



**Instituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice**  
Salesiane di Don Bosco  
Inspectoria Sagrado Corazón - ECU  
Quito - Ecuador



**Ser misioneros en todo lugar**

"Anda y haz tú lo mismo" (Lc. 10.37)  
Fiesta de la Gratiud Mundial 2026  
HIJAS DE MARÍA AUXILIADORA

## History of Sacred Heart Province ECU

### Origins of the Province

The Salesians of Don Bosco arrived in Quito on 30 January 1888, and took over the management of the "Catholic Protectorate", later called "*Salesian Workshops of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*" which came to be highly esteemed by the authorities.

Years later, during the presidency of the liberal government of Eloy Alfaro, the SDB were victims of a persecution that ended with their painful expulsion from the Country on 23 August 1896. They returned only in 1898.

While working in Quito, the SDBs never stopped thinking about the missions of the East. In a providential response, on 7 August 1891, Pope Leo XIII approved the establishment of the four Apostolic Vicariates of the East. The Vicariate of Méndez-Gualaquiza, at the request of President Antonio Flores Jijón, was entrusted to the Salesians.

With the acceptance of the proposal by the Rector Major, Fr. Michael Rua, the preliminary exploration of the Vicariate began until establishing itself in Gualaquiza in February 1894. From the first days, the Salesian Coadjutor, Jacinto Panchieri asked Mother Catherine Daghero to send the FMA to this mission and indicated that a house was already prepared for them.

Subsequently, the fervor of Monsignor James Costamagna had an impact. On 23 July 1902, he arrived as Apostolic Vicar of Méndez and Gualaquiza to assist this abandoned portion, also due to the influence of the Freemasonry prevailing in the Country.

After visiting the Shuar aboriginal centers in August, he realized the need for the FMA in these missions. In one of his conferences, he stated: "A complete evangelization must be preceded by a process of humanization, and this cannot be effective without the help of the FMA." It was then that he asked the Preprovince of Peru to send FMA missionaries to the Apostolic Vicariate of Méndez-Gualaquiza.

On **30 November** 1847, three enthusiastic missionaries from the Preprovince of Peru arrived in Gualaquiza: Sister Teresa Taparello, Sister Rosa Devalle, and Sister Victoria Orihuela. The Visiting Councilor at the time was Sister Angela Cavallo. Amidst the many challenges typical of the early years, they proclaimed the Gospel of Christ and sought to

alleviate the many needs of the Shuar inhabitants. They committed themselves to improving health and education, with particular attention to women, in co-responsibility with the SDB.

**On 15 February 1904**, the Sisters arrived from the port of Callao-Peru: Sister Lavinia Albertini, an Italian; Sister Edelmira Baeza, a Chilean; and the postulants, Sister Elisa Cortez, a Colombian; and Sister Trinidad Cruz, a Chilean. They founded the **"Sacred Heart of Mary" Community in Cuenca**. Its purpose was to support and improve the living conditions of the missionaries in the East by providing food, clothing, and medicine; to act as a bridge of communication with the Superiors; to assist the SDBs; and to form new vocations. The Visiting Councilor during this period was Sister Giovanna Borgna (from 1907 to 1913).

**From 1913 to 1921**, these houses were visited by Sister Decima Rocca, who was also the Superior of the houses in Peru, and from 1921 to 1928 by Sister Carolina Mioletti, Superior of the **Ecuadorian Preprovince** established as such on **8 January 1922**.

**On 2 November 1925**, "Mary Immaculate" community of Macas is founded to assist Shuar children and young people through the boarding school and the elementary school. The founders are: *Sister María Troncatti, Sister Domenica Barale, Suor Carlotta Nieto*. Subsequently, a renowned school was opened where the daughters of the settlers' and Shuar families were integrated.

**On 24 July 1937**, the Preprovince acquires **legal personality**, with the name of **Sociedad de Madres Salesianas**. Starting this year, the new Visiting Councilor is Sister María Bernardini.

- **On 7 March 1941**, the Preprovince of Ecuador **becomes a Province**, counting **13 houses and 124 FMA**.

- **The last Canonical Visit:** the Visiting Councilor, Sister Marta Riccioli visited the Province from 4 August to 19 November 2023.

- **Numerical reality of the Province: "Sacred Heart" Province (ECU)** currently has 141 Sisters distributed across 26 communities: 6 missionaries and 135 Ecuadorians. Of these, 140 have perpetual vows and 1 has temporary vows.

- **Initial formation:**

There is one young woman in the Postulancy.

In **"Saint Joseph" Novitiate** of CINAB (La Ceja, Medellín – Colombia) there is one Novice. The Novice Formator is Sister Bernarda Santamaría Merens.

