

Part 4: Crises calls for dialogue

In Part 3, we looked at God's abiding presence and how Salesian ministry evolved out of St. John Bosco's ability to be present to the young, especially those with significant needs. In this next section, we will look to dialogue as an essential during crisis.

Crises shakes us up making it difficult for us to talk about the experience so long as we are in the storm. Perhaps it could be likened to the effect of coming off a difficult roller coaster ride. With our heads spinning and our stomachs turning, we need time to regain our bearing and are not inclined to talk at that moment.

Nevertheless, in the midst of a crisis, our response to dialogue is both essential and needed. Many young people find it difficult to articulate how the pandemic disrupts their lives and they need people to pull it out of them. The origin of the Salesian mission evolved out of an encounter between St. John Bosco and a young migrant who was living off the streets. By meeting the boy in his own circumstance and asking a few questions in a conversation, the young man found his voice, expressed his needs, and was able to discover his own destiny.

But here's the challenge, how do you draw young people to come out of themselves during a crisis when adults are facing their own set of pressures in the pandemic. Again, the course of dialogue needs to be pursued, whether it be a support system or seeking professional help. For either youth or adult, the starting point begins with dialogue, which engages the "we," so that together, we can find what is needed to move forward.

Question:

1. *How can you be more intentional with the qualities of presence and dialogue during the times we live in?*