



INTOUCH

Dec. 15
2011

USA West Province Newsletter • Building Bridges Between Communities



Dear Brother and Sister Salesians:

Let's go back to the Rector Major's Closing Address for the Team Visit in El Salvador at the end of October. I already presented in this column the first of his four orientations for our Region: the need to return to Don Bosco, identifying his charismatic priority as our own, the evangelization of the young in North, Central, and South America.

Fr. Pascual's second of the four concluding orientations is that our InterAmerica Region cannot live off its glorious past, but

because of the new world and cultural situations, we must formulate and follow clear perspectives for a future just as rich as the past, indeed more. He divides this second orientation into three divisions: the **quality of our religious life**, the **reconfiguration of our presences**, and **religious discipline**.

1. For those of us who are SDB, we recognize that if there is little or only mediocre **quality to our religious life**, or if a Salesian community is not capable of renewing itself, then the work or ministry of that community will inevitably become weaker and weaker, and then die. I leave it to our own reflections to consider if that is not indeed the root cause of our having to leave or close down so many presences in the past, if that is not indeed the root cause of signs of weakness in some of our presences today.
2. The Rector Major then challenges the Region to **reconfigure our presences** in order to create a future that safeguards and frees up the vitality of the Salesian charism. Restructuring should not be seen as just a strategy of survival, trying to prolong at all costs the existence of works that are now neither socially significant, nor pastorally valid, nor vocationally fruitful, nor economically sustainable. The reconfiguration of our works must not only be a decision of administrative management, but part of an authentic process of spiritual and pastoral renewal. It implies a NEW form of Salesian presence, a new form which better responds to the demands of our consecrated life and the needs of the young today. Our Province Organic Plan is only a first step in this direction.
3. The majority of Salesians in our Region do live as faithful disciples of Jesus in the consecrated life. Nonetheless there are some who have failed in **religious discipline**, failed as disciples of the Lord, not living in conformity with the requirements of our Constitutions and Regulations, causing disorder, scandal and negatively impacting both the local and the provincial community. The area of financial transparency and accountability in the spirit of poverty is one such area. However this coming week's audit visit to the Province by PRAESIDIUM will challenge us to discipline ourselves in such a way that no child ever be at risk of misconduct in any Salesian presence again.

As we begin the Christmas Novena these days, we pray and sing that the Lord indeed come and give us HIS perspective for the future, a new heavens, a new earth.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Timothy C. Ploch, SDB
Provincial

Provincial's Calendar

December 2011

- 15 Don Bosco Tech Board Meeting, AM
Salesian HS (Richmond) Members Meeting, PM
- 16 Travel East
- 17 Postnovitiate Curatorium Meeting, Orange, NJ
- 18 Travel West
- 19-21 Praesidium Audit Visit to Don Bosco West
- 22 Provincial Residence Staff Party
- 23-24 Office Days
- 25 Christmas Day Dinner, Berkeley
- 26-29 Personal Days

Pray for Our Sick

Danny Ayala

Salesian High (South) student
brain aneurism

Patricia Lawton

sister of Fr. Tom Prendiville, SDB
stage four cancer

Fr. Richard Presenti, SDB

recovering from surgery

Mr. Wilfrid Rougeau

father of Fr. Marc

Fr. Bob Stein, SDB

congestive heart failure

Bro. Gerald Warner, SDB (SUE)
hospitalized after suffering a stroke

Fr. Frank Moloney concludes his service as Provincial in Australia at the end of this month. After his recent visit to San Francisco he wrote these gracious words about us in his province newsletter. Thanks, Frank!

THE BLESSING OF THE CALIFORNIAN PROVINCE



As I finish my time here in San Francisco, I would like to register my thanks, and the thanks of many members of our Province, to the Western USA Province. As most are aware, Australia once belonged to this Province. Fr Costanzo was our Provincial and Pat McClinden and Louis Liberati did their Practical Training with us. Those days are long past, but there are many similarities in both the achievements and the challenges we face today.

I wish to record the brotherly experience of Salesian welcome and care that I have always had in my many, many stays in this Province. While at the Catholic University of America in Washington, I was a member of this Province, and was always made welcome at Provincial celebrations. I have passed through on my way back and forth to and from the East coast, year after year, between 1999-2005. I have experienced nothing but affection and care. I cannot express my personal gratitude for that strongly enough. But I am not the only one. I know that I will miss some names, as I do not have any record in front of me, but Ian Murdoch, Jack Ayers, Peter Carroll, Elio Capra, Michael Court, Greg Chambers, Frank de Dood, Mika Leilua, Petelo Vito Pau, Peter Rankin, Mosese Tui, Peter Hoang, Taisali Leului, and no doubt others that I have not recalled, have been blessed by a stay of some kind at Berkeley. Well before that, of course, Bill Edwards, Jack Ayers, Kevin O'Mara and John Henry Neale did their Theology at Aptos.

As I close my time as Provincial, I want to record *our* thanks – and especially *my* thanks – to this Province, our mother-Province, that has blessed us so richly. With that prayer, comes the prayer that the Lord will continue to bless all Salesians of the Californian Province, and the mission of the Province to make Don Bosco's presence felt in this challenging part of our Salesian world.

Creating a Vocation Culture

Advent Greetings, Brothers and Sisters!

Please allow me to continue to share thoughts on building a “vocation culture” in our province:

From St. Anthony Messenger Press, *Catholic Update*: September 2008, *Why be a religious today? What does it take?* by Sister Janet Gildea, S.C

Here are some possible answers, outlined from the article:

- 1.) Good physical and mental health
- 2.) Deepening commitment to Jesus Christ
- 3.) Capacity for generous service
- 4.) Ability to live a celibate life
- 5.) Ability to embrace a simple lifestyle



What about Salesian characteristics? Are there any similarities and / or differences?

- 1.) The National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR) and the VISION Vocation Guide annual surveys report an increase in those discerning a call to religious life and priesthood, especially those under 30. *Vocation discernment needs to be an integral part of the faith formation of youth, everywhere.*
- 2.) We also need to encourage and remind parents, uncles, aunts and anyone in family households to assist us in vocation promotion. Parental attitudes toward priesthood and religious life can determine whether or not those life choices make it onto a young person’s radar screen. (They have many options or distractions—temptations.)
- 3.) Take nothing for granted. *Never underestimate your ability to influence a choice. Be not afraid but take courage! To paraphrase Mother Teresa, “It’s not about numbers; it’s about fidelity.” In other words, discipleship is not about nothingness or qualification, it’s about responding to God’s invitation and love.*

Are we asking the right questions to give us good direction for promoting and creating a “vocation culture?” Here are some of my personal reflection that might assist us to ask the right questions:

- 1.) Be visible. Be courageous. Active presence means to be involved and to participate in activities with young people and /or groups. The MOP initiatives, led by Joe Rodriguez and his team and shared in this InTouch, is an example.
- 2.) Invite! You are necessarily important. Delete “It’s Fr. Chinh’s or someone else’s job” attitude. Believe!
- 3.) Be attentive by seeking out vocation possibilities. Get others to help invite vocation.

That is all for now. My hope is to be able to discuss with your community these points and more, as we find ways to invite others, especially young people, to answer the call to serve.

Our Lady of Guadalupe... Pray for us!

Fr. Chinh Nguyen, SDB
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Awakening Vocations through M.O.P.

Multi-media Outreach Program

MISSION STATEMENT

To create and foster awareness of VOCATIONS through a social justice forum that promotes the skills, talents and abilities of our youth.

MAIN GOALS

1. Create an environment that fosters vocations.
2. Discover and encourage the gifts, talents and abilities of the young.
3. Provide the means for the young to encounter Christ through the following:
 - A. Social Justice programs
 - B. Promotion of the Volunteer Program
 - C. Promotion of youth retreats
 - D. Video Productions for the promotion of the above mentioned.

A Hike to Hear the Call

On Thanksgiving weekend the Multi-media Outreach Program (M.O.P.) youth leaders took Confirmation youth on a nature walk to Stoney Point. We started at Savio around 9:00 a.m. with our opening prayer followed by some games to introduce the youth to each other and to introduce the



A brief pause to allow others to catch up

new M.O.P. team. This year our M.O.P. leader is Monica Monge, 18, and her team will be Cristina Mendoza, 17, Omar Martinez, 15, Venus Martinez, 15, and Elizabeth Hernandez, 17. A talk was then given on “Social Justice” and the importance of hearing God’s call to serve others. We then gathered into a small bus and headed to Stoney Point. When we arrived, the day was beautiful, the air was warm and the wind was blowing strong. There was not a cloud in the sky. Everything around us as we walked to the bottom of the mountain reminded us

how wonderful our God is and then Joe Rodriquez pointed up the mountain, reminding us that we were here to do some hiking. Some of the youth and adults were not sure at this point if they were going to be able to do it, but we all continued walking until we found a spot to sit. There we took a moment to listen to Mrs. Diane Del La Torre sharing a scripture from the



Encountering difficult terrain, boys would extend the rope to keep everyone safe.

Bible (Mat. 13:3-8). This gave the youth the feeling of how it may have been long ago when Jesus spoke to His people, preaching to them outside on the open grass and not necessarily in a church environment. We then gathered our things and the youth lead the way to the top of the mountain.



Sermon on the Mount (listening to a scripture reading)

During our journey we encountered rough terrain, large boulders, dead ends, bees and of course the fact that we were all out of shape. We found out that some people were afraid of heights and that others were very daring. But most important, we stood by each other and everyone helped each other get through the obstacles. We

were not able to get to the very top of the mountain this time, but we did get up high enough to see a spectacular view. We could see for miles.

The way back down the mountain was a little easier. Back at the bottom of the mountain we gathered together again to talk about our adventure. I reflected with them that we all started at the bottom and that Heaven is like the top of the mountain.

Our focus was to get there. Life gives us the same challenges. Some hurdles are as big as the boulders we climbed, some paths we follow are dead ends, but if we continue on the right path, we eventually get to the top. Furthermore, going off the path can sometimes

hurt us, or our loved ones. We found that out when we detoured and found the bees. When it got tough we helped each other, which is how social justice works. That is how we succeeded in our adventure and that is how we will succeed in life.

The M.O.P. program would like to thank the Salesian Cooperators and Mrs. Diane De La Torre for their generosity in funding the transportation to Stoney Point. We would also like to thank Sr. Dolores Riojas and Juan Carlos Montenegro for their continuous support.

By Theresa Gamboa
M.O.P. Adult Leader

For questions, comments or concerns please contact Joe Rodriguez at:

MOP@saintdominicsavio.org



MOP leaders in T-shirts

Provincial Council Meeting

Nov. 20-22, 2011

Agenda Summary

Location: Corpus Christi Parish, San Francisco

1. Province Organic Plan

Al Vu led a discussion of the 24 page Province Organic Plan, 2011-2014. Copies will be distributed to every Salesian and to everyone on the Leadership List of the province. The Council discussed how communities and departments of the province will be encouraged to study the document. And, on Nov. 30th, each Salesian will receive a copy of Memoirs of the Oratory to help with study of Don Bosco for 2015.

2. Formation

Gael Sullivan introduced summer evaluations. Bill Keane presented the Fall evaluations of the novices. Discussion followed on the organization of the "S" programs.

3. Planning for future events

Tom Mass informed the Council of two coming events: (a) Regional meeting of Provincials in the Los Angeles area, Oct. 21-28, 2012. (b) The Pilgrimage Committee for 2015 is forming.

4. Tri-Delegation: Social Communication, Mission Animation, Youth Ministry

Judy Alvarez, in Social Communication, treated of recent activities and steps

towards the relaunching of one province website.

Juan Carlos Montenegro reported on Volunteers, on Salesian Mission Day, Nov. 11-12, 2011, on unity of purpose for the SDB-FMA volunteer program.

Al Vu dealt with the YM Delegates meeting in El Salvador; the responsibilities of the CYMs in the province; and the introduction of the document: Rethinking Salesian Youth Ministry to the province.

5. Finances and Administration

Joseph Farias introduced speakers for the following:

a) Joseph Lockwood informed the Council of the slow progress on the renovation of De Sales Hall.

b) James Petray of Burr Pilger Mayer, Inc. led the Council through the 23 page Audit Review of the Salesian Society to June 30, 2011.

c) John Cattalini handled the present financial status of the Province and the appraisal of the Mt. Madonna property for sale.

d) Joseph Farias clarified the value and purpose of a particular Trust.

6. Other Matters

Personnel; Provincial Visitations; Youth Clubs; Governance and Legal matters.

Thomas Prendiville

DBTI Campaign to End Hunger

Wrapping up a successful month-long Campaign to End Hunger, Don Bosco Technical Institute students led a 16-mile Walk to End Hunger on Sunday, Dec. 4. Students from Alverno and San Gabriel Mission High Schools also participated. The multi-school walk took a circular path through the San Gabriel Valley, beginning and ending at Bosco Tech.

All proceeds from the walk will be sent to benefit Family Promise and the Catholic Worker, organizations that help low-income and homeless families in the San Gabriel Valley and the greater Los Angeles community.

The walk followed a month-long, 2,000 pound food drive that benefitted the Shepherd's Pantry and Thanksgiving Goodness, an alumni-run undertaking in which Bosco freshmen, alumni, and volunteers prepared 3,200 sack lunches and distributed them to the homeless in downtown Los Angeles.

For more information about these activities, contact Darlene Nichols, Bosco Tech's Director of Service and Action, at (626) 940-2138 or dnichols@boscotech.edu.

InTouch Provincial Newsletter

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Weekly publications will be distributed on Wednesdays. Please submit news for publication by Friday of each week.
Send contributions to:
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Around the Province

A Mother for the Americas

For whom would you rise in the wee hours of the morning? The 5:00 a.m. Mananitas and Eucharist at St. Dominic Savio Church on December 12th revealed that many would do so for Our Lady of Guadalupe. The filled church offered standing room only for the feast day celebrations in honor of the patroness of the Americas. Fr. Avelino Lorenzo presided at the liturgy and mariachis provided music for the lively congregation, despite the early morning hour. Noting the apparition of Our Lady in the middle of the Americas, Fr. Avelino highlighted her intention to bring Jesus to all the people of our lands.



After mass many gathered for personal prayer before the image of Our Lady.

Sports Corner

Salesian Varsity Football Repeats as Div IV Champions

The Salesian Football Team dominated every aspect of their championship game on Saturday, December 10, against Ferndale HS, beating them 42-6 for the North Coast Section Div IV Championship. They have won 21 straight games, two championships and joined the 64-65 Football Team as the only other football team to go undefeated in Salesian History. [Read More](#)



California at the finals, they finished second, making them the number two team (of Division 4) in Southern California.

This great finish to the season is the result of the hours of practice the team put in every day (even on Thanksgiving). They ran 30-50 miles a week starting in June (at least

800 miles during the season). They are to be congratulated.

DBTI Cross Country Team Places in State Finals

By Brad Stolz

During the Thanksgiving weekend, the Varsity Cross Country team, with most of the JV team and parents along for support, traveled to Fresno for the CIF State Championships. The team, in excellent shape and well-

motivated, came in third, missing second place by only one point. The three top finishers were JJ Dominguez, his brother, Ruben Dominguez, and Gabriel Castro. The California State Finals is one of the most competitive in the country, and the team finished third out of 24 teams racing.

This followed the intense competition of the CIF Southern Section preliminaries where DBTI team won their heat, beating 15 other schools from throughout the southern half of California. Running for the championship of Southern

A Reason to Not Sign

“The NFL is my goal, not my dream. My dream is to have an impact on people. I think I’m doing that, and I’m not finished yet. All the trips to the pediatric hospital, to the Homeless Center. I’m not done yet.” - Manti Te’o, star Notre Dame linebacker, on why he has decided to return to college for his senior year rather than go to the NFL. ([South Bend Tribune](#))

ADVENT

AFTERNOON OF REFLECTION

for SALESIAN YOUNG ADULTS

COME TAKE A MOMENT
AND STOP FROM YOUR BUSY SCHEDULES
AND SPEND AN AFTERNOON IN PRAYER AND REFLECTION
ON GOD'S WORD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2011

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

NORCAL: DON BOSCO HALL
BERKELEY, CA

SOCAL: ST. JOSEPH YOUTH RENEWAL CENTER
ROSEMEAD, CA

TO REGISTER, PLEASE CONTACT
THE PROVINCE YOUTH MINISTRY OFFICE
SDBYOUTH@SALESIANYM.ORG OR CALL 415-866-3300

INSTITUTE FOR SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY PRESENTS...

A Special Retreat on Don Bosco

The Don Bosco Retreats are offered for young adults and adults of the Salesian Family: members of Salesian parishes, youth centers, school faculties and staff, adult past pupils, and collaborators in the Salesian Mission. This weekend experience will offer reflection, discussion, and prayer around the life of Don Bosco, his place in history, and his impact on our lives and ministries today



“Don Bosco In History”

January 6-8, 2012
Don Bosco Hall
Berkeley

Early Spring
Los Angeles Area
Location & Dates TBA

The retreat begins at 7:00 PM on Friday evening and concludes at lunch on Sunday.

Cost for materials, meals and lodging for 3 days inclusive, \$60.00

Retreat Registration

Mail registration to Don Bosco Hall 1831 Arch Street, Berkeley, CA 94709 or Fax to (510) 704-1925

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Check which retreat you would like to attend.

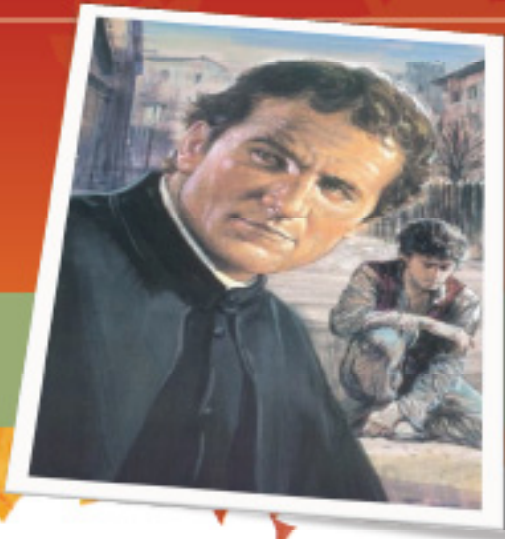
January 6-8 Berkeley

Early Spring 2012, Los Angeles

*Checks payable to Salesians of Don Bosco. Space is limited. Register by **December 29, 2011.***

Exploring Don Bosco

A Three Night Study and Reflection Series
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM



Evening One

Evening Two

Evening Three

Don Bosco in His Time

Post-modern Don Bosco?

The Young Adult Bosco

In Northern California: DON BOSCO HALL BERKELEY

Monday January 9, 2012

Tuesday January 10, 2012

Wednesday January 11, 2012

In Southern California: SALESIAN RESIDENCE LOS ANGELES

Tuesday January 17, 2012 **Wednesday January 18, 2012** **Thursday January 19, 2012**

This evening explores Don Bosco's historical and cultural settings which shaped his vision and mission. Understanding those influences help us to "begin afresh" from his perspective to enable our times to intersect with his.

Can the historical figure of Don Bosco offer insight for our own time and place situated within a post-modern crisis of meaning? What clues has this saint left us for navigating our way back to the "meta-story" of the Gospel?



Examining the young adult Giovanni Bosco, on his way to his mission and taking the first steps in his dreams, offers us a rich model of discernment and faith. Looking at his friendships, his seeking out mentors and spiritual guides, and his own ascetic choices offers today's young adult a roadmap for mission and an itinerary for everyday holiness.

There is no fee for this series.