

General Chapter 25

GC25 (2002): Could also be called the Chapter of Communication. Views social communication as a 'vital new space where young people gather' (#47).

A reading of the Chapter from the **point of view of communication** helps us see various aspects:

- The authentic image of the community: witness of fraternal life that becomes a response to the profound need of the young for communication (#7)
- Interpersonal relations in the community (# 13-15)
- Communicative presence with the young and their environment (# 37-48)
- Communication in society – new needs of the mission: acting in defence and on behalf of the young (# 103, 140)
- Communication in institutional relationships at province and world level (# 111, 159)

AND WHERE TO NOW?

The newest thrust emerging from the General Council and the Department for Social Communications is that of a **SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION**, indeed an **ECOSYSTEM**. And while the term 'Media Education' is the one in most common use at school and other levels, the term 'educommunication' is being used with greater frequency.

(Go to the [SSSC document](http://www.sdb.org) at the www.sdb.org website: Departments-Social Communication-Documents).

THEORY IN THE SOCIAL COMMUNICATION FORMATION PLAN

THEORY/CONTENT & ANALYSIS

Theory of communication

- theory, forms, types, models, structures

History of communication

- communication through the ages; inventions

Science of communication

- philosophy, psychology, culture, economy, politics of social communication, educommunication.

Christian communication

- communication and the history of salvation
- communication and the church: Fathers, documents, World Day of Communication, ethics, catechetics, liturgy, spirituality

Salesian communication

- communication and salesian charism: Don Bosco, Master of Communication, strategies, traditions, constitutions & regulations, **GC21-25**, **letters of Rectors Major**, **communication in community and Salesian works**, 'good day/night', mortuary letters, youth language today

Communication and global reality

- UNESCO on communication: McBride Report, information and technology, digital divide, media education, media for peace etc.

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COMMUNICATION AND THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

One of a series of brief formation resources for Salesians. The aim is to provide pointers for further reading and study.



All references can be found in English translation

The Church

We begin by looking at the references to communication in more recent times within the Universal Church. Each of these texts is available in English.

* *Inter Mirifica* (1963): the decree of Vat II on Social Communication.

* *Communio et Progressio* (1971): a pastoral instruction on SC requested by the Council Fathers.

* *Guidelines on the instruments of Social Communication—for future priests* (1986): Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education.



* *Criteria for ecumenical and interreligious collaboration in Social Communication* (1989): a step forward in understanding the need for cooperation with others beyond the Catholic Church.

* *Pornography and violence in the means of communication* (1989): a pastoral response to a significant educational problem worldwide.

* *Aetatis Novae* (1992): to commemorate 20th anniversary of *Communio et Progressio*. Note that it suggests elements for pastoral planning.

* Various papal messages on the annual World Day of Communications—most recently on the significance of the Internet.

Key Elements from General Chapters 21-23

GC21 (1978): a new perspective—social communication as an alternative school. GC21 looked at things from the following perspectives:

1. Important cultural dimension of SC (#148)
2. Need for formation for SC (#152)
3. Central consultative body to be set up (#153)
4. Specific activities in SC—giving impetus to radio, tv, publishing etc.
5. The beginnings of province-level organization.

GC22 (1984): Structural reform of SC. This was the Chapter that set up a Department of SC at Central level.

GC23 (1990): The evangelizing capacity of the Salesian Community as a test of social communication. To evangelize and to educate is to communicate. The Preventive System has characteristic elements of communication. Assistance is a form of educative communication. GC 23 offered a number of challenges to the Salesian community with regard to social communication:

- the emergence of a global culture.
- new multi-media channels of communication. (and the importance of mass media)
- the need for everyone to work together to confront the needs of young people in being able to communicate with them.

General Chapter 24

GC24 (1996): A new departure. The third part of the Acts of this Chapter, called 'Towards the future' dedicates sections 128-137 to communication. This Chapter presented three key points with regard to communication:

1. Principally the task of the adult educator and calls for harmony and unity (the tendency within contemporary times is fragmentation, mass communication included).
2. A re-reading of the complex Salesian commitment in the light of communication: evangelization, education, Preventive System
3. Organizing communication calls on the different levels of the life of the Salesian Community, e.g. to consider the quality of its communication.

□ Letters of the Rector Majors:

• 1977 – AGC 287 (p. 3-33):
Don Luigi Ricceri: **"Family News"** - On Salesian information, commemorating the centenary of the Salesian Bulletin.

• 1981 – AGC 302 (p. 3-30):
Don Egidio Viganò: **"Social Communication challenges us"**. SC in the mission, as a new presence. Formation for SC. Promoting information.

• 2000 - AGC 370, (p. 3-44):
Don Juan Vecchi: **"Communication in the Salesian mission"**.