public places or at public events and then disseminate them, preserving their image and reputation.

The presentation of *rights and duties* on the Internet does not exhaust the breadth of the argument on this issue. The intention is also to call to responsibility the FMA, who as educators and companions of the young, are called to inhabit the digital world with the awareness of the importance of knowing the legislative and institutional regulations regarding social networks, in order to respond as Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello to the mission of helping young people to be «*good Christians and honest citizens*»<sup>87</sup> in contemporary society.

<sup>87</sup> ISTITUTO FMA, *Costituzioni e Regolamenti*, Roma 2015, C 69.







## CONCLUSION

The intention of the Guidelines was to make possible a broad conversation in the communities on the impact of the culture of communication and its impact on the Institution and on the person throughout the formation itinerary.

Reflection on the fundamental issues concerning social networks pushes the FMA Institute to set out on an ever more dynamic path in step with the times. It was not possible to exhaust such a broad and complex topic, such as that of the Formation of the FMA in dialogue with the world of communication and *social networks*.

Now is the time for evangelical discernment to ask questions of meaning and to grasp the anthropological and ethical consequences of the FMA presence in digital environments.

The accompaniment of young people in formation requires a change of mentality, a willingness to unlearn so as «to learn with the generation of *digital natives*, so that a clear and solid identity can mature».<sup>88</sup>

The appeal is, therefore, to the FMA and to all those who have a responsibility in the mission of accompanying young people to fulfill God's plan for them.

This unprecedented time is an “invitation to hope, which speaks to us of a reality deeply rooted in the human being. It speaks to us of a thirst, of an aspiration, of a yearning for fullness, of measuring oneself with what fills the heart and elevates the spirit towards truth, goodness and beauty”.<sup>89</sup> We are called to walk in hope to create new educational processes in the digital world with creativity and daring, which is now the norm of everyday of existence.

In the horizon of God, in the heart of contemporaneity, *what communication challenges and impacts on formation still need to be redefined?*

<sup>88</sup> ZANOTTI Carlo Maria, *Vocazione e connessione digitale. Sfide e opportunità formative*, in *La vita consacrata e il nuovo mondo ambiente digitale*, (a cura di Schmucki Albert e Forlani Donatella), Bologna EDB 2015, p. 219.

<sup>89</sup> PAPA FRANCESCO, Enciclica *Fratelli tutti. Sulla fraternità e l'amicizia sociale*, Brescia Editrice Morcelliana Scholé 2020, p. 52.



*"Do not be afraid of becoming citizens of the digital environment. The attention and presence of the Church in the world of communication is important, to dialogue with the man of today and bring him to an encounter with Christ: a Church, [an Institute] that accompanies the journey knows how to set out with everyone.*

*In this context, the revolution of communication and formation is a great and exciting challenge, which requires fresh energy and a new imagination to transmit the beauty of God to others.*

*Let our communication be scented oil for pain and good wine for happiness.*

*Let our brightness come from our becoming neighbor to whom we meet wounded along the way, with love, with tenderness".<sup>90</sup>*

<sup>90</sup> Messaggio del Santo Padre Francesco per la 58ª Giornata Mondiale delle Comunicazioni Sociali (2014). *Comunicazione al servizio di un'autentica cultura dell'incontro*, Città del Vaticano.





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<b>PREFACE</b>	p. 5
<b>ON THE WAY</b>	p. 9
<b>I - THE CONTEMPORARY EDUCOMMUNICATIVE SCENARIO</b>	p. 13
<b>II - THE SALESIAN CHARISMATIC COMMUNICATION ROOT</b>	p. 19
<b>III - THE CHALLENGES AND IMPACTS OF COMMUNICATION ON FORMATION</b>	p. 25
3.1 - THE COMPLEXITY OF THE WORLD OF COMMUNICATION	p. 28
3.2 - THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS	p. 30
3.3 - INTERPELLATIONS TO CONSECRATED LIFE	p. 33
3.4 - THE FORMATIVE ATTENTIONS OF THE FMA INSTITUTE	p. 36
<b>IV - THE MISSION OF THE FMA INSTITUTE IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS</b>	p. 45
4.1 - THE MISSION IN THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM	p. 48
4.1.1 - WHY BE PART OF THE SOCIAL NETWORKS	
4.1.2 - HOW TO BE PART OF THE SOCIAL NETWORKS	
▪ IDENTITY AND INSTITUTIONAL AWARENESS	
▪ COMMUNITIES AND AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS	
▪ KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	
4.1.3 - WHAT CONTENTS TO COMMUNICATE	
4.2 - THE CONVICTIONS OF THE FMA INSTITUTE	p. 56

4.3 - THE CRITERIA FOR LIVING  
IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

p. 57

4.3.1 CHARISMATIC CRITERIA

4.3.2 OPERATING CRITERIA

## V - DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP: DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF THE FMA

p. 63

5.1 - PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

p. 65

5.2 - RIGHTS AND DUTIES

p. 67

## CONCLUSION

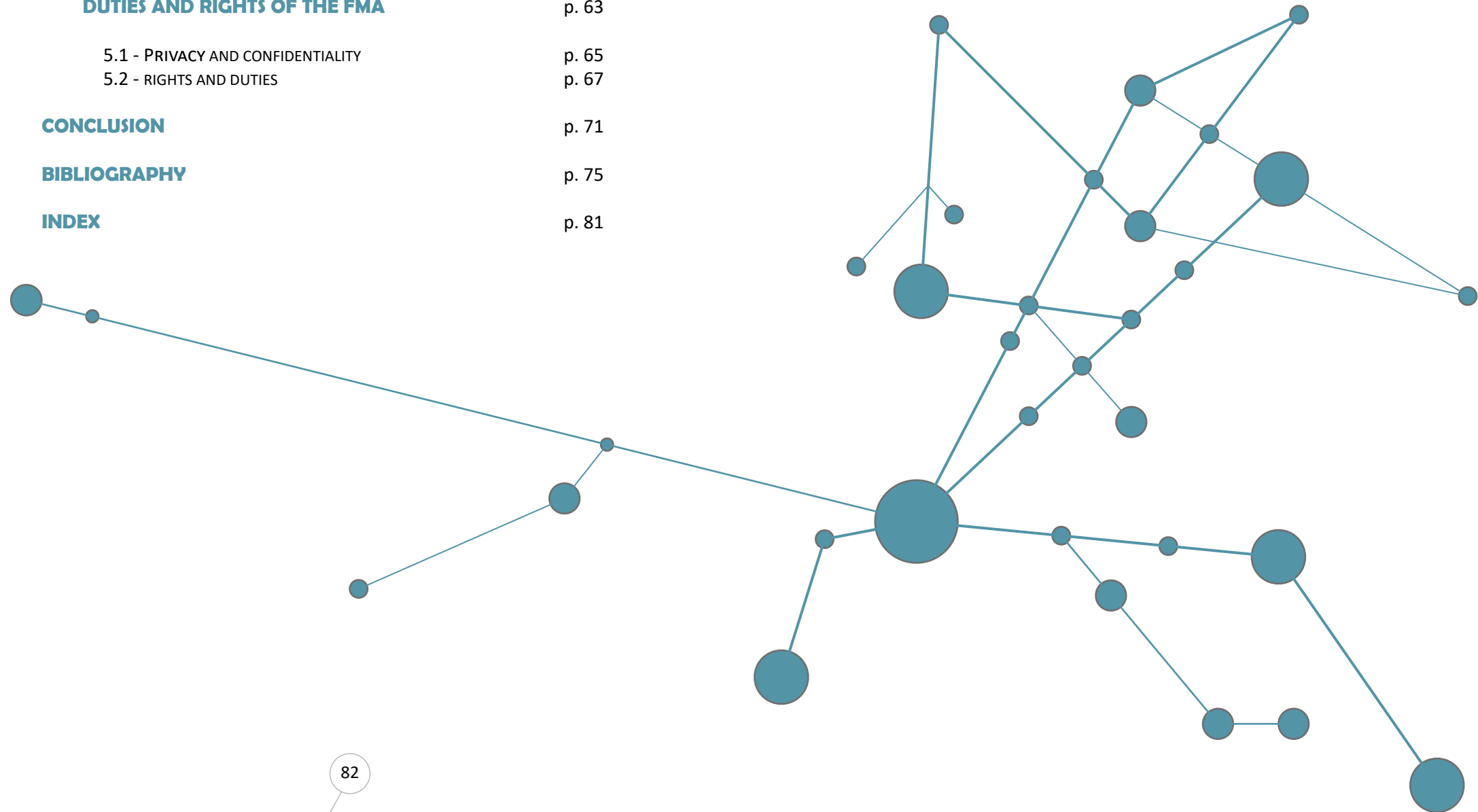
p. 71

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

p. 75

## INDEX

p. 81



## NOTE

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This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.



**Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice**  
*Salesiane di Don Bosco*