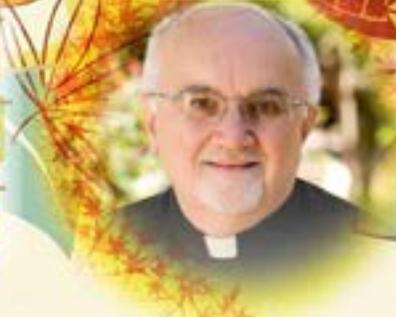


INTOUCH

NOVEMBER 22, 2012

Happy
Thanks
giving



November 22, 2012
Thanksgiving Day

Dear Brother and Sister Salesians:

Happy Thanksgiving to each and every one of you, to all our families, young people, collaborators, to the provincial community at large!

We have countless reasons to be thankful, not just today, but everyday. It's just that Thanksgiving Day is the national day to celebrate our thanks with one another.

This year Thanksgiving is part of the Year of Faith. One way we can live this Year of Faith more openly is to be prophetic about what Thanksgiving Day is all about. It may be politically correct to refer to it as Turkey Day. It may be uncomfortable to say a public prayer (especially if we're eating out). It may be customary to organize the holiday around the meal, the parade, the game. But this is the Year of Faith! Why not go to Mass as a family too? Why not admit that, as we used to pray, "it is

right to give him THANKS and praise."

You see, as people of faith, especially this year, we need to stand up and defend the real purpose of this day. Recently I had the chance to see the new film *Lincoln*. Something that struck me about this fine film is how rooted the President was in God. It was not just the language of the day. It came from his heart and deepest core. So later I reread his Thanksgiving Day Proclamation of 1863. Right in the middle of the Civil War he's leading the nation to give thanks to "our beneficent Father who dwells in the heavens." After listing so many reasons to give thanks to God as a nation, Lincoln declares that even in a time of war, "no human counsel has devised nor has any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, has nevertheless remembered mercy."

Thanksgiving Day can be a spiritual therapy for us. It can hold in check our sense of entitlement, turn

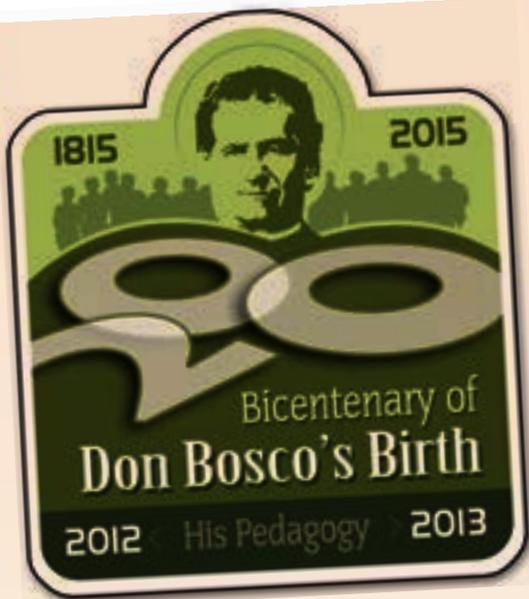
our minds and hearts upward to God, and open our hearts and hands to the needy. Some retail stores have announced that they will not wait for Black Friday to begin their Christmas sales. Instead they will open on "Turkey Day" itself, another small sign of the distancing of God from our everyday life and the spread of materialism.

So what do we do? Be thankful to God out loud! Instead of distancing ourselves from God by lack of reflection and prayer, let us be "mystics and prophets" of the primacy of God in history, in the world, in our nation, and in ourselves as persons and communities. And as Salesian "servants of the young," may Thanksgiving Day help us double our efforts to "educate to a Christian and festive way of life" (C17).

Happy Thanksgiving Day!

Sincerely,

Rev. Timothy Ploch, SDB
Provincial



**“Rejoice in the Lord
always. I will say it again:**

Rejoice!”

EDUCATION OF THE HEART

Beginning from our understanding of Don Bosco's pedagogy, the major points of reference and the tasks of Strenna 2013 are as follows.

4. Education is a thing of the heart. “Don Bosco's pedagogy”, **Fr Peter Braido** wrote, “can be identified with all his activity; and all of that with his personality; and all of Don Bosco is gathered up, finally, in his heart”. **Here lies his greatness and the secret of his success as an educator.** “By saying that his heart was entirely given to the young means saying that his entire personality, intelligence, heart, will, physical strength, all his being was directed to doing good for them, fostering their all-round growth, desiring their eternal salvation”.

Fr. Pascual Chavez, SDB
STRENNA 2013

PROVINCIAL'S CALENDAR

Year
of Faith

November 2012

- 22 Thanksgiving Day, Stockton
- 23 Community Outing
- 24-25 Office Days
- 26 Visit Novices, Rosemead
- 27 Meeting of Provincials
with Archbishop Gomez,
Los Angeles
- 28 Visit Novices, Rosemead
- 29-30 Office Days

December 2012

- 1-2 Office Days
- 3-5 Provincial Council Meeting,
DeSales Hall
- 6 -7 Office Days



VOCATION CULTURE



LET US CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR ALL VOCATIONS IN A SPECIAL WAY THAT MANY YOUNG PEOPLE WILL HEAR THE CALL TO BECOME RELIGIOUS AND PRIESTS.

Prayer for Openness to God's Call

Lord Jesus, once You called the first disciples in order to make them fishers of men. Continue to let resound today Your sweet invitation: "Come and Follow Me."

Grant to young men and women the grace of responding promptly to Your voice. Sustain our bishops, priests, and consecrated souls in their apostolic work. Give perseverance to our seminarians and to all those who are fulfilling the ideal of a life of total consecration to Your service.

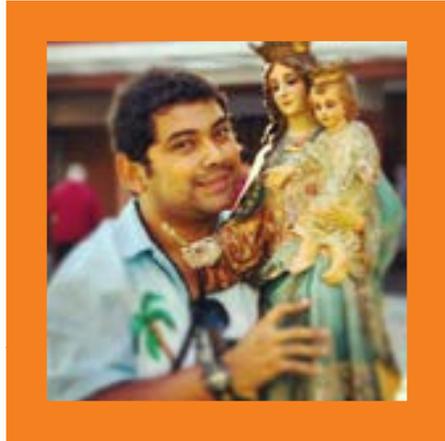
Enkindle in our communities a missionary zeal. Send, Lord, workers into Your fields and do not let mankind be lost because of a lack of pastors, missionaries, and people dedicated to the cause of the Gospel.

Mary, Mother of the Church, Model of Vocations, help us say "Yes" to the Lord Who calls us to collaborate in the divine design of salvation. Amen.

Pope John Paul II

VOCATION

CULTURE



Contact *Fr. Jose Lucero, sdb*

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Jhoni Chamorro

candidate

“More, that vocational campaigns be put into action: families, parishes, all our schools should be able to create a pastoral microclimate where they can grow and ripen vocations, forming a genuine culture of vocation in which LIFE is conceived and lived as a gift, as a vocation and mission, amidst the diversity of options.”

Fr. Pascual Chavez, SDB

My name is Jhoni Alejandro Chamorro Veliz, born in Granada, Nicaragua. I grew up in a warm and loving home with my grandmother, mother and two brothers. In 2000, I graduated from a Salesian high school and was very involved with the Salesians. Several years later I decided to come to the United States. I still remember like it was yesterday, I arrived in November just three days before thanksgiving. I'll never forget that first thanksgiving spent with my aunts, cousins and friends. We all sat around the table giving thanks to God for all that he provided for us during the year (we gave thanks for the good and bad moments).

For the first three months, while living here in California, I thought about my vocation and soon began seeking out the Salesians back in 2010. As I was quietly discerning my vocation, I continued to ask God for a miracle in order to show me what he wanted of me. But just then, I encountered a really difficult moment in my life that really put my vocation to the test. In January 2011, I was informed that my grandma had gotten really sick and inevitably passed away. At that point in my life, I had decided that it was probably

best for me to return to Nicaragua. However, after giving it some serious thought and after listening to advice from a really close friend, I chose to stay here and seriously continue with my discernment.

In July 2011, I was looking for some information on the internet and saw an announcement about the world-wide pilgrimage of the relic of Don Bosco. I was so excited at learning this that I was filled with so many emotions and my heart was full of happiness. Imagine my surprise when I realized that the relic would be visiting California! I truly believe that the arrival of the relic was the miracle I was asking for from God. This was the sign I needed to help me respond with courage to his call. During the relic visit in California, I met Fr. Jose Lucero and spoke with him about my interest in deepening my discernment. Right away, he kindly gave me valuable insight regarding my vocation and soon put me back in touch with my call to enter with the Salesians once again. Shortly after speaking with Fr. Jose, I began volunteering in youth ministry at Corpus Christi parish for a year. Throughout this time I resigned myself to God's will for me and opened myself to say yes to his call. I decided

to fill out the formation application and soon realized that I was accepted to the pre-novitiate program. I started the pre-novitiate formation on September 17, 2011. The purpose of this particular phase of formation was to prepare me for the novitiate. I certainly couldn't have gotten through the pre-novitiate without the help of my formators, not to mention the example of the SDBs from St. John Bosco High School. It was during this period of formation that I was given a warm welcome and refuge in order to properly discern my vocation.

At the end of April 2012, I submitted my application to the Provincial expressing my interest to continue my formation and to move on to the next phase as a Salesian Novice. Every day continues to be a challenge, especially since English isn't my first language, but I believe with all my heart that continuing with my formation is God's will for me. Because I grew up with a strong faith life, I believe that no matter how hard the situations in my life are, nothing will make me feel discouraged. I love my vocation and I want to respond to God with a sincere heart during this year of formation.

PROVINCIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



Welcome

Fr. Atanasio Serrano, SDB

from the Province of Madrid
to our province for one year of pastoral work in
San Luis Rey Parish
Laredo, TX



INTENSIVE SALESIAN COURSES



SALESIAN PEDAGOGY

JAN 7-11
5pm-8:30pm

**Education & Evangelization:
Girls & Young Women**

JAN 14-18
5pm-8:30pm

**Education & Evangelization:
Boys & Young Men**

Berkeley, CA

For the Salesian Family, the entire academic year 2012-2013 is dedicated to the study of St. John Bosco's Educational Methodology, a Salesian Pedagogy. Therefore, the Institute of Salesian Studies is offering two week-long intensive courses. The first week presents a pedagogical approach to the education and evangelization of girls & young women, and the second week for boys & young men.

Although these two weeks of courses stand on their own, the two weeks are designed to complement each other. You may register for one or two weeks.

Week One

Sr. Ann Cassidy, FMA draws upon the research of contemporary educators, as well as her own years of experience, to highlight the effectiveness of Salesian pedagogy, as well as to tailor its educational methods to the education of girls & young women.

Week Two

Fr. John Serio, SDB, tailors his course toward the Salesian educational and evangelical approach for boys & young men.

Continuing Education/Graduate UNITS

If you wish to take these courses for graduate or continuing education units, email:

info@salesianstudies.org

Or contact Fr. John Roche at 510-204-0801



salesianstudies.org/register