



INTOUCH

Dec. 22
2011

USA West Province Newsletter • Building Bridges Between Communities



December 22, 2011

Dear Brother and Sister Salesians:

In just a few it will be Christmas Day! I wish to everyone in Don Bosco West a truly blessed and merry Christmas. This includes every confrere, all our Salesian sisters, our Cooperators, every member of all the other branches of the Salesian Family, every student in our schools, every young person in our parishes and clubs and retreat center, each one of our staffs and collaborators of any Salesian presence in California and Texas, and also all our families, dear ones, and friends.

There are still three Advent days left though. Christmas really begins on the 25th and continues up until the Epiphany. Of course the world of malls and online shopping think Christmas is over and gone on the 26th. Let's respect the time and not anticipate Christmas, nor move into Easter mode after the 25th. Specifically, despite the last minute details and almost frantic searching for that perfect last gift, let's respect this time of patient expectation. Like Mary, right up to the birth day of her Son, we long for him, we prepare for him, we contemplate him.

I am so taken by Pope Benedict's Christmas reflection: *God made himself small so that we could understand him, welcome him, and love him. Imagine, God made himself small.* He made himself what he was not so that we could become what he is. Like the prayer in the Mass: "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity." Because he wants our love more than our fear, he comes as a child, small. When we look at a manger, is that what we see? That God made himself small like a child?

As Salesians we see even more. We notice that God made himself small, like a young baby, in poverty and in need of help. The mission we all share, the mission for which God raised up St. John Bosco, is to take care of the young who are poor and in need of help. So in the manger we also see ourselves, called to serve Christ in the young to whom we are sent. The Salesian mission is a channeling (to use a New Age term) of the mystery of the Incarnation: in Jesus the child God is one with us. In the children Jesus sends us to serve, especially the poor like him at his birth, we become one with God.

So Merry Christmas, but it's still Advent, so "The Lord our King is drawing near. O come let us adore him."

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Timothy C. Ploch, SDB
Provincial



Provincial's Calendar

December 2011

- 22 Provincial Residence Staff Party
- 23-24 Office Days
- 25 Christmas Day Dinner, Berkeley
- 26-29 Personal Days
- 30-1/3 Visitation, Laredo

January 2012

- 4-5 Office Days



Pray for Our Sick

Mr. Wilfrid Rougeau
father of Fr. Marc

Fr. Bob Stein, SDB
congestive heart failure

Mrs. Ree Sell
wife of Deacon Glen Sell
St. Luke's Parish, Stockton
hospitalized for observations



May they Rest in Peace

Mr. Dan Jiru
December 21, 2011
Long Beach, CA
Former Salesian Brother

Salesians Ready the Way

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” Mark 1:1-3

In numerous many ways we have prepared the way of the Lord this Advent. Among them is our long-standing tradition of gathering food, toys and resources to provide a Christmas celebration for families unable to do so on their own....



Christmas Outreach



Don Bosco always made every effort to help and be present to the poor and

the abandoned. One area where the DBTI Varsity Soccer Team and parents lent their help and presence this year is through the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angel's Adopt-A-Family Christmas Program. For 22 years this program has made it possible for struggling families with children to have a magical Christmas. This year 380 families were helped.

DBTI's Varsity Soccer Team assisted on two days, once to sort and package food boxes for the families and to wrap presents for the children, and the second time to help with delivery of boxes and gifts to the families. The second outreach day was Saturday, December 17, beginning at 6:30 a.m. with a short prayer service with Archbishop Gomez. They then loaded up vans and made deliveries, also visiting briefly with the families to whom they delivered.

-By Brad Stolz



San Luis Rey Christmas Project: 35 families, 175 children, 300 Christmas gifts (the very best for those who have the least) and the youth of the parish who spent nine hours sorting and wrapping the gifts.



St. Francis HS gives to Watsonville's Share Your Holiday toy drive.



Tamales in the making for the Boyle Heights Holiday Family Festival at the SF Youth Center.



St. Dominic Savio gift collection fills Parish Office waiting room and hallway too.



DBTI's Campaign to End Hunger Walk engaged students from DBTI and two sister schools.

Salesians Ready the Way

“But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God...” Jn 1:12

We also gathered in celebration and prayer to renew our union with God and one another through liturgical feasts, days of prayer and community celebrations.



St. Dominic Savio Youth conclude an evening prayer procession in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Corpus Christi women keep vigil on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Salesian Boys and Girls Club Los Angeles decorated and ready for Tamale Dinner Fest, a thank you to club supporters.



Fr. Tom Juarez and Lorena Zamora lead retreats at St. Joseph's Salesian Youth Renewal Center in Rosemead, preparing the way for Christ into the hearts of the young.



Combined choirs for St. Dominic Savio Christmas Concert

Community Celebrations

Corpus Christi Celebrates La Purissima



Who is that doing the bunny ears over Jhoni's head?



Shrine for the Feast of Mary Immaculate



Corpus Christi YM Team's Christmas photo.



Children join in the festivities.



DeSales Hall Community outing to Newport Harbor Christmas Boat Parade .



Fr. Tim Ploch, Provincial and Fr. Leo Baysinger Pastor, enjoyed the celebration.

Advent Afternoon of Reflection

By Andres Neira

On December 17th I had the honor to attend the Salesian Youth Movement's Advent Afternoon of Reflection in Rosemead. This special encounter focused on Mary and how she's an example of saying yes and believing in God's work. Sometimes we are scared to answer God's call. Sometimes we simply look the other way as if He never called us.

This afternoon of reflection helped me to see that we should trust God and His work, just like Mary did at the age of 16 or so. God has a plan for all of us. We just have to trust Him and say, "Yes, Lord, let it be done according to your will."

Let us prepare ourselves for the coming of our Savior by saying yes to Him, for He has many wonderful gifts in store for us.

Captions for Photos:

(up to down, left to right)

How did Our Blessed Mother react as an ordinary girl of her time?; Sharing groups, answering reflection questions; Young adult participants at Don Bosco Hall's Advent Afternoon of Reflection; Young adult participants at St. Joseph's Advent Afternoon of Reflection

InTouch Provincial Newsletter

Salesians of St. John Bosco
1100 Franklin Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Phone: (626) 280-8622 #35
E-mail: intouch@salesiansc.org
Weekly publications will be distributed on Wednesdays. Please submit news for publication by Friday of each week.
Send contributions to:
intouch@salesiansc.org



La Posada

San Luis Rey Church, Laredo TX



On Wednesday, December 17, the Catholic community of San Luis Rey in Laredo, Texas, took Joseph and Mary symbolically in search of a place in which they could give

birth to the Savior. The La Posada was celebrated by hundreds of people and animated by the youth of



the parish under the leadership of Andrew Castro and Reymundo Gomez, both volunteering a year of service at the parish. The celebration was enhanced by new statues of Joseph and Mary purchased by Fr. Mike Gergen, the pastor, and by the ethnic dance of children in honor of the Holy Family.



Welcoming Christ in the Migrant: National Migration Week 2012

Catholics called to offer hospitality to those in need.

WASHINGTON—National Migration Week will be observed in dioceses around the country January 8-14.

“Just as on the road to Emmaus, Christ's disciples met him in the guise of a stranger, this year's theme helps remind us that Christ makes himself present to each of us in the lonesome traveler, the newcomer, and the migrant,” said Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles. “We are called to open our hearts and provide hospitality to those in need, especially for migrants who find themselves far away from home and in vulnerable situations.” Archbishop Gomez is the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration.

[Read More](#)

Letter of Hispanic/ Latino Bishops to Immigrants

Dear Immigrant Sisters and Brothers,
May the peace and grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you!

We the undersigned Hispanic/Latino Bishops of the United States wish to let those of you who lack proper authorization to live and work in our country know that you are not alone, or forgotten. We recognize that every human being, authorized or not, is an image of God and therefore possesses infinite value and dignity. We open our arms and hearts to you, and we receive you as members of our Catholic family. As pastors, we direct these words to you from the depths of our heart.

[Spanish Text](#)
[English Text](#)

*“And she gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”
Luke 2:7*

May Christmas find us ever ready to welcome our Lord and Savior in all the ways He comes to us, especially in the young and the poor.



The Christmas Story

A precious account acted and told by the children of St Paul's Church, Auckland, New Zealand.

To view video please click the live link below:

[The Christmas Story](#)



Merry Christmas

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: _____

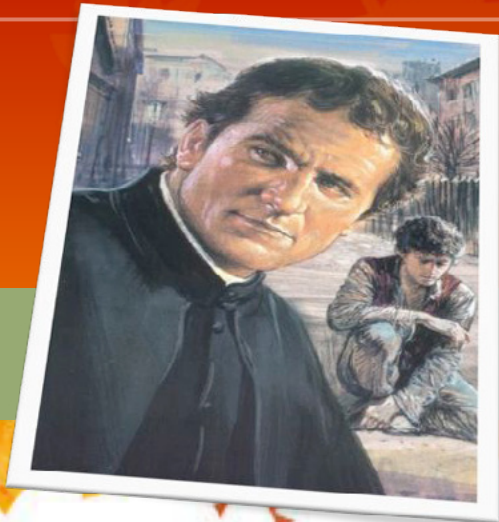
Address: _____

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.

ROCK OUT

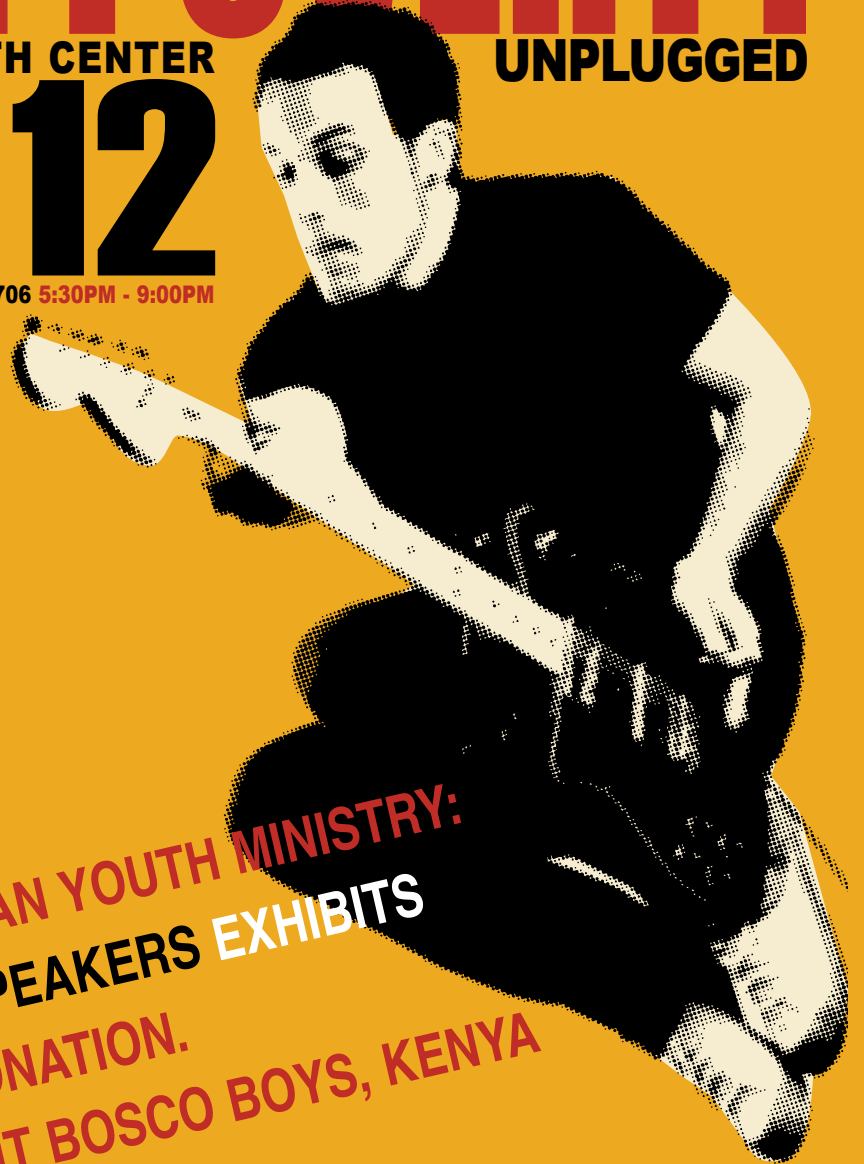
YOUTH POVERTY

ST. DOMINIC SAVIO YOUTH CENTER

UNPLUGGED

01.21.12

13400 BELLFLOWER BLVD, BELLFLOWER, CA 90706 5:30PM - 9:00PM



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ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT BOSCO BOYS, KENYA**



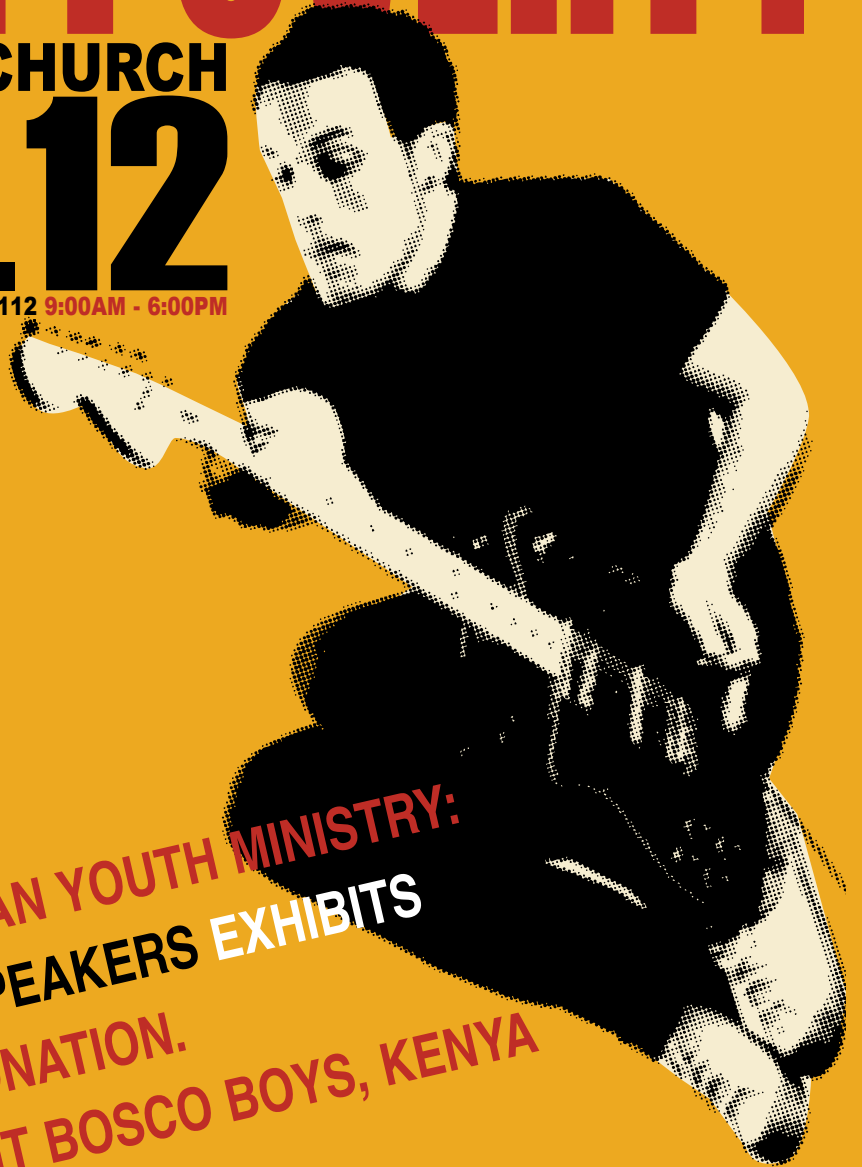
ROCK OUT

YOUTH POVERTY

CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH

01.28.12

62 SANTA ROSA AVENUE, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94112 9:00AM - 6:00PM



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