

# Salesian Newslink



Don Bosco with us  
Salesian Co-operators  
The Roman Missal

Can young people be holy?



# Salesian Newslink

ZMB Vice province of Mary Help of Christians



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# Need for Dialogue

against a HUMAN tendency  
that aims at dominating



EDITORIAL

*By Fr Javier A. Barrientos SDB*

It is quite interesting to read most comments on social networks, and discover that a good number of adolescents, young people and adults long to communicate. I believe we all have something to say to the world. Once upon a time, communication was the privilege of a few; access to internet and other means of mass communication were not even accessible to the majority; but today a good number of people do have access to all of these. Yet, the advantage of the social networks over the e-mail providers and news agencies is the capacity to establish some level of dialogue. A person who expresses his/her opinion on any topic is subject to support, criticism, challenge of the way a thought is expressed, etc.

Dialogue is such a powerful means of development that helps people move forward. Contradicting points of view come to a decent level of tolerance and acceptance that helps people make progress in different fields. However, basic and direct dialogue is losing its ground at the most basic levels of social interaction.

I would suggest that among people known to me, the ordinary way of establishing any dialogue is somewhat lost. In family settings people spend less and less time in dialogue. Parents need to spend more time outside the home in order to provide for the needs of the family. Children spend good deal of time in front of the TV set, chatting over the internet, etc. Even religious communities are losing this fundamental means of social interaction; members give priority to phone calls to the people they sit around with for a meal, just to give one example.

'By means of words' (dialogue) ancient civilisations sought progress to better ways of living, to end conflicts and to establish peace. Unlike some of the ancient civilisations, today's

News agencies, state-owned TV stations and radio, -just to mention a few- provide a common 'one-way' communication, the public ought to believe and accept what is being offered. In the current scenario, truth is what powerful news agencies present. There are a few public arenas where the public can give their opinion and thus together find the truth. It is definitely impossible to get everyone involved in this process; nevertheless the channels should be left open. In the political field, there are still many countries where the only means of public mass communication is the state-owned TV and Radio stations, for fear that people are exposed to a second opinion.

Here in Africa, we are still somewhat privileged, to have a mild attitude from the Media towards the Church. The Catholic Church in Africa with its lights and shadows is not always the focus of news agencies; at least not yet. Unlike Europe and the Western World, where Catholics are normally under the spotlight (especially when things go wrong), here in Africa, today's headlines on church issues will be a forgotten part history already the following day. Yet, dialogue is non-existent. There will be a full page to denounce some wrongdoing, (even if not proven and true) and only a small paragraph to retract or apologise for misleading or giving wrong information.

To become a good communicator, everyone needs to be a person who knows what dialogue is all about and who is ready to be challenged in his/her own opinion. Dialogue is such a basic activity of human beings who live with other human beings, yet it is at the same time, one of the most challenging tasks to accomplish should we like to live in harmony. Intolerance has become the 'order of the day', where personal views and ideas ought to prevail despite reality.

Alongside criticising governments, news agencies and other public mass communicators, it would be good to see deep inside each of us, how open are we to be challenged by our own confreres, sisters, children, pupils, employees, -anyone- who disagrees with us.

Only when we are able to accept others the way they present themselves to us, that day we can say we have begun to make of dialogue the condition of our interaction in the human society. ☺

# THE COLUMN

## Devotion to Mary Help of Christians and her sanctuary at the heart of Salesian work



Fr Pascual Chavez SDB  
RECTOR MAJOR

**A** cool evening in May 1862, with his usual skill as a story-teller Don Bosco said: «Try to picture yourselves with me on the seashore, or better still, on an outlying cliff with no other land in sight. The vast expanse of water is covered with a formidable array of ships in battle formation, prows fitted with sharp spear-like beaks capable of breaking through any defence. All are heavily armed with cannons, incendiary bombs, and firearms of all sorts – even books and are heading toward one stately ship, mightier than them all. As they close in, they try to ram it, set it afire, and cripple it as much as possible.

This stately vessel is shielded by a flotilla escort. Winds and waves are with the enemy.

In the midst of this endless sea, two solid columns, a short distance apart, soar high in the sky; one is surmounted by a statue of the Immaculate Virgin at whose feet a large inscription reads: “Auxilium Christianorum”; the other far loftier and sturdier, supports a Host of proportionate size and bears beneath it the inscription: “Salus Credentium”.

The flagship commander – the Roman Pontiff – breaking through all resistance steers his ship safely between the two columns from whose summits hang many anchors and strong hooks linked to chains, and moors it to the two columns first to the one surmounted by the Host, and then to the other, topped by the statue of the Virgin. At this point something unexpected happens. The enemy ships panic and disperse, colliding with and scuttling each other.»





“I am the woman whom your mother has taught you to greet three times a day”

### A name new and old

Don Albera tells us that one evening in December that year, after hearing confessions until about 11.00 p.m., Don Bosco went for his supper. He looked very pensive. He suddenly remarked: “There were a lot of confessions tonight but truthfully I hardly know what I said or did, because all the time I had something on my mind. I kept thinking: Our church is too small; we have to pack in our boys like sardines. We must build a larger, more imposing one under the title of Mary Help of Christians. I don’t have a penny, nor do I know where to find the money, but that’s not important. If God so wills, it will be done » (BM 7, 196). He also confided his plan to Don Cagliero: «Up to now we have celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception with pomp and solemnity [...]. But the Madonna wishes us to honour her under the title of Mary, Help of Christians. The times are so bad that we

sadly need her help to preserve and safeguard our faith.» (MB 7, 197).

In the first months of 1863 he set to work obtaining the necessary permissions; in 1865 the foundation stone was laid, and in 1868 the work was finished.

### The icon that speaks

Don Bosco was moved not only by practical considerations (to have a larger church) or political and religious ones (the wave of fierce anticlericalism that was threatening the Church).

The picture of Mary in the painting by Lorenzone above the high altar expresses very well Don Bosco’s innermost thoughts. His understanding of the history of salvation led him to place the Church at the heart of the world, and at the heart of the Church he saw Mary Help of Christians, the all-powerful Mother, who conquers evil.

The Madonna was always present in Don Bosco’s life. In the dream at nine years of age, Jesus introduces himself in this way: «I am the son of the woman whom your mother has taught you to greet three times a day.»

But the focus for his devotion to her has a specific location: the church in Valdocco. «And this,” Fr Viganò writes, “will remain the definitive Marian icon: the point of reference for an unceasing increase in vocations and the centre of the expansion of his charism as founder. In Mary Help of Christians Don Bosco finally recognises the features of the Lady who was at the origin of his own vocation and who was and would always remain his Inspiration and Teacher.»

### Mary has built herself a house

The Valdocco sanctuary becomes the tangible and the real sign of the presence of Mary in the life of Don Bosco and of the Congregation. This is the “mother church” of the Salesian Family.

Popular opinion immediately discovers the marvellous understanding between Mary Help of Christians and Don Bosco: Mary Help of Christians now will always be «Don Bosco’s Madonna.» And Don Bosco is «the saint of the Help of Christians.» Very rarely has it happened that a title of Mary, almost unknown, has spread so quickly throughout the world.

Humbly Don Bosco said: «I am not the one responsible for the great things you see; it is the Lord, it is Mary Most Holy who deigns to make use of a poor priest. I have put up nothing of my own: Aedificavit sibi domum Maria (Mary has built herself a house). Every stone, every decoration represents a grace.»

The Valdocco sanctuary is the church which Salesians all round the world see more with their hearts than with their eyes. And it is here that everyone feels “at home.”

## AFRICAЕ MUNUS

Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation

# Young People

Youth is a time when genuine and irrepressible questions arise about the meaning of life



**Y**oung people make up the majority of Africa's population. This youthfulness is a gift and a treasure from God for which the whole Church is grateful to the Lord of life. Young people should be loved, esteemed and respected. "Whatever their possible ambiguities, [they] have a profound longing for those genuine values which find their fullness in Christ. Is not Christ the secret of true freedom and profound joy of heart? Is not Christ the supreme friend and the teacher of all genuine friendship? If Christ is presented to young people as he really is, they experience him as an answer that is convincing and they can accept his message, even when it is demanding and bears the mark of the Cross."

As I said on the subject of young people in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini*: "Youth is a time when genuine and irrepressible questions arise about the meaning of life and the direction our own lives should take. Only God can give the true answer to these questions. Concern for young people calls for courage and clarity in the message we proclaim; we need to help young people to gain confidence and

familiarity with sacred Scripture so it can become a compass pointing out the path to follow. Young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic and credible messengers."

In his Rule, Saint Benedict asks the abbot of the monastery to listen to the youngest monks. As he says: "It is often to a younger brother that the Lord reveals the best course"] So we should make every effort to involve young people directly in the life of society and of the Church, so that they do not fall prey to feelings of frustration and rejection in the face of their inability to shape their own future, especially in those situations where young people are vulnerable due to lack of education, unemployment, political exploitation and various kinds of addiction.

Dear young people, enticements of all kinds may tempt you: ideologies, sects, money, drugs, casual sex, violence... Be vigilant: those who propose these things to you want to destroy your future! In spite of difficulties, do not be discouraged and do not give up your ideals, your hard work and your commitment to




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Pope BENEDICT XVI

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your human, intellectual and spiritual formation! In order to grow in discernment, along with the strength and the freedom needed to resist these pressures, I encourage you to place Jesus Christ at the centre of your lives through prayer, but also through the study of sacred Scripture, frequent recourse to the sacraments, formation in the Church's social teaching, and your active and enthusiastic participation in ecclesial groups and movements. Cultivate a yearning for fraternity, justice and peace. The future is in the hands of those who find powerful reasons to live and to hope. If you want it, the future is in your hands, because the gifts that the Lord has bestowed upon each one of you, strengthened by your encounter with Christ, can bring genuine hope to the world!

When it comes to making life choices, when you find yourselves considering the question of a total consecration to Christ – in the ministerial priesthood or the consecrated life – turn to him, take him as your model, and listen to his word by meditating regularly. During the homily of the inaugural Mass of my pontificate, I spoke words to you that I want to repeat now, for they remain timely: "If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed ... Dear young people: Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ – and you will find true life." ❀



## Mary Help of Christians

Dear Friends,

We are in this month of May which is dedicated to Our Lady. For us in a special way the month reminds us of Mary Help of Christians - the Madonna of Don Bosco. She was the constant guide and support in his life. She was the Teacher whom Jesus promised he would give to little Johnny Bosco to help him to be gentle, strong and steadfast and thus win over his friends with kindness and not with blows.

The teaching began immediately and Mary showed him the work he was to accomplish among these youngsters.

In the Italy of his day, it was a common custom to dedicate the newly born child to Mary to watch over it and to protect this new life. Infant mortality was alarmingly high. It is certain that Mamma Margaret too presented little John Bosco to Our Lady soon after his birth. She inculcated progressively into her youngest son, a great love for Mary. He soon learnt the common Marian prayers – the Hail Mary, the 'Angelus' and the Rosary. In his dream at the age of 9, when he asked the mysterious personage who he was, he was told: "I am the son of her, whom your mother taught you to greet three times a day". At the Moglia farm, during the work, when the Angelus bell would ring forth from the Parish Church, John Bosco, would kneel down and recite the Angelus to honour Our Lady. Before performing his magic

tricks for his companions, first he would often make them recite the rosary together in the field. Somehow, John Bosco inherited from his mother, Mamma Margaret, the great love and devotion he had for Our Heavenly Mother, Mary. On the eve of his departure to the Seminary, 29 October 1835, as he was packing his little bag, Mamma Margaret approached him and said: "John, when you were born, I consecrated you to the Madonna, when you began your studies, I asked you to have devotion to this Mother of ours. Now I ask you to be totally hers". Deeply moved, John Bosco replied: "Mother I thank you for all you have done for me. Of these your words, I will treasure them to the end of my life!" And treasure them, he did. He was totally devoted to her. He taught the youngsters to love Mary, to be devoted to her and to place themselves under her maternal protection. He built the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians as a monument of his love for her. Mary worked closely with Don Bosco obtaining for him heavenly favours of one sort or another thus giving him the conviction that what he was doing was the Will of God. She was often his guide during the dreams or 'visions' he had.

When he founded the Society of the Salesian Sisters to do for the girls, what he was doing for the boys, he called this Society, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, as a sign of his permanent gratitude to Mary for all the graces he had received through her intercession. Finally towards the end of his life, he could say: "I have not taken a single step without the express wish of Our Lady". Here was a truly devoted son of Mary. He would tell us "*Have devotion to Mary Help of Christians and you will see what miracles are!*"

Today, my dear friends, Don Bosco is inviting us to place all our confidence and trust in this Heavenly Mother who took him under her protection and guided him all through difficulties and problems and helped him to become a saint. I am sure if we too will accept her as our Heavenly Mother, she would do the same for us.

I wish you all a Very Happy Feast of Mary Help of Christians.

Fr George Chalissery SDB

# Don Bosco in AFRICA



Don Bosco & first Missionaries

**F**or the past four or five days (6 December 1887) Don Bosco isn't feeling well, last evening he had a severe fever and headache and for this reason, under medical prescription he needs to be in bed from 6pm. This morning he woke up around 8am and did not take part in mass, just as from Monday, receiving communion.

This evening although exhausted he wanted to go to church to participate in the farewell mass for missionaries. He entered the presbytery helped by me and Festa while Fr Bonetti was delivering his sermon. But I must say that the best and most efficacious preaching is done by Don Bosco, showing up in such pain to see his children off. Immediately everyone stands up to see him.

Mons. Letto after the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament addressed the missionaries and gave them his blessing. It was a very touching moment, in church –that was packed– there was none who was not in tears. After the blessing, each of the missionaries came in front of Don Bosco to greet him and kiss his hand... they cried, and Don Bosco cried as well; everyone in church cried... missionaries embraced confreres from the house for the last time, as well as the General Superiors... then they walked through the church... people knelt at their passing, filled with tears and kissing their hands and cassocks – and then they all returned to the presbytery and surrounded Don Bosco... then I heard abundant words of compassion towards the poor and old Don Bosco... how many I saw crying!!! I heard many bless that man of God, to the point of calling him a saint!!! After the service, Don Bosco as he passed through the courtyard was acclaimed by the youngsters and tired as he was; he went to his room.”



by Fr Alexio Mesi SDB

A century later, Don Bosco is once again moving among his dear children, not only those of Turin (Italy) but his children all over the world. Don Bosco's relics are visiting all provinces in Africa and this unique opportunity is for each Salesian, FMA, Salesian Co-operator, youngster and friend of Don Bosco an important event. The feelings, emotions and momentum that Valdocco felt upon seeing Don Bosco in his time can only be compared to the emotion people feel after seeing Don Bosco's relics visiting them.

Missionaries departing to South America knew they would not see Don Bosco again in their lives; their hearts were so moved that they could not hide their tears and emotions. While they would venture to new lands and peoples, their father would remain behind, blessing them and giving them energy. Today Don Bosco comes to visit his children and tears fill his children's eyes because this is most likely to be the once-in-life-time encounter between the Saint and them.

In the places where Don Bosco's relics have visited, people have done as much as those who saw Don Bosco for the last time in their lives did: they knelt in front of him, kissed his hand and received his blessing. The initial scepticism towards the pilgrimage of Don Bosco's around the world, is slowly yielding to the feeling of gratitude and appreciation for the efforts in having Don Bosco visiting those places he did not visit in his lifetime.

The Salesian Family in ZMB Vice-Province awaits the arrival of Don Bosco. Preparations are on their way to make of Don Bosco's visit a memorable event, but most of all a spiritual renewal for us all. 🌟

Don Bosco's relics in Nairobi, Kenya (FMA Mutuini)





## Local NEWS



### **Provincial Visitation - Hwange (Zimbabwe) 09/05/12** *(CI John Musonda SDB)*

After about five days of community visitation thus from the 4th to the 7th of May, Fr. George Chalissery returns to Lusaka with a call to twin passionate for God and humanity; thus reechoing the words of the superior generals of the religious congregations. Indeed it's arguably sound to say that any sort of engagement with humanity is always with and never without that of God. If anything the premise for this engagement comes from God. Among other engagements, Provincial celebrated the Eucharist on Saturday and Sunday in our two sister parishes of Holy Family and St Teresa respectively. We wish him God's blessings and good health as he goes back to Lusaka (Zambia). ☺

### **Missionary Childhood Congress:**

#### **Hwange (Zimbabwe) 28/04/12** *(CI John Musonda SDB)*

Our two sister parishes St Teresa and Holy Family took part in the bi-annual diocesan congress of the Missionary Childhood (MC). The congress which attracted over 500 children from around the diocese of Hwange was held



in Binga district situated on the shores of the Zambezi River of about 240 km from Hwange town.

The MCs congress which was graced by his grace Albert Serrano bishop of the diocese of Hwange was held under the diocesan synod theme – 'in the light of the risen Lord together we walk'. The congress run from the 19th to the 22nd of April, 2012. ☺

### **First Communions at St. Mary's Parish Kabwe (Zambia) 8/04/2012**

*(Fr Andrew Reut SDB)*

A wonderful celebration of Easter with about 47 children receiving their Holy Communion for the first time. The children were prepared by catechists Mr Peter Chulu and Mr Eric Ngosa. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Fr Andrew Reut, parish priest of St Mary's in Kabwe. ☺



### **R.I.P Mr Abraham Tembo Lusaka (Zambia) 08/03/2012**

*(Fr George Chalissery)*

Early in the morning of Thursday 8 March, after a long illness, Mr Abraham Tembo, the father of Fr Vincent Tembo has passed away. The funeral mass was celebrated on 10/03/2012 and it was well attended by family members, members of the Salesian Family and Bishop Clement Mulenga SDB who came all the way from Kabwe.

### **R.I.P Mr Antoni Czerwinski Warsaw (Poland) 18/02/2012**

*(Fr Joseph Czerwinski SDB)*

After a routine operation, the father of former Provincial of ZMB, Fr Joseph Czerwinski, Mr Antoni Czerwinski peacefully passed away in Warsaw on 18 February 2012; he was surrounded by family members and two his sons who are priests. His funeral was a beautiful send off and expression of faith and solidarity from Salesian Family and diocesan priests. The Bishop and many priests concelebrated the funeral Mass. It was very, very cold, but the spirit was warm. ☺



### **Leadership Seminar Chingola (Zambia) 10-12/02/12** *(David Njolo SDB)*

The month of February at Don Bosco Youth Centre was marked by two great leadership seminars, which were conducted in the oratory and school respectively. The seminar, which was conducted in the oratory focused on strengthening of the already existing oratory leadership while that of the school aimed at educating all the students in good selections of class leaders and the two hot seats of the College's Presidency. Fr Slawek and Br David were given by the community the mandate to facilitate both seminars by giving talks. The leading thought of the presentations was geared at highlighting the qualities of the Christian leaderships with its role of service and quality thought and reflection before any undertaken action as its base. ☺



# Can young people be holy?

*By Alphoncius Hamweete SDB*

which is accepted by their peers. They like easy lives and any activity which is lifeless does not attract them. They like places where they can enjoy themselves. They do not like formal structures because

they are full of ideas and visions of how things should be done. Some of the young people have shunned going to church because they feel alien to the church. The church environment is not youth friendly. In the church they find elders giving orders to youths what to do and what not to do. They are not viewed as gifts to the church but trouble makers who need to be ruled by an iron fist. On the other hand, the notion of holiness to the youth is misunderstood that it cannot fit into their culture and realm of life. Thus anyone who participates actively in the liturgy, seems to be up to date with the teaching of the church, has a deep attitude toward prayer, honesty with God and sincere with oneself is a laughing stock among friends or perhaps is called a 'nun' or 'priest' and is tipped to be missing something in life.

However, in this article, I would like to reflect on some elements of youth spirituality. Holiness is not attained by having long

prayers and running away from the reality of life. But Celebrating life in happiness is a way to holiness. Being holy is not necessarily being declared a saint by the church, but it is a journey of becoming perfect just as our Father in heaven is perfect (cf Matt 4:48). Young people are called to be holy as young people, while enjoying their youth: the enjoyment, which is not temporal but accompanied by a heart full of calm, peace and joy because of the inner freedom which comes along with it, like having a lot of friends, being cheerful, charming, and affectionate toward all. Above all, having a spiritual mentor with whom one surrenders oneself to be directed toward a journey to living a happy life is a way to holiness. Saint Dominic Savio is a good model as he at an early age took his life so serious that saintly life is acquired only in being prayerful and restricting oneself from pleasure.



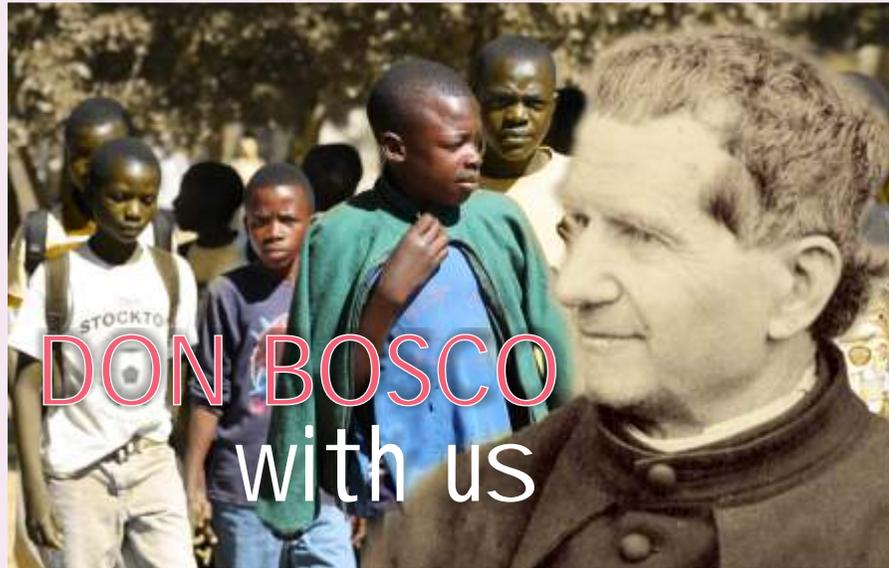
**Y**oung people are full of life and energy. We see a lot of creativity among young people. Exploration is a daily adventure. There is also a rebellious attitude towards the authority of parents or teachers. They see elders as obstacles to their freedom to lead their own lives, although at the back of their mind they know that they need elders' support and coaching in life. But how to balance this is a problem. We hear of early pregnancies, early marriages in villages, hanging around in night clubs and girl-boy sexual relationships as a normal life-style among the youth. On the other hand young people depict themselves as people who know what justice is. Thus we hear of protests against this or that, either in churches, schools or society at large. In this web of confusion the question is: is it possible for young people to be holy?

Most young people want to do something which feels good and



He would immerse himself in God through solitude. He withdrew into isolation and began to pursue his ideal. Seeing himself trying to practice the means he had envisioned, he instinctively began to measure his own capacities against those required to realize his ideal. He began to feel fearful and somewhat discouraged. Like all adolescents, he inclined to resolve his problems on his own. He did not yet feel himself an adult, but he wanted his autonomy. But through the inspiration of Saint John Bosco's sermon and kind advice moved him to say "I never knew I could sanctify myself so easily, but now that I know I can be happy and holy too, I most willingly want it! However, Don Bosco advised him to do his duties well and suggested to him to recreate with his friends if he wants to be holy.

In conclusion, to be holy means to live to one's full potentiality. Living to one's fullness is realizing the vision of Jesus Christ who said, "I have come that you may have life in full". Fullness of life encompasses integrating all the aspects of life as centered on Christ. Young people need to realize that in seeking cheap popularity, easy money and illicit sex they lose their lives and also playing loud music, dancing, speeding cars, living loose lives without having time in silence to listen to oneself and reflect on the word of God is a life of restlessness and empty. Saint Augustine in his youth tried all sorts of pleasures of life but did not find satisfaction and confessed that he only found true fulfillment in God. For the young people it is possible to live holy lives if they follow good role models in life, stand on true convictions and follow the advice of saint Paul who said "free the desires of youth, and pursue righteousness (2 Tim 2:22) and should believe that the power in them is greater than the power which is outside them. ☺



Br. Walter Thyriang

Hello thinking people!

People flock to church in a certain Salesian Parish when a particular priest is presiding over the Eucharist celebration, because the priest is a very good preacher. But there was some scepticism among those who know him well, '*he does not practice what he preaches*' they said. Hearing this, the priest said during his homily; '*I know some of you are not happy because I do not practice what I preach; but you will be more scandalised if I preach what I practice.*'

The first retreat in 2011 was preached by Fr. Filice. Clearly he spoke from his love for Don Bosco and the Congregation and reflected on the reality of his experience. With his permission I noted the following: Salesians' Mortal Sins:

- A Salesian Priest saying Mass alone on Sunday, while many people long for mass.
- A Salesian watching Television, while the oratory is going on and young people are paying in the playground.
- A Salesian School or Community that depends on fees paid by poor people.
- A Salesian coming for an annual retreat without a book or reading material on Don Bosco.
- A Salesian that says 'it is not my responsibility' for things or activities in the community.

Occasionally, Father would get so emotional almost to the point of shedding tears. He did apologise saying because of 'a weak heart' that he has. I thought the above seemed ordinary – could it be that I have no or have lost my Salesian heart?

We will have the relic of Don Bosco among us this year, an opportunity to renew our love for our founder and the charism he left as a legacy. Some of us are sceptical about the whole exercise; maybe we are right. But to refuse the relic in the community is an extreme denial. The argument that body parts are not to be taken around is not convincing. Remains of politicians are taken to the whole country for people to pay their respect. But it is just a relic; what about Rectors and communities who refuse confreres? If we welcome Don Bosco and reject fellow salesians or have no young people in our presences then what is the point?

Think!!

# DON BOSCO wanted us like this!



## The Original Idea

Don Bosco's work on behalf of poor and abandoned boys grew rapidly, as far as the numbers of beneficiaries is concerned, but slowly and progressively insofar as his helpers did. From the outset of his work, Don Bosco found himself in need of helpers to continue the kind of works he had started. Some of the first helpers who came along were priests; they dedicated their time to the religious instruction of the boys of the oratory, animated the games and preached recollections and heard confessions. The most renowned of these priests were perhaps Fr Cafasso and Fr Borel. Nevertheless, there were many other people (not necessarily priests) who also gave to Don Bosco's mission their time, talents and resources. One of the first two who ever helped Don Bosco were Mr. Joseph Galiardi, who owned a little store in Turin, and Count Cays from the Turin aristocracy.

An autonomous group or part of the Salesian Society?

Don Bosco's idea for this group of helpers was to make of them 'full-time members of his Society'. They were to live outside the religious community, but still be part of his Society; practicing poverty and obedience although not taking up the vows, doing at home and in society, what Don Bosco did in the Oratory.

It was in 1864 when in the second article of his rule he wrote:

*'he does not make a vow, but tries to put into practice that part of the rule which is compatible with his age, state and condition, which would mean that they would teach or promote catechism for the benefit of poor children, promote the distribution of good books; see that they have novenas, retreats, or other works of charity which are directed in particular way to the spiritual welfare of the young and the common people.'* (Lappin, P.- 'Give me Souls', P. 269).

For Don Bosco, anyone who came along to help with his work on behalf of youth had almost instantly obtained membership to the Society. However, through years of discernment, the Church helped Don Bosco to have rather a different understanding of it altogether. The Association of the Salesian Co-operators, thus, was born; this group was born to be an independent association, though linked to the Salesian Society, in the same way the Third Order of the Franciscans is linked to the Franciscan Order.

Men only?

Don Bosco intended to have the Association of the Salesian Co-operators divided into two branches: male and female, where the male branch will help Salesians directly; while the female would be working with the Salesian Sisters. In response to this idea, Pope Pius IX said to Don Bosco, "No, no!" interrupted the Holy Father, "don't make any exceptions. Take them also into your association. Women have always played the most important part in the conversion of people. More than men! Exclude them and you will deprive yourself of your greatest help." (P. 269) Thus, the Association is made up of both men and women; which in our days is mainly made up of women -if statistics are to be taken into consideration. Don Bosco thought of men only because his mission was addressed to the education and evangelisation of poor and abandoned boys, not girls. Therefore, he saw it more convenient for men to come along in his works in order to safeguard the morality of his institutions.

Young Co-operators?

Neither in Don Bosco's mind nor in the history of the

Association is there any mention of 'young co-operators'. The nature of the Association is to gather all men and women who desire a life of Christian perfection and apostolic commitment into one single group. Thus, the age situation of any of its members is never the basis for any special sub-group inside the Association.

the Association is made up of both men and women;  
which in our days is mainly made up of women  
-if statistics are to be taken into consideration!

### Nature of their Apostolate

The Salesian Co-operator develops his/her life of commitment in three areas: personal witness to the Gospel, Christian animation of society and collaboration in the pastoral activities of the church imbued with the Salesian spirit.

Don Bosco saw the Salesian Co-operators different from the Third Orders, which normally aimed at Christian perfection by the practice of pious devotions. His co-operators were to engage in the transformation of civil society. They had all the means, time and opportunity to intervene in the public sphere, unlike his religious (priests and brothers) who because of their vows and religious status could not even think of it. But the Co-operators have all the possibilities to intervene in politics, culture, social work, communication, etc animated by Christian values and the Salesian approach. Thus, the work of the Salesian Co-operators is not confined to the Salesian community.

### Communication

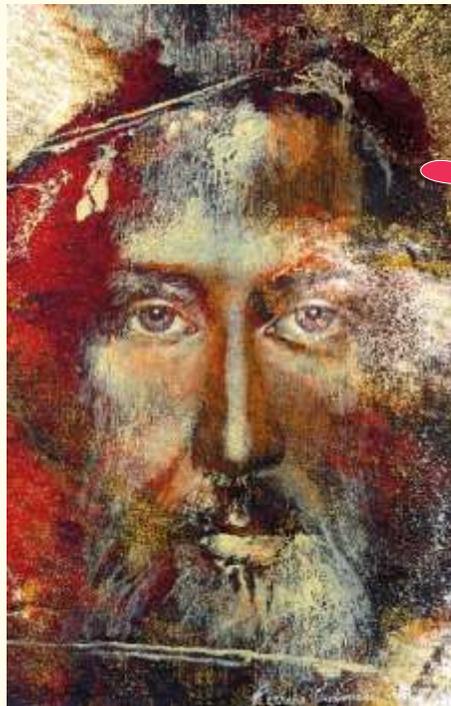
In order to animate and keep co-operators in constant communication Don Bosco founded the Salesian Bulletin to spread good news but also to let people know of the achievements made in the work on behalf of youth.

Let's keep up with the good work begun by Don Bosco! 📧



By Nhlanhlas M

# CHRIST'S Obituary



**J**esus Christ, 33, of Nazareth died Friday on Mount Calvary, also known as Golgotha, the place of the skull; betrayed by Judas the apostle; crucified by the Romans by order of the Ruler, Pontius Pilate. The causes of death were crucifixion, extreme exhaustion, severe torture and loss of blood.

Jesus Christ, descendant of Abraham, was a member of the house of David. He was the son of the late Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth and

Mary his devoted mother. Jesus was born in a stable in the city of Bethlehem, Judea. He is survived by his mother, his faithful apostles, numerous disciples and many other followers.

Jesus was self educated and spent most of his adult life working as a Teacher. Jesus also occasionally worked as a medical doctor and it is reported that he healed many patients. Up to the time of his death he was teaching, sharing the Good News, healing the sick, touching the lonely, feeding the hungry and helping the poor.

Jesus was most noted for telling parables about his Father's Kingdom and performing miracles such as feeding over 5,000 people with only five loaves of bread and two fish; and healing a man who was born blind. On the day before his death, he held a Last Supper celebrating the Passover Feast at which he foretold of his death.

The body was quickly buried in a stone grave which was donated by Joseph of Arimathea a loyal friend of the family. By order of Pontius Pilate, a boulder was rolled in front of the tomb with Roman soldiers put on guard.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested that everyone try to live as Jesus did. Donations may be sent to anyone in need... 📧

## ZMB Easter Camp

# CHRIST LIVES

Fr. Javier A. Barrientos SDB

Celebrating the Easter Triduum in a youthful environment



Youngsters camping at Makeni novitiate in Lusaka

### A milestone in the faith journey of young people...



Christ Lives | Easter Camp:  
Lusaka (Zambia) 05-08-2012.-  
105 people have gathered at the formation house of Makeni to celebrate the Easter Triduum. The youngsters who took part in the event came from the communities of Mansa (FMA), Hwange (SDB), Chingola (SDB), Chawama (SDB), Bauleni (SDB), Makeni (Fidei Donum), Kasama (FMA) and Kabwe (SDB). Some of the delegations arrived on

Wednesday evening and slowly prepared to begin the programme on the following day.

The Easter Camp (Christ Lives) began on Thursday at 3pm with the welcoming of the last delegations and the introduction to the programme. All delegations arrived in time and were ready to commit themselves to participate in the programme. The first session dealt with the need to commit oneself to service, especially to those around us who are most in need, after the example of Jesus who washed the disciples' feet.

In the evening the Eucharistic celebration included the colourful ceremony of the washing of the feet, where 12 young people (boys and girls) were chosen to represent the 12 disciples. The young girls



were particularly happy to have been chosen for this ceremony because it is quite unusual to have a woman among the disciples. Fr George Chalissery, provincial, was the main celebrant.

On Friday, the programme had the first reflection on the mystery and reality of death. It was given by Bro Walter Thyrniang SDB. After the conference, young people had time for sharing and preparation for the Way of the Cross and the Service of Good Friday.

On Saturday the programme had some short sessions and the preparation for the Easter Vigil done in groups. The evening mass was prepared through the Lectio Divina.

On Sunday the group had its final session on 'commitment' as a response to the baptismal vocation and as a witness to the resurrection of Christ. The main topic was on voluntary service. The last session was followed by group work and it concluded with the Eucharistic celebration that was presided by Fr. Christopher Rychcik SDB, rector of Makeni community.

After mass the group had the final comments and conclusion of the programme. After lunch some of the delegations departed with joy in their hearts after having celebrated the resurrection of the Lord. 📍



# HEAVEN OR HELL?

## Youth Seminar



Kabwe (Zambia) 05/05/-2012.- The Oratory director of Kabwe Youth Centre, Fr Mariusz Skowron, has organised a youth leadership seminar with the title: "*Heaven or Hell?*" to help young people from the parish and oratory to reflect on the daily life choices and its consequences in their lives and those of their families.



Two of the main issues the seminar aimed at dealing with are addiction to alcohol and drugs. Unfortunately, more and more young people in Kabwe are prey to these addictive substances due to lack of opportunities in life. Unemployment is one of the main factors of young people's initial frustrations in life and thus alcohol becomes a problem in their lives; not to mention the social pressure from friends and family environment.

Fr Mariusz, after hearing the wish of the young people from Kabwe, decided to invite some experts in the field of drug and alcohol abuse to talk to the young people and explain to them the consequences of such 'choices'. Fr Mariusz also invited Fr Antonio (youth delegate) to explain the Salesian approach to the youth situation and the possibilities of recovery when a person is found prey to these situations.

The response of the youngsters has been quite overwhelming. Although the title of the seminar sounds a bit 'old fashion'; it nevertheless helped young people to become aware of the choices that make of their lives, places of joy and happiness (places like heaven) or sadness, frustration and pain (as it would be the situation of hell). 📍

# The NEW ROMAN MISSAL

FOR THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY MASS  
IN ENGLISH.  
(Part II)



My first reflection on the New English Missal dealt largely with the part played by the Assembly during the celebration of the Eucharist.

This reflection (Part II) will touch on a few general points concerning the role of the presiding priest.

However, it needs to be emphasised that these rules and guidelines (Rubrics and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal) are not 'for the English Mass' only. These rules and guidelines are universal. They are to be found in every Roman Missal regardless of language. The Church has simply used the occasion of the publication of the new English translation to draw attention to and correct some elements that she considers to have been ignored or abused over the years.

We are reminded, furthermore, that the Eucharist which we celebrate belongs to the Church and not to individual priests or bishops to be changed and adapted at will.

## WHAT IS DONE BY THE PRIEST AND WHERE?

### **Introductory Rites:**

*"When he has arrived at the altar, after making a profound bow with the ministers, the Priest venerates the altar with a kiss and if appropriate, incenses the cross and the altar. Then, with the ministers, **he goes to the chair.**"* (Roman Missal. Pg. 491. See also GIRM 124)

The missal here makes it quite clear that the introductory rites (from the sign of the cross to the end of the opening prayer) are led from the chair and not from the altar.

This is important, since the presider's chair is one of the three focal points during the Eucharist. (The other two being the lectern and the altar)

The presider's chair is not just a seat for him to take the weight off his feet!

*"The chair of the Priest Celebrant must signify his function of presiding over the gathering and of directing the prayer."* (GIRM No 310)

To lead the introductory rites from the chair is not as easy as it used to be, given the size and weight of the new English Missal. It will require the assistance of a strong altar server or the use of an extra lectern (which should **NOT** be similar to the lectern/ambo from which God's Word is proclaimed.)

Perhaps the easiest solution would be to use the smaller 'Sunday Missal' which is now available from the Catholic Bookshop.

An extra microphone at the chair may also be needed for this part of the Mass.

*"The Priest or a Deacon, or another minister, may very briefly introduce the faithful to the Mass of the day."* (RM. Pg 492)

The key words here are '*may*', indicating that an introduction to the Mass is optional; and '*very briefly*'. Any lengthy reference to the readings (which in any case have not yet been proclaimed!) is best left to the homily.

*"After this, the Priest calls upon the whole community to take part in the Penitential Act, which, after a brief pause for silence, it does by means of a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the Priest's absolution, which however lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance."* (GIRM 51)

The various formulae for the penitential rite have been greatly reduced in the new English Missal. However, it is important to note that there is no Sign of the Cross at the end of the rite either by the priest or by the people. In fact, **any attempt to make the penitential rite look like a Sacramental General Absolution should be strenuously avoided!**

In Appendix II at the back of the Missal is the optional rite for the blessing and sprinkling of Holy Water which **replaces** the usual penitential rite.

The Instruction tells us:

*"On Sundays, especially in Easter Time, the blessing and sprinkling of water as a memorial of Baptism may take place from time to time...."*

- *If this rite is celebrated during Mass, it takes the place of the usual Penitential Act at the beginning of Mass."* (RM. Page 1217)

The collect or opening prayer concludes the Introductory Rites and the focus now shifts from the chair to the ambo/lectern.

### **The Liturgy of the Word:**

As you would expect, God's Word is proclaimed from the ambo (what we generally refer to as the 'lectern'). The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM 309) states:

*"The dignity of the Word of God requires that in the church there be a suitable place from which it may be proclaimed and towards which the attention of*



*the faithful naturally turns during the Liturgy of the Word.*

*It is appropriate that generally this place be a stationary ambo and not simply a moveable lectern."*

**Our communities that do not have a lectern/ambo of any kind in their chapels should take note!!!**

*"From the ambo only the readings, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Easter Proclamation (Exultet) are to be proclaimed; likewise it may be used for giving the Homily and for announcing the intentions of the Universal Prayer" (General Intercessions). (GIRM 309)*

It follows, therefore, that the announcements, the giving of directions, speeches at the end of the celebration and other such things should be done from some other place – and not from the ambo/lectern. This may require the provision of yet another microphone!

It sometimes happens, on special occasions, that one or more of the readings are not to be found in the lectionary and are therefore photocopied onto sheets of paper.

Someone once said that reading the Word of God from a sheet of paper during the Eucharistic celebration is like pouring the Precious Blood into a paper cup. We should be equally shocked by both! If it is absolutely necessary to photocopy a reading, the paper could at least be placed in the lectionary and read from there.

*"The Priest, standing at the chair or at the ambo itself or, if appropriate, in another worthy place, gives the Homily." (GIRM 136)*

So, the preacher has a choice: he can speak from the presider's chair (because giving the homily is part of the office of presiding), or from the ambo (from which the Word of God has been proclaimed) or from 'another worthy place': But, is preaching the homily from half way down the aisle or while wandering around the church a 'worthy place'?

In pre-Vatican II days, it was customary to begin and end the homily with the sign of the cross.

However, in the early 1970's, the Congregation for Divine Worship was asked whether such a practice was still appropriate. The answer given was:

*".... It is inadvisable to continue such a custom because it has its origin in preaching outside Mass. The homily is part of the liturgy: the people have already blessed themselves ..... at the beginning of Mass. It is better then, not to have a repetition before or after the homily." (Notitiae v9 1973)*

The Universal Prayer of the Church (General Intercessions) follows the Creed.

Appendix II at the back of the Roman Missal (page 1225 and following) gives examples of the formulae to be used for these intercessions.

Three things to note from these examples:

The priest's introduction and the intentions

themselves **are addressed to the People and not to God.**

The Intentions are just that – invitations to pray for particular needs. They are not prayers of thanksgiving or praise to God.

The priest concludes the General Intercessions with a prayer addressed to the Father through Jesus Christ.

### ***The Liturgy of the Eucharist:***

From the preparation of the gifts until the distribution of Holy Communion to the people, the focal point shifts from the ambo to the altar. The altar is the place of sacrifice and the table from which we are fed.

*"It is also the centre of the thanksgiving that is accomplished through the Eucharist." (GIRM 296)*

The altar should remain uncluttered throughout the celebration.

*"Only what is required for the celebration of the Mass may be placed on the altar table: namely, from the beginning of the celebration until the proclamation of the Gospel, the 'Book of the Gospels'; then from the Presentation of the Gifts until the purification of the vessels, the chalice with the paten, a ciborium if necessary, and, finally, the corporal, the purificator, the pall and the Missal.*

*In addition, arranged discreetly, there should be whatever may be needed to amplify the Priest's voice." (GIRM 306)*

*"The candle sticks ..... should be appropriately placed either on the altar or around it ..... so that the faithful may not be impeded from a clear view of what takes place at the altar or what is placed upon it." (GIRM 307)*

In other words, only what is needed for the celebration should be placed on the altar. It is not the place for the celebrant's hymn book breviary, spectacle case, or even the cruets. Furthermore, if a crucifix is placed on the altar, it should face the people and not the priest. (See GIRM 308)

Three times, during this part of the Mass, the priest 'raises' the paten and chalice: at the preparation of the gifts, during and after the words of consecration and during the doxology at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Missal subtly suggests how this 'raising' should take place.

At the preparation of the gifts, the Missal instructs the Priest to raise first the paten and then the chalice '**slightly above the altar**'.

At the consecration, the Missal instructs him to take the paten and chalice in turn, holding them again '**slightly above the altar**'. After the words of consecration he '**shows**' first the consecrated host and then the chalice to the people.

During the doxology, '*he takes the chalice and the paten*



with the host and **raising** both, he says: *Through him.....'*

So, we have 'raising slightly above the altar', 'showing to the people', and 'raising'.

Many liturgists have interpreted these actions in three ways:

*Preparation of the gifts:* The bread and wine are raised just a few inches above the altar because they are not being offered at this point. The priest is simply receiving the gifts, giving thanks for them and placing them on the altar.



*A t t h e consecration:* slightly above the altar while saying the words and then at about eye level to s h o w t h e consecrated host and the chalice to the people. Again, the Priest is showing – not

offering – anything at this point.

*During the doxology:* Raised to the highest point. This is the high point of the Eucharistic Prayer. This is the point for the offering Christ to the Father, the time for the great gesture of lifting high the gift of Christ's Body and Blood towards heaven for all to see.

*"The priest may give the Sign of peace to the ministers but always remains within the sanctuary, so that the celebration is not disrupted. He may do the same if for a reasonable cause he wishes to offer the sign of peace to a small number of the faithful."* (GIRM 154)

This suggests that occasionally the priest may wish to leave the sanctuary briefly and offer a sign of peace to a small number of people; for example, to the grieving family during a funeral Mass or to the Bride and Groom

during a wedding Mass. It certainly does not envisage the priest wandering around the church greeting his parishioners!

*Two final notes on the Liturgy of the Eucharist:*

Firstly, the rubrics of the Roman Missal make it quite clear that the bread is broken during the 'Lamb of God' and **NEVER** during the consecration.

The priest is not miming what happened at the Last Supper. He is proclaiming the reason why we gather to give thanks: 'For on the night he was betrayed he himself took bread....'

If the priest were simply miming what happened at the Last Supper, then the people would also 'take and eat' at the consecration.

Further, after breaking the bread during the 'Lamb of God', it does not make sense to put Jesus back together again for 'Behold the Lamb of God'. At this point the people are invited to behold the Body of Christ *which has been broken* for us.

**The Concluding Rites:**

*"..... Standing at the chair or at the altar and facing the people ..... the priest recites the Prayer after Communion."* (GIRM 165)

Unlike the Introductory Rites, the priest has a choice of where to stand for the final prayer, blessing and dismissal – at the altar or at the chair.

However, since the chair is one of the three major focal points of the Eucharistic celebration and from which the priest leads the Introductory Rites, it would seem to be the more appropriate place for the conclusion of the celebration.

This would seem to a good point to conclude this commentary on the role of the presiding priest.

Next time (Part III) I would like to reflect on the various prayers of the Mass: those recited by the priest alone, by the people alone and by the priest and people together. ☪

## UNITED NATIONS & AFRICA

### When Help has a hidden agenda

Lusaka (Zambia) 03/12/2012.- The General Secretary of the UN Mr. Ban Ki-moon has recently visited Zambia and his visit has caused lots of ill feelings and discontent among the Zambian people. The Secretary of the United Nations having spent a few days in Zambia left only one message: unless gay rights are not upheld and promoted, there will be no help for development in Zambia; this message came some time back from the U.K Government and the reply of the Zambian Government and people was just the same: There are other priorities at the moment; things more important than the gay rights. The whole issue here is not so much in whether the gay rights are not upheld and respected in Zambia, but the intention of the UN

to restrict any help to the actual fact of complying with the UN agenda on gay rights. It seems that the whole world is going gay and in addition to that, for most industrialised nations to be gay is the normal thing, namely not to be gay is almost considered an offence. The attitude of some governments in Africa and recently in Zambia is praiseworthy because they prefer their sovereignty and independence in upholding their cultural values over the pressure (even financial) that comes from developed nations.

Although people with the gay tendency ought to be respected and treated with compassion, it is wrong for world institutions to condition help to developing nations based on issues such as these.

It is praiseworthy the attitude of Governments in some countries in Africa that have no fear of challenging UN and some of the first world countries that want to condition their help to developing countries in the name of 'human rights' not of the majority but of some sort of privileged minority. ☪

# The Red-brick PROVINCE

By Fr Javier A. Barrientos SDB

**I**t happened a few weeks ago during a conversation with a priest that this thought came to me: what's the reason why one place in the province seems to be just like anywhere else? It had received some comments a few years ago regarding the buildings we have in the province. After a visit to some communities in the north, a visitor commented, "this is the only place I've seen Salesians keeping a uniform way of building". It never came to my mind that this comment contained a simple important truth: most buildings in ZMB are made of red bricks. It is not to pass judgement on the reasons why it is so, but looking around the province, from Lilongwe to all three communities in Lusaka, Kabwe, Chingola and Mansa, not forgetting Hwange in Zimbabwe, these communities have one important thing in common: they are built with red bricks. Should you take a photo of yourself leaning on a wall in any of these communities, there is no way someone will ever tell in which community you were. In fact, someone once saw a picture of Mansa and he thought it was Makeni.

There is a Roman axiom that reads, 'see the interior through the external signs'. I wonder what is the interior of ZMB Province when it comes to reading the building style we have adopted. Perhaps none ever gave a thought but it is quite noticeable to any visitor that certain uniformity in our buildings tries to convey a message; but what is the message?

I have tried some possible explanations to this mystery. I'll share two possible theories. The first one: 'most communities in ZMB are built with red-bricks to help confreres feel always at home'; so that whenever they are on transfer they will not miss the community they leave behind; since the next one will be exactly the same inside and outside. The second one: 'most communities in ZMB are built with red-bricks to let generations-to-come that this was in our time, the most affordable building material'; just like Greeks and Romans used marble, so in ZMB we use red-bricks. Why not? Generations that will come after us will understand that once red-bricks were fabricated in such quantities that they were the most affordable building material (its overproduction lowered its price), although the same generations will ask again, but if red-bricks were so affordable,



why is it that none of the surrounding buildings (of people outside the Salesian communities) ever used the red-bricks? But the latter question will leave the mystery unsolved!

Therefore, dear reader, what do you make of it? Why would a province adopt the red-brick style for all buildings? 🌀

# Testimonies

The Aspirantate Experience in ZMB

By Paul Nkandwe

I came to join the Salesian Community in Kabwe as an aspirant in June 12<sup>th</sup> March, Youth day. I did not know what to expect though; those who had experienced it shared their experience with me and that's all I knew.

When I came here at Don Bosco Youth Centre, my main objectives were; to live in a Community of Salesian Spirit and be able to see if it is really my call to serve God as a Salesian; to live in a community surrounded by spiritual leaders (Priests); to be in an environment guided by a programme according to the demand of time; to fully experience the life of being with young people and to learn more about the Salesian life (Charism, Spirituality, etc).

What I have learnt and experienced in this short period of staying in this Community is more than I expected. Almost all my objectives have been achieved in just a short time. In the first days of being here (Kabwe), it was not easy for me to stay alone as an aspirant and as a young person in a community of three Priests of different nationality. However, I got used to the situation and am staying freely.

In my condition as aspirant I have been blessed with receiving the blessed sacrament of Holy Eucharist; and also the sacrament of Penance whenever I am in need of it. I am able to meditate, reflect and pray at my own time without any disturbances. I really feel moving from one point of Spirituality to another.

Life just continued from one stage to another, from one environment to another, from the community of ordinary men and women, boys and girls to a community of priests. At first I was thinking that the Christian duties I was doing at parish and centre level would end immediately I entered the community. But everything just continued like before though different in some ways. My work of coordinating the Altar Boys Club, meeting the catechumens even though I don't teach them here I have chance to meet and talk to them.

The greatest joy in my experience as aspirant is the affection and the conduct among the youths, the altar boys, young boys and girls and myself. From the youths I have developed interest in some games like basketball and pool, also wishing to learn more from them and the Community, so that all this can help others.

In the Oratory and the youth centre I meet people of different character, talents, interest, Church, etc.. It is really a wonderful experience for me, giving me hope and courage to move on in discovering my vocation. Even though I am an aspirant, the community treats me with great respect. In April I was included in the Invitation to have lunch with the Bishop of Kabwe, other Priests, religious Brothers and Sisters. It was an honour for me since it was my first time to attend such an important venue. In the same month of April we had a YES



retreat from 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>. It was very Challenging and meaningful.

On May 5<sup>th</sup> I helped Fr Andrew Zdzieborski to organize the Altar Boys' day for the feast of ST Dominic Savio. On this feast day, 189 Altar Boys participated. It was a busy and interesting day for Fr Andrew and me together with the Altar boys. At 08:30hrs we had registration, 10:00hrs Mass and after mass there

Every vocation  
is a proof that God loves  
our Congregation

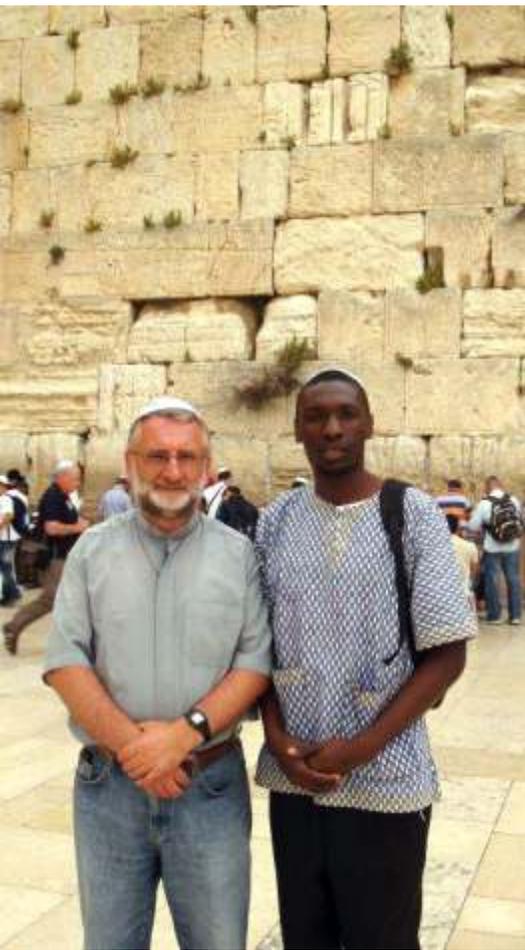
was some social time involving dances, comedy and sketches. After Lunch at 14:00hrs different games started. It was one of the best moments I have never had before with the Altar boys.

Although it is so challenging to leave one's family and friends; so far I am happy and enjoying my stay here! I get my strength from the Body of Christ and daily prayer, for Christ is the source of every happiness.

I hope to grow more in faith and the Salesian Charism and Spirit in the way that Don Bosco, our founder, was in holiness all his life. ☺

# שלום, בקר טוב

Jerusalem, 01/05/2012



Fr Joseph Czerwinski SDB together with George Phiri SDB in front of the wailing wall in Jerusalem

Fr Joseph and George Phiri measuring the dome of the Jerusalem Mosque



**T**ime passes very quickly and there is nothing that we can do... (in order to slow it down – I mean here the quick flow of time, we would have to breach the speed of light which is not possible at the moment...) This week we will end the course (lectures and group work) and on Saturday, 5th May, 2012, we will commence the 30 days Ignatian retreat. I must say that the course was well prepared. We have had the inputs on H. Scripture, History of the Church (Jerusalem and Holy Land) Judaism and Moslem religions as well as on a personal, spiritual discernment and growth in our Christian vocation. So far the course went rather smoothly. There were some minor incidents with the Palestinian and Jewish hostilities but we, and I in particular, did not experience major problems. The weather was OK, accommodation and food even better. I think that these two months that have already passed helped me to understand better the situation here in the Holy Land as well as my Salesian, priestly vocation and my spiritual growth. (I hope anyway...)

Now the time is slowly coming for the retreat. As I have never done this kind of retreat before, I am a bit afraid, if I will manage to persevere the 30 days. The basic requirements are simple: silence and total dedication to prayer and meditation. (Phones and other communication media are rather discouraged and should not be used during this time).

After the retreat we should be stronger in our vocation and hopefully much more dedicated to our respective missions...

This week, starting on Tuesday, 1st of May, we will have special inputs on the Ignatian spirituality, personal prayer and meditation. This should help us to enter the time of silence and discernment.

I have also managed (in spite of the rather tight program!!!) to meet with Br George sdb, who is doing his first year of theological studies in the Salesian Major Seminary in Jerusalem (Ratisbone). So far he is doing well and is quite happy to be and to study here in the Holy Land. In two weeks time he will have his first exams and I am sure he will do well.

I assure YOU ALL that I remember You in my prayers, here in Holy Land. I will continue praying for the Confreres and ZMB intentions, in a special way during the retreat. At the same time please remember us: Br George and me in your prayers. ☺

Yours in Christ Jesus,  
Joseph Czerwinski SDB

PS. Some sayings of St. Jerome who lived in a cave near the nativity grotto in Bethlehem:

*Be at peace with your own soul, then heaven and earth will be at peace with you.*

*What good is speed if the brain has oozed out on the way.*

*A friend is long sought, hardly found and with difficulty kept.*

*Haste is of the Devil.*

*Why do you not practice what you preach?*



## 9/5/2012 - Spain - Over 500 children at the Friends of Dominic Savio Camps

(ANS – El Campello) – From April 27 – 29 at El Campello ed Elche, The Friends of Dominic Savio Camps (ADS) were held, involving over 500 children from



Salesian associations and Centres, from Valencia, Saragozza, Albacete and Murcia. The aim of the initiatives is to bring children to know the young Saints of the Salesian family.

The ADS-Camp is one of the meetings proposed by the Salesian formative curriculum; its main aim is to introduce the participants to the Salesian style and to those young Salesian Saints of the Salesian family who can be models of life and joy for them. All this in the course on one weekend, in which every child gets to know many other boys and girls from Salesian centres.

## 7/5/2012 - Poland - XXII International Salesian Youth Games

(ANS – Krakow) – Football, basketball, volleyball and table tennis: the ball in four of its



dimensions dominated the city of Krakow from 28th April to 3rd May 2012. About 1500 young people from 11 European countries competed in the XXII International Salesian Youth Games, under the patronage of the President of the Polish Republic, Bronisław Komorowski. The games were organised by the Salesian Sports Organisation (SALOS) of the Republic of Poland which promotes passion for sport, honest competition and the principles of fair play among children and young people.

They were aimed at offering Salesian youth an opportunity for healthy sporting competition, building a new world through sport based on Christian humanism and developing character and respect for values. There was also a significant cultural element in the initiative: the young athletes were able to go on various guided tours, visiting the city of Krakow and its surrounding area – the Monastery of Tyniec (sailing there and back by boat), the Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the salt mine at Wieliczka.

## 7/5/2012 - RMG - Facebook: almost a nation

(ANS – Rome) – If it were an independent nation, Facebook would be in third place after China and India in terms of population. It would be a superpower at world level which could aspire to a permanent seat on UN Security Council. The Wall Street Journal has published some data on the population of the social network founded by Mark Zuckerberg. On 31st March this year, Facebook had 901 million users active during the month, 33% higher than the 680 million on 31st March 2011. Facebook has



a population three times greater than that of the United States. Compared with the two superpowers on the planet in a demographic, but also an economic sense, Facebook has 300 millions citizens less than India and about 400 million less than China. These figures, from just one social network, demonstrate how the 'digital continent', without geographical borders, has a real existence.

## 2/5/2012 - Brazil - Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians on the way to WYD

(ANS – San Paolo) – The Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in the Provinces of “Mary Help of Christians” and “Saint Catherine of Siena” met on 19 April in the Provincial house in San Paolo to begin the preparation process of the Salesian communities for the World Youth Day in 2013. The meeting was chaired by Fr Antonio Ramos Prado SDB, Member of the Episcopal Commission for Pastoral work of the National Bishops' Conference of Brazil (CNBB).

Among the 35 people present were the Provincial of San Paolo, Fr Edson Donizetti Castilho, the Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry Fr Alexandre Luis de Oliveira, and the Provincial Delegate Sr Teresa Cristina Pisani Domiciano. The Provincial opening the meeting observed: “As Don Bosco used to say, the young are our main concern. It is they who determine the decisions we make and we cannot desert or betray Don Bosco”.



## Ours is God's Work

Don Bosco's apostolic zeal and care for the salvation of souls opened him to the missionary spirit and made the Salesian presences spread into other countries and continents. Don Bosco responded to the needs of the Church (and the Italian emigrants) and sent the first missionaries to South America in 1875, just one year after the final approval of the Constitutions (on 3rd April 1874).

We, as Salesians, look on our Constitutions as the living presence of Don Bosco's spirit among us; therefore, we need to remind ourselves that missionary work is 'an essential feature of our Congregation.' Not all Salesians receive this gift of God to be a missionary, but those who receive it need to remember that 'the Salesian missionary makes his own the values of those people (to whom he is sent) and shares their hopes and anxieties' (C. 30). I believe that the efforts, the witness to Gospel values and the Salesian spirit of the first missionaries on Zambian soil have been blessed by God with a good number of our local vocations and especially with the episcopate of the first Zambian Salesian priest, Fr Clement MULENGA, for the new diocese of Kabwe.

I am sure that the Salesian missionary work will still continue to support the local Church and our communities in strengthening the Christian and Salesian style of life, and to beseech the Lord for His further blessing of us all on this soil.

By Fr Christopher RYCHCIK  
(missionary in Zambia since 1986)

## DON BOSCO AND NATEC WORKING HAND IN HAND FOR THE YOUTH

By Leonard Rutagarama

**RUNDU DECEMBER 2012:** Friday 12 is not like any ordinary day in Rundu. A group of young people is scurrying around and about at Don Bosco Youth Center. They are preparing the NATEC (Namibian Teens Encounter Christ) Weekend by which they intend to bring the right message home. They are busy calling, SMSes and receiving new candidates.

The weekend is a three-day spiritual journey to help fellow youth rediscover their call and lead a Christian life amid the challenges of today's society through shared-life experiences. There were 45 young men and women in attendance.

Fr. Bosco Mulenga SDB, the local priest in charge of the youth has put the centre at our disposal and has even offered accommodation and food for the event to meet half way the NATEC team that travelled all the way from Windhoek, about 700km away. There are no words to thank him for this invaluable contribution.

Besides giving mass and listening to confessions, this is also the second time Fr Mulenga is part of NATEC Weekend (the last was on 17-19 December 2010). Despite his work load at this time of the year, and still recovering from malaria, he did not call off or postpone the meeting. All converged –thanks be to God- to make it happen as scheduled, from 11 to 13 December.

The initiative stemmed from an outcry for help that was made in 2010 by some university students originating from the Kavango and members of NATEC outreach team. It has been widely reported in local media that the Kavango youth are at the crossroads. Teenage pregnancy with its subsequent school dropouts has reached alarming proportions while many youth indulge in alcohol and drug abuse, thus exposing themselves to HIV/AIDS infection risks. The moral values in the society and in particular among the youth are on a slippery slide and action is needed now to rescue the youth...

It is in these circumstances that NATEC team approached Fr Mulenga in order to join hands in helping the youth in and around Rundu... and God heard their cry through Fr Mulenga. Drawing from the Salesian legacy and youth experience, he is helping setting up a local NATEC team and has tendered to be their spiritual director, while a couple offered to be behind the youth team. After all the Body of Christ is one and we are all its members. We work hand in hand for the spiritual well-being of the youth, bearing in mind Christ's own message: "I came so that they may have life and have it to the fullest."

Despite challenges ahead, Don Bosco and NATEC, responding to their call, jointly bring hopes to the youth in the Kavango via peer initiative. May God continue the work He has started in them through the Don Bosco spirituality. 🙏



## ZMB PHOTO - Issue No 22

1. **Nairobi (Kenya):** Team Visit 2012, presided over by Fr Pascual Chavez.
2. **Chawama:** Rectors' First Annual meeting.
3. **Bauleni:** Youth Day 2012. Fr Chisanga shows Fr Musenge the various activities of the youth day.
4. **Kyindu-Bauleni:** CI Clement Mutamba addresses the young of young people gathered for the annual youth retreat in preparation for Easter.
5. **Makeni:** Saleian novices preparing banners, paintings and other decorations for the youth camp 'Christ Lives'.
6. **Bauleni-State Lodge:** Boys and girls from City of Hope during a day of recollection organised by the Salesian Sisters.
7. **Kabwe:** Fr Andrew Reut showing Fr Leszek the

- roof of the catechetical centre in Makululu that collapsed due to the heavy rains.
8. **Chawama:** Fr Dennis Higgins celebrating his 65 birthday, surrounded by the provincial community and Salesians from Lusaka.
9. **Bauleni:** Palm Sunday at St Matthias Mulumba parish.
10. **India:** Fr Oswald Mulenga during the leadership course for rectors and superiors of religious communities.
11. **Chawama:** Practical trainees after their first annual meeting.
12. **Chwama:** The provincial community distributing snacks to the youngsters that participated in the Easter Camp.
13. **Bauleni:** Young people during the stations of the cross.