

**In attention of Msgr Rolf E. Buschhausen,
president of Hilfsaktion für den Fernen Nächsten**

I. Actual situation

The main purpose of Giovanni Bosco Foundation in Constanta is to help people, especially young people and children who are in need, through education, social and moral assistance, training and professional qualification in order to help them reintegrate into society. Our entire educational work focuses on the preventive system, considering that it is easier to prevent, by human, intellectual and professional formation, than to intervene afterwards to correct a youth deviant behaviour. We do all these through:

1. Family Houses - where 7 children aged 8-18 years live. Some of them come from very disturbed families, with serious problems, others live in an abject poverty, or face severe violence problems. There are often cases of broken families, where children suffer because of their parents' behaviour, which makes them inconstant. Some parents face problems which make them abandon their children (some are alcoholics, others were arrested after violating the laws or there are cases when parents go abroad to work and never come back). We offer these children education, support and mostly affection, in order to live and develop in a caring and safe environment and then to integrate in the society and to handle well life situations.



2. A Social Boarding House (Maria House) we opened last year through which we offer support for children and young people who come from villages or small towns nearby Constanta. We refer here to those who finish the 8th grade (the secondary school) and do not have the possibility to go to high school, have to remain in their villages and, in the best cases, they help their parents in working the land. This situation occurs because in their villages, they do not have high schools and/or because the families do not have the necessary financial means (appropriate cloths, food, school materials, transportation from their village/ town to Constanta and back or finding a place where children could stay during the week, etc.) to



come and enrol them in high schools in Constanta. We offer our help to those who want to continue their studies, this way we contribute to their professional formation, to the improvement of their life situation and the economic status of children and young people who come from rural areas and we help prevent the school abandon. The ones who finish high school will have much more opportunities of finding a job, which will assure them a decent life and the minimum necessary financial means.

3. A Day Centre who offers help through: school tutoring, monthly meetings for young people, indoor and outdoor activities, leisure activities such as football, volleyball, basketball, chess, games, festivities on different occasions (Christmas, Easter, Children's Day, Autumn Holidays, etc.), cultural visits and inter-ethnic exchanges.



Through the Day Centre, we offer children who have an increased risk of dropping out the school or who have gaps in learning, the possibility to receive support in doing their homework by participating in an *After School program*. We offered this program to about 50 children in the school year 2016-2017. This number grew up to approximately 90 children in the school year 2017-2018. This year (meaning in September, when the school year started in Romania), we received around 92 enrolments.



Since September 2017 we also initiated a parental education program called *the Parents' School* for the parents of the children who participate in the activities of the Day Centre. Throughout the year, we had a series of meetings, where we enjoyed the presence of a large number of interested parents. Courses take place on a monthly basis and among the topics covered are "Effective Communication", "Developing Personal Autonomy Skills", "Preventive System".

4. The typical Salesian **Oratory** activities which are free and provided to overall about 200 children are an important part of our work, too. For instance, during the *Summer Together program* that we have organized during the following period 25.06-20.07.2018, 110 young animators helped us with all the activities. During the year, they cannot come all at a time, but by rotation they come and participate in the activities and events we organize.



Children and young people are organized in groups that give them the opportunity to stay together and to receive a human and Christian formation, respecting every member from any ethnic community or religion. The groups are structured according to the age of the children and are coordinated by young volunteers.

5. **A Professional Training Centre** where since 1999 we have organized qualification, requalification, specialization courses in informatics and social areas, recognized nationally and/or internationally. The number of graduates since the year the activity started until today is around 2.360 persons. During this time, the centre has been providing the following IT courses: operating PC, programming using Java, IT Essentials, Web design, PC Graphics, ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence), Equal Skills, Autodesk (AutoCAD, Inventor, 3DS Max Design). Additionally, we organized some personal development courses such as Socio-educative animator, Trainer (and other courses for social workers).



Children, young people, employed and unemployed people or other persons in need register in our courses in order to learn new skills or improve those that they already have, in order to improve the quality of their life (through a chance in the job market). Last year (September 2017-August 2018) we organized 12 course with 112 participants.

II. Future perspectives

Starting this autumn, we want to open a new service that is a *Vocational Counselling program*, through which we aim to help young people discover their skills, personality, attitudes, emotions, behaviours, interests, values and to reduce the number of young people who decide not to continue training after the completion of the compulsory education.



Working with young people made us realize that they face difficulties in choosing a professional activity or a job, which can bring them satisfactions and for which they have the proper skills. This happens because they do not have enough information and because of the low interest of the

local authorities, schools and social environment in developing programs to support the young identifying their own skills, choosing the right schools or the qualification they want to obtain. We observed also an insufficient concern for making the most of their opportunities in order to develop their personal identity.

First, we will address to children that live in our Family Houses, children who benefit from the services we offer through the Day Centre and children who come to the After School program. Another target group we thought of are the volunteers who participate in our activities.

The vocational counselling services will be developed mostly for children that finish the secondary school (7 and 8 grade) in order to help them choose the right high school and children that are about to finish high school (11 and 12 grade) in order to help them choose the right university or other kind of training and their future job domain.



The main result that could be reached though the development of our vocational counselling services is to help participants to become aware of their skills, to find out what they have to improve, to find the area that is the most adequate for them in order to achieve a performance level close to the ideal, responding this way to labour market's needs.

In the next two or three years, we intend to open a *Vocational School* for those who after finishing the secondary school, do not want or cannot go to a theoretical high school. There are young persons that do not have sufficient skills or financial means in order to follow a theoretical specialization in high school, then go to a university and only after get a job. For these persons we would like to offer a new perspective – a vocational school after which they can obtain a profession (welder, electrician, plumber, etc.) in a demanded domain on the labour market. This future project we have in mind requires a lot of efforts, starting with the building of the school, the equipment needed, the qualified human resources, the study materials, etc., but most of all requires big amounts of money. That is why we have to plan it well and to start looking for funds.

Thank you very much for all your support. Greetings from Constanta!