**2022 DOUBLE SALESIAN JUBILEE**

**VIDEO TEXT**

**BARRY R. STRONG, OSFS**

Greetings to all of you and happy feast of St. Francis de Sales!

With this video addressed to all confreres, I am happy to formally announce the beginning of our 2022 Double Salesian Jubilee: the 400th anniversary of the death of St. Francis de Sales and the 450th anniversary of the birth of St. Jane de Chantal. Our jubilee year runs from 23 January 2022 through 24 January 2023.

As you know, the 20th General Chapter, which took place in Annecy in July 2018, approved an exhortation to the congregation about the celebration. This exhortation recommends:

That our whole Oblate community prepare and celebrate this double jubilee as a special opportunity to know more deeply and to incarnate the teachings of both St. Francis de Sales as our principal patron and St. Jane Frances de Chantal as our secondary patron. […] The goal of the celebration of the double jubilee is a renewal of our Salesian spiritual life and to benefit of this opportunity to make both saints more familiar to the world, in the fulfillment of one of the first missions of the congregation: “living and spreading Salesian doctrine” (Constitution 11).

Therefore, the 2022 Double Salesian Jubilee may be seen as having three practical pillars: (1) to increase knowledge and love of St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane Frances de Chantal; (2) to encourage imploring their intercession; and (3) to imitate their virtues and devotion. Every Oblate province or region, parish, institution, school, program, and local community is asked to plan to observe the Jubilee Year in its own way.

Currently there are approximately 450 Oblates of St. Francis de Sales serving the needs of church and society in 18 countries. This means our jubilee year will be marked by what St. Francis de Sales called “unidiversity.” Francis promoted holding the two values of unity and diversity in simultaneous creative tension, not in opposition to each other but in their necessary and fruitful complementarity. Our unity blesses our diversity with singular purpose; our diversity gives creative expression to our unity. The same holds true as we explore different ways to celebrate this jubilee year together.

Preparing and launching these observances will prioritize the collaboration and participation of our lay colleagues in the various ministries in which we are engaged. Programs will have an outward focus and take into account the spiritual needs and hungers of the people of God and how the spiritual wisdom of Saints Francis and Jane speak to these needs and hungers. As our Founder, Blessed Louis Brisson, told the first Oblates in the Chapter of 13 December 1892—"We are not religious for ourselves, but for the Church, in order to manifest even more the action of the Savior, His light, and His graces.”

I wish to extend my profound gratitude to the International Commission for Salesian Studies which took the lead in providing direction for the celebration of the Double Salesian Jubilee. They are Oblate Fathers Joseph Chorpenning, Herbert Winklehner, and Jean-Luc Leroux.

During this jubilee year, we also await a special contribution from Pope Francis. Last year, the Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco, the Superior General of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, and I wrote a joint letter to Pope Francis, on behalf of all Salesian institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, petitioning an Apostolic Letter to mark the event. The Vatican Secretariat of State replied that His Holiness intends to welcome our request positively and imparts his Apostolic Blessing to all those who are inspired by St. Francis de Sales, encouraging them to continue their evangelical witness with missionary ardor and zeal for souls.

Clearly we have much to celebrate!

May God bless us, keep us faithful to our mission and ministry, and empower us to give Salesian spirituality and teaching ever fresh and creative expression in the church and society of our day.

Live Jesus!