

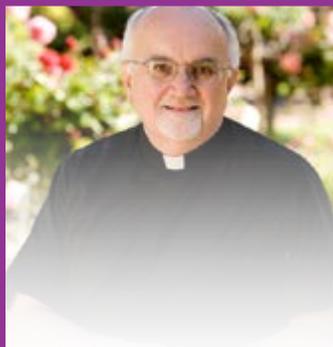
INTOUCH

USA West Province Newsletter - Building Bridges Between Communities

ADVENT

Hail, Mary,
full of grace,
the Lord is with you!





Provincial's Letter

December 6, 2012

Dear Brother and Sister Salesians:

A JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS Project Conference was held earlier this week in Atlanta, Georgia. I am happy to announce that our province sent two confreres to attend. Both are working on the front lines in our pastoral outreach to immigrants. Fr. Mike Gergen is pastor at San Luis Rey Parish, Laredo, TX. The parish is a beacon for immigrants in that difficult border town. And the other is Fr. Gael Sullivan, pastor at St. Luke's Parish, Stockton, CA. We are only in our second year of service there, but last Sunday the first regular Spanish Mass was celebrated. This in addition to the years' long

outreach the parish has had to Filipinos, Laotians, and Vietnamese.

In accordance with our Province Organic Plan (POP), an outreach to immigrants, especially the undocumented, is one of our priorities (cf. Priority 5). The same POP calls for us to publish the positions we as a province community take on certain issues of social justice. Elsewhere in this issue of *InTouch* you will find our policy statement on immigration reform. It contextualizes that policy statement within the history of the presence of Salesians in California and why Don Bosco's first successor, Blessed Michael Rua, sent us here in 1897. It also contextualizes our position in the present



on such a hot button issue as immigration reform not on our political persuasion, but on Gospel values as taught by, in our case, the US Bishops on this specific issue.

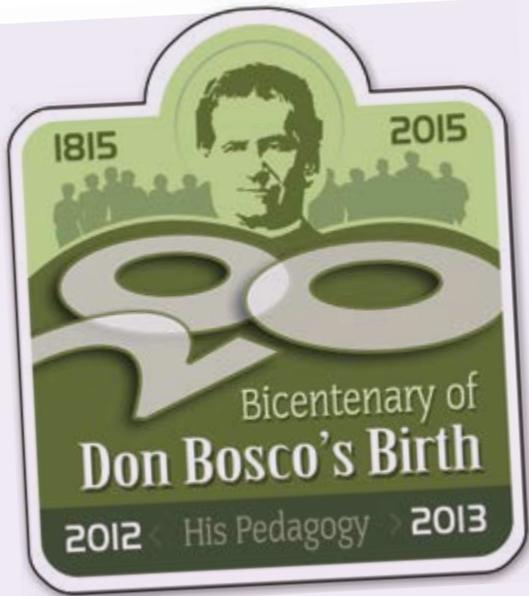
The other context for this statement is the two feasts of Mary coming up: the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mary was an immigrant, undocumented and homeless, both at the birth of her Son and as a refugee in Egypt. She as mother identifies with our undocumented brothers and sisters. She as teacher points them out to us as our field of work. She as help shows us how to stand up for them.

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.

5. The formation of the upright citizen and good Christian. Forming “good Christians and upright citizens” is the intention which Don Bosco expressed so often to indicate everything the young need in order to fully experience and live their lives as human beings and as Christians. So the presence of education in social life takes in all of this reality: educational sensitivity, educational policies, the quality of education in social life, culture.

► Fr. Pascual Chavez, SDB
STRENNA 2013

PROVINCIAL’S CALENDAR

December 2012

- 6 Board Meeting, Salesian B&GC, Los Angeles
- 7 Office Day
- 8 Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena, Watsonville
- 9 Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass, Richmond Auditorium 10:00am
Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass, St. Ambrose, Berkeley 12:30PM
- 10 Board Meeting, Salesian B&GC, San Francisco
- 11 Office Day
- 12 Las *Mañanitas*, Stockton
- 13 Board Meetings:
 - Trustees, Don Bosco Tech, AM
 - Members, Salesian High School, Richmond, PM
- 14-19 Visit Ratisbonne Studentate of Theology, Jerusalem
- 20 Office Day



MARY THE IMMACULATE HELP OF CHRISTIANS Mother and teacher of Don Bosco

Fr. Pascual Chavez, SDB

Fr Egidio Vignano, in the Letter for the presentation of the renewed Constitutions, speaking about 8 December, wrote: “This feast of Our Lady so full of meaning for every Salesian heart, is a date that was very dear to Don Bosco; it was the date that he said marked the official birth of our charism in the Church. It may be indicative to recall some events associated with this date: in the first place the meeting with Bartholomew Garelli (1841) and the Hail Mary that began that prophetic catechism lesson; the opening of the Oratory of St Aloysius at Porta Nuova; the announcement (in 1859) of the meeting which would launch the Congregation; the consigning (in 1878) of the first printed Rule

to the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians; the first appointment of one of our confreres as a Bishop (Bishop Cagliero); and, in 1885, the important announcement of the designation of Don Rua as Vicar of the Founder. On that same 8 December 1885 our Father declared that “we owe everything to Mary” and that “all our greatest enterprises



and events began and reached fulfilment on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception”¹¹

But what underlines the relationship between the title of the “Immaculate Conception” and Don Bosco is not only an historical or dogmatic coincidence. At the foundation of it we find a fundamental aspect of the “Preventive System” which, and we need to remember this once again, is not so much a clever educational insight, as something “inspired by the love of a God who provides in advance for all his creatures, is ever present at their side, and freely gives his life to save them”. And so “Don Bosco passes this on to us as a way of living and of hand-

ing on the goapel message”. It permeates our approach to God, our personal relationships and our manner of living in community, through the exercise of a charity that knows how to make itself loved” (C. 20). In my view, we will never respond sufficiently to the challenge which this way of understanding the “Preventive System” presents us with.

Salesians of Don Bosco Province of San Francisco



Statement on Immigration Reform:

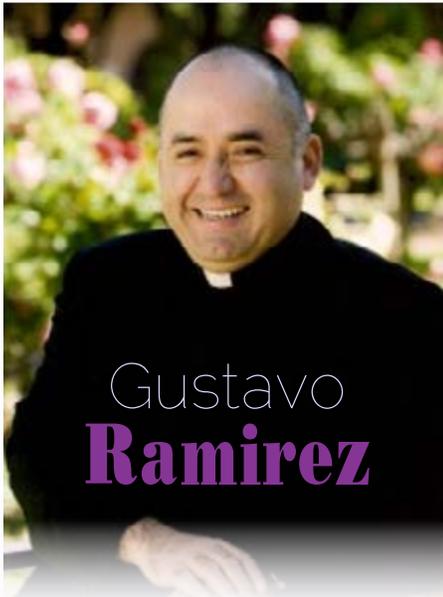
In 1897, Don Bosco's first successor, Fr. Michael Rua, sent a small group of Salesian missionaries to San Francisco to begin serving Italian immigrant young people and their families in the United States. Today in our various ministries of educating and evangelizing the young in California and Texas, we witness firsthand the effects of an inadequate and broken immigration system on the people we serve, especially the young, in our schools, parishes, and youth centers.

Therefore, we, the Salesian Family of the San Francisco province, compelled by the Gospel and in union with the United States Catholic Bishops' campaign for immigration reform, *Justice for Immigrants*, call on our federal and state governments to enact a new immigration policy that is both just and comprehensive.

We advocate for through education:

- A realistic path to legalization and citizenship;
- A plan that gives priority to a family-based immigration system so that the waiting time/backlog to reunite families is significantly reduced;
- A plan for addressing our employment-based immigration system, so that migrant workers can enter and work in a safe, regulated, and humane manner;
- Restoration of due process protections and reformed detention policies for those detained in the immigration system;
- Effective border security that recognizes the human rights of all people, especially the young;
- A process whereby young people who are children of undocumented families can earn a college degree and become gainfully employed;
- Policies to address the root cause of migration, such as the weak economic development in poor countries.

VOCATION CULTURE



Gustavo
Ramirez

Br. Gustavo Ramirez, SDB, was born and raised in Mexico in a small town named Ahuacatepec; He immigrated to the US in 1992 and been here since, He always thought that God has a special calling for him it took a long time for him to discover it. In 2006 He met the Salesians in Berkeley and considering his vocation to the priesthood which he had explored before joining. He professed first vows in August 15, 2008. He has been a Salesian since then. He spent three years studying in New Jersey. He graduated from Seton Hall University, and moved to Richmond to start practical training, He is currently in his second year. One the greatest blessings for Gustavo as a Salesian is the accompanying of young people in their journey, every day he experiences something new from them, they are the fuel for his vocation. Gustavo loves how young people are not afraid to be who they are and how they embrace their youthfulness. He works hard on trying to inspire them to be the best they can be, to instill good values and to bring them closer to God.

Contact *Fr. Jose Lucero, sdb*

Vocation Director
infor@salesianvocation.org
[salesian.vocation@facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/salesian.vocation)

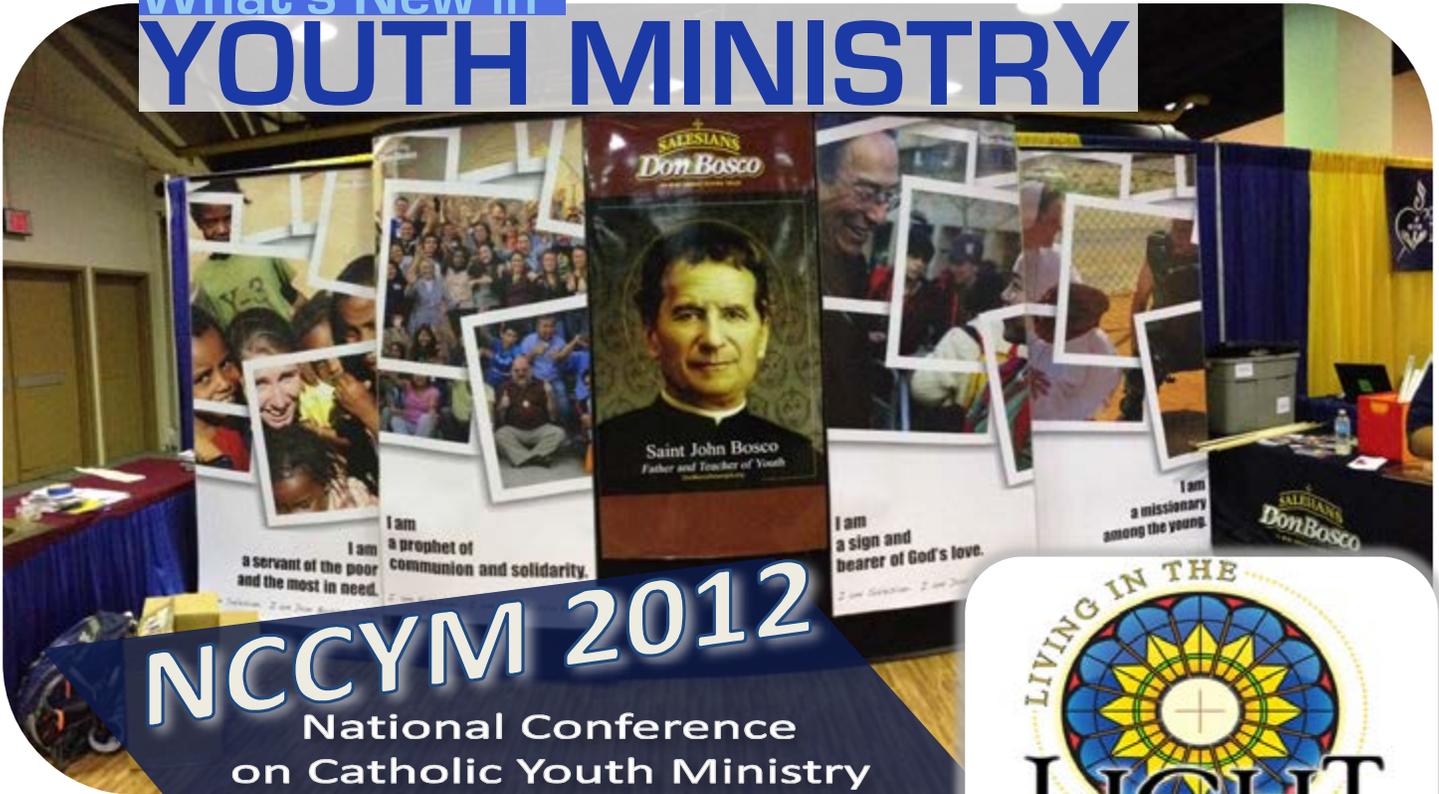


“More, that vocational campaigns be put into action: families, parishes, all our schools should be able to create a pastoral microclimate where they can grow and ripen vocations, forming a genuine culture of vocation in which LIFE is conceived and lived as a gift, as a vocation and mission, amidst the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

Mary was an immigrant, undocumented and homeless, both at the birth of her Son and as a refugee in Egypt. She as mother identifies with our undocumented brothers

and sisters. She as teacher points them out to us as our field of work. She as help shows us how to stand up for them. Fr Tim Ploch, sdb

What's New in YOUTH MINISTRY



NCCYM 2012 National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry

November 29-December 1, 2012 ♦ Orlando, Florida

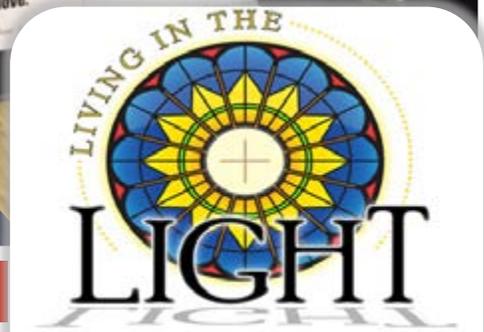
Last week, close to 2,500 youth ministers from around the nation gathered in Orlando, Florida for the biennial National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry. Among them was the Salesian Family. Coming from the SUO SDB and FMA delegation was Sr. Ann Cassidy, Fr. Jose Lucero, Fr. Joe Nguyen, and Bro. Al Vu. On Wednesday, November 28, Bro. Al Vu assisted Fr. Abraham Feliciano, Province Youth Ministry Delegate for SUE, in a presentation to the SUE CYMs on the Salesian Youth Movement. The presentation followed by a fruitful discussion on the need to continue to clarify the identity of the Salesian Youth Movement and in particular in North America as well as understand the movement in the context of our pastoral mission of education and evangelization.

The Salesians also had a booth in which the eastern and western provinces of the FMA and SDB collaborated in sponsoring. There, NCCYM participants were able to engage with salesians in learning more about Don Bosco, his spirituality, his pedagogy, and his mission to youth here in the US and Canada. NCCYM participants also walked away with a very cool poster of Don Bosco (designed by Bro. Travis Gunther of SUE) in which were hidden various objects, symbols, and sayings that related to our founder.

It was always interesting to hear how different people have come to know Don Bosco. Most edifying were the encounters of various past pupils from other countries.

In all the conference was an opportunity for rejuvenation and networking. The next NCCYM will be held in San Antonio, Texas, December 4-6, 2014.

So mark your calendars and see y'all in Texas!



"Teenagers desperately want to have meaningful relationships with adults who genuinely care about them."

Dr. Christian Smith



"As Church, we gather so we can be prepared to be sent on mission: to serve others and proclaim the reign of God."

Jack Jezreel

Young Adult

ADVENT

EVENING OF REFLECTION

PEACE

LOVE

JOY

GIVING



DECEMBER
19TH 7:00PM TO 9:00PM



ST. JOSEPH SALESIAN YOUTH RENEWAL CENTER
8301 Arroyo Drive, Rosemead, CA 91770



SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY OFFICE
626.280.2574 / sdbyouth@salesianym.org

Salesian Volunteers



reflections of a **Salesian volunteer**

By Jessie Smith

Well another month has passed here in Tijuana! I can't believe how the time has flown by! In the past few weeks the weather has changed from nearly unbearable heat to cool mornings and evenings. I am now wearing my Northface fleece to keep warm, and wearing pants instead of shorts every day! In a few weeks more at the end of November we'll begin our rainy season just in time for the Holidays.

First of all I want to share with you some short stories that have really stuck in my heart of people I have met here in Tijuana these past few weeks. I am beginning to slowly understand more clearly the situation of those around me especially through these encounters.

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS THE CHRISTIAN AS LAMPLIGHTER



At the Valet Mass [2002] I reminded the boys and their parents that in the time before there were electric lights on our city streets, a person would have the responsibility of being the lamplighter and lighting the gas lamps at dusk and extinguishing them before dawn. Going down one street and up another, he would have people watching him doing his work. They would watch him until the sun went down and could not see him any more. But they could see new light come forth.

This is for me a wonderful image of what a Christian life is all about and what lies behind this challenge for all of us. Those who are Christians continue to light new lights and we can follow their path by the lights they have left behind. They become for us a light in the darkness. A true Christian, therefore, is one whose track you can follow by the light he or she leaves burning.

In all the darkness of stories about Bali, the gunman at Monash University, and the sniper in Washington, we need to remember that we are meant to be a light of hope in our world. The way we care for other people, the way we affirm and encourage them, is our way of being a lamplighter. Each time you light a candle, you might remember your role as a lamplighter and the beautiful prayer which is used in Salisbury Cathedral, England that reads:

Lighting a candle is a prayer;
When we have gone it stays alight
Kindling in the hearts and minds
Of others the prayers
We have already offered for them and for
others
For the sad, the sick, and the suffering
and prayers of thankfulness too.

Lighting a candle is a parable;
Burning itself out,
It gives light to others.
Christ gave himself for others.
He calls us to give ourselves.

Lighting a candle is a symbol;
Of love and hope,
Of light and warmth.
Our world needs them all.

*From A Canopy of Stars: Some Reflections for the Journey
by Fr Christopher Gleeson SJ [David Lovell Publishing
2003]*

PLEASE PRAY FOR
OUR SICK



MRS. PATRICIA LAWTON
sister of Fr. Tom Prendiville



PREORDER
Father Joseph Boenzi's new book

St. Francis de Sales
Life & Spirit

Father Joe Boenzi, a Salesian of Don Bosco, is a well known scholar, teacher and promoter of St. Francis de Sales and his spirit.

Here is what he says about Salesian Spirituality in the preface of his book:

*Salesian spirituality, molded by the experiences of Francis de Sales, inculcated by Jane Francis de Chantal, articulated by Jean-Pierre Camus, fostered by Louis Brisson, pastorally relaunched by John Bosco, emphasizes what Vatican II would come to term **the universal call to holiness**. It is an approach born of common sense. God is sought in the ordinary events of life, where the profane is not separated from the sacred. The spirituality of Francis de Sales and of those who follow his approach to the Gospel is attentive to meeting the spiritual needs of lay men and women and supporting them in their day-to-day commitments in the home, in the workplace, and in society.*

7 x 10, approx 300 pp.
Retail price: \$24

SPECIAL PRE-ORDER price:
\$20 if ordered by December 15

Publication date: January 2013

E-mail the following information to
desales@desalesresource.org or
fax/call us at 1-800-782-2270 to place your order.

No. of copies @ \$20+ P&H _____

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Contents of the Book

Part I: Background, Vocation, Ministry

- 1. Historical and Political Context
- 2. Youthful Experience and Formation
- 3. Apostolic Vocation
- 4. Bishop and Shepherd
- 5. Francis de Sales and Calvinism

Part II. Foundation of the Visitation

- 6. Jane de Chantal: Making of a Founder
- 7. Visitation: A Community of Women for Women
- 8. A New Form of Religious Life
- 9. From Small Community to Religious Order

Part III. Legacy of a Devout Life

- 10. The Written Works of Saint Francis de Sales
- 11. Projects for Pastoral and Cultural Renewal
- 12. Last Days of Francis de Sales
- 13. Mother de Chantal: Living the Salesian Spirit

Part IV. Spiritual Theology

- 14. Francis de Sales and Theology
- 15. Historical Sources of Francis de Sales's Spirituality
- 16. On Prayer
- 17. Love of God and Neighbor
- 18. Towards a Spirituality of Ordinary Life
- 19. The Devout Life and Practice of Virtue
- 20. Live Jesus!

Part V. Recognition of Virtues and Influence

- 21. Early Biographies
- 22. Process of Beatification and Canonization
- 23. Doctor of the Church
- 24. Patron of Communications

Appendix 1. Time Line for Francis de Sales

Appendix 2. Consecrated Life & Salesian Spirit

Appendix 3. Index of Persons

Selected Bibliography

Notes

These pages are the fruit of spoken sessions and living experiences. I cannot claim to add anything to the great work of so many scholars on themes that derive from Francis de Sales and the Salesian tradition. I can only hope that these pages continue to add to the conversation, allowing people to resonate with Francis de Sales in their own circumstances. *Joseph Boenzi, SDB*

EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

JAN 7-11
5pm-8:30pm

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

JAN 14-18
5pm-8:30pm

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

Berkeley, CA

Individual & Group Rates (One Week)

1-2 participants \$249 ea.
3-4 participants \$225 ea.
5 + participants \$198 ea.

These group rates include the required texts, as well as a dinner each night.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The education and formation of young people in today's climate provides many challenges as well as opportunities for the educator. This two-part series of intensive professional development courses present a methodology for education in today's context. In the first part, 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. In the second part, Fr. John Serio, SDB tailors it toward the education and evangelization of boys & young men. Although these two courses may be taken separately, they are designed to compliment each other.

CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS

Participants who complete the course work will receive a certificate from the Institute of Salesian Studies for 3 continuing education units for each course.

GRADUATE UNITS

These courses are fully accredited by the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology. Participants can obtain 1.5 graduate units per course by registering as a "special student" at DSPT instead of through salesianstudies.org. For more information, contact John Knutsen 510-883-2073 or via email at jknutsen@dspt.edu



salesianstudies.org/register



15th Anniversary of Province Website

FREE PRIZE DRAWING | DEC. 8-12, 2012

On December 8th, 2012 the Salesians of Don Bosco - USA West will officially relaunch our province website,

www.DonBoscoWest.org

with a special blessing from our provincial Fr. Tim Ploch, SDB. The text of the blessing will be available online.

The relaunching of the province website will be dedicated to our Blessed Mother on her special day (Dec. 8th - The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception). This simple event will mark 15 years of our province's presence on the world wide web.

There will be a free prize drawing open to all visitors of www.donboscowest.org from Dec. 8-12th, 2012:

WIN ME



LIMITED EDITION CAP



PRIZE INFO:

- We will be giving away ten (10) free limited edition "I Love Don Bosco" caps valued at \$25.00 USD each
- Any visitor (anywhere in the world) with a valid email address may enter this free online drawing
- Each person may enter the online drawing only once (duplicates will be removed)
- We will cover all shipping costs for the prize winners
- The list of prize winners will be published in the weekly InTouch newsletter
- Each prize winner will be contacted by email for shipping information

DONBOSCOWEST.org

Please help us spread the word and visit www.donboscowest.org from Dec. 8-12th 2012 to share in our simple celebration.

CAGLIERO 11

Newsletter for Salesian Missionary Animation



A Publication of the Mission Department for the Salesian Communities and Friends of the Salesian Mission

Dear Salesian missionaries and friends of the Salesian Missions!

A few weeks ago I received a very valuable gift in Japan. Sr. Rosa, an FMA of 82, painted during the Spiritual retreat the whole journey of faith of Mary. She drew on a 4 meter roll of paper the journey from the Virgin's YES up to the upper room while awaiting for Pentecost with the Apostles. The roll recalls the foundation of our Christian life - the journey of faith can never be stopped!

On the right hand side of the triptych of Aparecida given by Benedict XVI to the Church in America in 2007 there are three scenes from the Bible depicting listening, and on the left hand side three other scenes of proclamation. The dynamics of a living faith are simple - Listen to Jesus (*Come to me!*) and be sent by Jesus (*Go and proclaim!*)! In the journey of Advent 2012 I invite all to live with a heart more open to Christ Jesus. We meet him in the Word and the Eucharist, but also in our young people, especially non-Christians. Thanks to the young people - who are awaiting our witness and word of faith - we can live more fully the missionary mandate of Jesus!

Václav Klement

Fr. Václav Klement, SDB
Councillor for the Missions

Rediscover the experience of the Salesian "sodalities" and of missionary groups

In the November 2012 issue of the Italian Salesian Bulletin Fr. Pascual Chávez wrote that «almost instinctively, Don Bosco felt the importance of "social reinforcement" in the formation of young people, especially those formed by friends and peers. Young people need friends like the air they breathe. The gang, peer group, group of friends can badly influence even the well educated youth. Don Bosco, in his genial pedagogical instinct, invented a "place" for friends which brings out the best in them».

The Rector Major underlined that «social ties and friendships are an important protective factor. A person is satisfied when he feels recognised, endorsed, supported, treated with kindness by people with whom he lives ... the "sodalities" developed from these insights as original and fruitful experience of youth groups, and became part of the Salesian panorama. Today, the charismatic heritage is passed on to the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM). It is an educative movement offered to all young people, to make them subjects and protagonists of their own human and Christian growth, with a will to have an influence in the neighborhood and in civil society in which it is inserted and make its contribution to the local church».

It is also in this light that the missionary groups in every Salesian presence fosters the revival of the missionary consciousness of young people and of the whole Educative Pastoral Community in order to achieve new levels of faith and commitment, with a specific interest in sharing their faith in Christ, witness of life, and Christian solidarity. As a result, the missionary group revitalises the enthusiasm for the faith and the fascination for the Salesian charism. It helps to «overcome faith fatigue and rediscover the joy of being Christians, of being sustained by the inner happiness of knowing Christ and belonging to his Church» (Benedict XVI). This, in turn, stirs up the ardour that gives birth to new vocations.



May Christ be the centre of our Christmas celebrations!
Happy New Year 2013!





God blesses the generous giver

While participating in youth groups during my adolescence I often heard the experiences of missionaries who narrated to us their adventures and difficulties. This awakened in me the desire to be a priest and work in foreign lands surrounded by many young people. I think that for the first time it made me think seriously about God's call to follow him more closely. On the other hand the witness of so many priests who were fully committed to their priestly ministry while seeing in their faces the joy in what they did motivated me to give my response to God. Seeing the problems of the world especially of the youth, later made me ask myself if Jesus Christ had given his life for me why can't I dedicate mine for the good of others, as a response to His great love?

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of our Salesian Congregation the Rector Major Fr. Pascual Chávez asked each Province to send 1 Salesian as missionary. I had applied to be a missionary during my novitiate so I reminded my Provincial of this desire of mine to which he graciously acceded to.

Many people asked me «Mexico needs missionaries, why do you want to be a missionary *ad gentes*? » Little by little I discovered that faith must be lived without borders and that if God gives one the gift of the missionary vocation he must respond to it with generosity. God does not allow that the place left by a missionary to go to other places remains empty, **God blesses the generous giver**. Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said «give until it hurts», which means give from our poverty. This is what my Province has done with my becoming a missionary. Yet Mexico needs so many missionaries to awaken the lethargic faith of many people, to give hope to many people living in fear, insecurity, spiritual and material poverty, it also needs missionaries who are passionate about the ideals of Jesus Christ. I truly believe that through our witness of life and the joy of living this call of God, He Himself will raise up among our young people vocations to work for the needy in Mexico and world over.



God has called me to work in Peru. As a Salesian missionary I am immensely happy in living my vocation because I feel the close presence of God who has called me to share his mission in other lands, with other young people. I know God has big plans for me and I'm willing to say "yes" with the help of our Mother, Help of Christians.

To young Salesians I say: If God calls you to be a missionary do not hesitate to answer his call. You will see that God will bless you greatly. Live your life worthily by giving it to God in the place where He will send you. Be generous with him and you will experience the fullness of joy!

*Fr. Alfonso Abarca Patricio
Mexican, missionary in Peru*



Salesian Missionary Intention

Mission for Hispanic migrants in the United States

That the Salesians of the American continent are made aware of the phenomenon of migration in order to prepare a regional plan in this regard .

International migration in the whole American continent is one of the most important signs of our times. It has grown dramatically over the last twenty years. Statistics tell us that now there are about 50 million Hispanic migrants in the United States, making up 70% of the Catholic community of the country. Due to the lack of pastors about 600,000 migrant Catholics in the United States leave the Church each year. During the 2011 team visit to the 13 Provinces of the American continent, the Rector Major has called on all Provinces in the region to raise the awareness of confreres regarding the phenomenon of migration and to prepare a regional plan in this regard.

