Dear Salesian Sisters and Brothers,

Our Provincial Council meetings ended on Friday afternoon and on Saturday I was driving to Los Angeles. Fr. John Itzaina joined us for his first provincial council meetings since being asked to join the council.

This week I will be in Los Angeles visiting different Salesian sites and our summer camps. On Friday, I will fly out to San Antonio, Texas to attend the Jubilee celebrations of the Salesian Sisters from the West. On the top of the list of those celebrating anniversaries is the name of Sr. Cesira Pierotti, who would have celebrated 75 years of profession. Unfortunately, Sr. Cesira was taken to heaven on Thursday, July 7, at the Salesian Sisters Provincial House in San Antonio, Texas. She was 97.

We wish to offer our condolences to the Salesian Sisters for the loss of this wonderful Salesian Sister. Sr. Cesira spent her life in service for the young. While her initial life stated in New Jersey, she spent most of her Salesian life in California. She served in different leadership roles and was a great mentor to many people within the Salesian Institute and outside the Congregation. Many SDBs remember her fondly. Fr. Larry Lorenzoni showed me a card that Sr. Cesira had handwritten to him two weeks ago. Sr. Cesira loved her life and was passionate about living. She loved her vocation and touched so many lives with her smile, wisdom, humanness and Motherly advise. She kept in contact with many friends and past student and even when her health began to deteriorate, she continued to accept visitors and phone calls. As Pastor of St. Dominic Savio I remember her fondly as she whizzed by in her motorized wheelchair and greeted everyone with a smile as she went off to her next activity. Many times she would stop and converse with the person for a little while and off she would go. Sr. Cesira will be greatly missed. We pray that God will send more vocations like hers. May she intercede from heaven for our provinces here in the West. “Eternal Rest grant unto her O, Lord.”

While in Texas, I will also visit our

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- Br. Paul Garcia ...................16
- Fr. Chinh Nguyen ...............24
- Fr. Chuyen Nguyen............ 28

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

- Mother of Fr. Joseph Paradayil
  (Critical Condition in India)
- Connie Boenzi
  (Mother of Fr. Joseph Boenzi)
- Br. Bruno de Pretto, SDB
- Fr. Mario Rosso, SDB
- Fr. Armand Oliveri, SDB
- Br. Ernest Martinez, SDB
- Fr. Leo Baysinger, SDB
- Fr. Rafael Saiz, SDB

REST IN PEACE

- Diana Rodriguez
  The aunt of Br. Benito Guerrero died
  at age of 56, June 29, 2016.
- Belia Polanco
  Salesian Cooperator,
  St. Dominic Savio Church, Bellflower.
- Sr. Cesira Pierotti, FMA
  who would have celebrated
  75 years of profession on July 16.
Salesian Parish in Laredo and see how our brothers are bearing the summer heat of the Lone Star State. I will also spend 3-4 days with family members.

On July 21, I will fly back to Los Angeles and attend a Board Meeting at Don Bosco Tech, Rosemead. On July 23 and 24, I will spend more time at St. Bridget’s Parish, speaking to parishioners and celebrating the Eucharist at 11:15 am on Sunday. I will drive back to San Francisco on Monday, July 25th.

I ask for your prayers as we enter another week of summer ministries. May these weeks of ministry with our young people help them see in us the face of our Compassionate God. May it help us discover more and more God’s presence in our youth.

With warm regards,

Fr. Ted Montemayor, SDB

“IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO LOVE THE YOUNG. THEY MUST KNOW THAT THEY ARE LOVED.”
— St. John Bosco
The 4th of July Celebration
Berkeley, CA
Salesian Youth Leadership Conference, or SYLC, just took place at Camp St. Francis in Aptos, California in the third week of June, where more than 75 youth leaders gathered to learn from and support each other in their ministries. The week started out with a bang with a musical about the life of Don Bosco. Spirit Team members gave the performance of their lives with incredible solos from Jose, Camille, and Br. James, backed by strong harmonies from Steven, Nathaniel, Andrea, Rudy, Sean, William, Helen, Tyler, Matt, Delano, Quang, Izzy, and Emily, all under the artistic direction of Br. Al Vu and Damien Ho. The musical introduced Don Bosco to youths in the audience not from Salesian sites, while reintroducing him to those who have known him their whole lives through a slew of powerful songs like “Beautiful City” and “Don Bosco Teacher and Friend.” The musical set the tone for SYLC and filled the youth participants with anticipation for the week to come. The first full day of SYLC was filled with four informative sessions by witty and charismatic speakers like Br. J honi, Br. James Nguyen, Br. Al Vu, Fr. John Roche, Kris Tran, Damien Ho, and Sean Roche. The participants were introduced to the four components of the Salesian Oratory: Home, School, Church, and Playground through the four sessions. This was useful to know because later that evening Spirit Team presented Salesian Youth Spirituality through six prayerful activity stations. The idea of youth holiness, sprinkled throughout the day in the learning sessions and the spirituality stations, was the center of night prayer, which was planned by Spirit Team Prayer Committee led by Br. J honi and Emily. They introduced a few of the young saints and blessed youths within the Salesian family and told of their stories as a way to inspire the participants to grow in their own holiness. It seemed almost fitting that while these youth participants contemplate their own journey to holiness the camp itself experienced a power outage, and everyone was left in the dark. The first full day of SYLC ended on a contemplative yet exhilarating note. Wednesday involved another rotation of sessions by yet more great speakers like Fr. Mel, Andrew Coffey, and Enrique Diaz. The sessions focused on effective communication, a skill we all need to continually practice to improve upon. Br. James and Spirit Team youth and adults ran the leadership stations after dinner. The leadership stations activity was the first time all the participants truly engaged themselves in an activity so fully at SYLC. None stood by the sidelines and simply watched. Even the adults were engaged with a few wanting to jump in with a group and participate.
Through Br. James’s thoughtful activity debrief, the participants realized just how important effective communication and teamwork were to successfully complete the stations. The night continued with a campfire by the bluff led by Izzy and Camille. They invited many adults to share their talents with the participants, Br. Al with his chants, Amendo with his Tucci, Vince with his beautiful voice, Rudy with his Green Day cover, and Enrique Diaz with his Michael Jackson dance. Campfire remained one of the most memorable activities of SYLC 2016. The night ended with the Mission Rosary. The participants seemed to transition seamlessly into prayer. Many of them had not experienced a procession before so this spiritual experience was both new and powerful.

Thursday’s Emmaus Banquet provided the participants a glimpse into the lives of the millions of young people living in poverty around the world. All the participants were divided up into different countries and they had just a few exotic foods local to that country like fish head, pig intestine, chicken gizzard, yams, and beans to eat as their dinner. One participant, Gabe, was chosen at random to be the privileged “1%”, who was served a lavished multi-course dinner which included a salad, fried chicken, personal pizza, pasta, a Caramel Frappuccino from Starbucks, soda, and a fudge brownie with raspberries. Some of the participants felt envious not having all that food, food that they know and love. Not given any direction on what to do, Gabe decided to hand out all of his food to the different “countries”. More importantly, he not only shared his food but sat down and ate with different groups. Gabe showed us that as the “1%” it was not enough to just give out of pity, but we need to accompany and live in solidarity with youths living in poverty out of love and respect. Some felt the sting of hunger later that night as they headed to bed. But this experience allowed the participants to walk in the footsteps of other less fortunate young people, even if it was for just an evening.

The Emmaus Banquet on Thursday was followed by an equally powerful and poignant activity on Friday, the Immigration Simulation: “Walk in My Shoes”. The participants were given the role of immigrants, both legal and illegal, on their way towards finding more stable lives for them and their families. On their journey they faced tough and corrupt border control officers, traffickers trying to trick them into trafficking themselves for money, racist sweatshop owners, immigration workers who don’t speak their language, and healthcare workers who can’t help them because they don’t have money. They were stuck in this game that they did not know the rules to (no one knew which station they had to go to next) and had no idea how to win, all the while trying to keep their families together. None succeeded. A few broke down and cried. Some pretended it was only a game and laughed their way through it.
But deep down all knew that somewhere this was the reality that millions of young people face every day as the refugee and migration crisis continue to silently rage on in Europe and the Americas. This thought-provoking activity helped open the participants to adoration and reconciliation later that evening, where many young people took advantage of the availability of the priests and went to confession, even late into the night.

Before anyone was quite ready, Saturday had come and SYLC was coming to an end. Participants were ready to go home, see their friends and family, and most importantly sleep. But a part of them wanted SYLC, the tight-knit community they had formed there to go on longer. All of the youth leaders were commissioned by Fr. Ted Montemayor, the Provincial, at the Commissioning Mass to mark their sending forth into their own missions. To keep in the spirit of SYLC, the contemplative atmosphere of the Commissioning Mass had to be balanced with the entertaining and loud energy of the last SYLC social, Café Don Bosco, where Spirit Team members Sean, Quang, Damien and adult Kris Tran graced us with their unforgettable rendition of “I Don’t Want to Miss a Thing” from Aerosmith. Participants and Spirit Team danced and karaoke for hours into the night. The night ended with a touching slideshow clip of the journey that was SYLC 2016, all the friendships made and the lessons learned. Now, weeks after SYLC had ended, to all those that were a part of SYLC 2016, in the wise words of Damien Ho, Spirit Team Coordinator, “those glimpses of SYLC are now a reminder, as well as an invitation, for us to continue to go out there and be of service to others.”

2016 SYLC’ers, Spirit Team, Adult Animators, and Volunteers
2016 Salesian Youth Leadership Conference
It’s been a blessing to be able to visit a few of our summer programs this past week.

It began with visiting the Salesian Boys & Girls Club in Los Angeles. It was great to see Br. Tom Mass, Br. Steve Standard, and Jonathan Lee and the young people who were having a great time. The summer program seems to be going well with the service that is being provided to the children and youth at Wabash and the 4th Street Clubs. The pool at Wabash was a great success. I was able to bring Fr. Leo with me for a visit. We had a good time seeing all the kiddos have a lot of fun. Then I drove up to Camp St. Francis where I spent the 4th of July with the camp staff and the participants as well as day campers. It was great to see Fr. Itchan and Br. Al. The skate park was a hit and it was great to see alum from Salesian High LA as well as alum from Don Bosco Tech. Corpus Christi Day Camp came over and the entire group had mixed games and good food with hotdogs and hamburgers for lunch. Then it was beach time and afternoon games. CCC went returned after dinner. It was a lot of fun to see the groups mixing. It was great to see the Salesian Sisters at Camp Auxilium and to see the amazing activities taking place there as well.

On Tuesday I drove to Richmond and Berkeley. It was nice of the Berkeley communities to host myself and my friend Elva Moreno who accompanied me on this trip. We spent two days with the Salesian Boys & Girls Club from Richmond and were able to attend a field trip to the Academy of Sciences. There were about 130 participants. I know the number well because Elva and I prepared smores for the group which I think they really enjoyed. Fr. Thien, Br. Jhoni and Br. Paul are doing a great job with the young people in Richmond. On Tuesday evening we had the opportunity to go spend some community time and went bowling. Br. Pat Maloney joined us and we had a great time just enjoying one another’s company while bowling. On Thursday Elva and I spent the day with Fr. Chuyen where we took a day to rest and relax and enjoy some good Vietnamese food. Finally, on Friday we spent the day with Camp Corpus Christi where I was invited to give the students a talk and to say their first Mass of the camp season.

What a blessing to be able to see the wonderful work taking place with the young throughout our province. I was amazed with the young people assisting our camps as staff and was able to broach the vocation topic to a few of them. I was impressed that some of our young people serving as counselors have given a thought to a religious vocation. I remember the many years in my formation I worked at camp how much fun it was and how much I learned about what it means to be a Salesian. My formative years were such positive and amazing years for me just as our camps are formative for the young people we serve.

Fr. Jose Lucero, sdb
Salesian Vocation Director
Sr. Anna Bui, FMA, bid farewell to both the school and the parish. The audience filled the “banquet hall” each grade of the school presented special acts. One group of children dressed in the vocation that they expected to be a grownups: one wanted to be a priest, another a scientist, another a doctor, another a baseball player, another a Salesian Sister, and so on. The parish and school decided to give Sr. Anna a special going away gift. But what do you give a Sr. principal who has everything? The financial council of St. Mary’s Church decided to give Sr. Anna $100 for each year of service. She has served our community for ten years. The St. Mary’s parish and school community will miss her and the wonderful legacy she has left us.
Graduation Class of 2016
St. Mary’s School gets full accreditation for 6 years.

Salesian June Ordination Anniversary
Celebration Fr. Beto Chavez, SDB, and Fr. Jesse

Fr. Beto, SDB and Teresa Garcia, event organizer.

Fr. Jesse and the Family Manzo
Camp Savio, Bellflower, CA - Over 270 teenagers have decided to spend their summer serving the kids living around the St. Dominic Savio parish. Many people are in disbelief by the amount of volunteers we have at Camp Savio and think we are crazy to keep so many teenagers in one place. As a Salesian camp, we believe that there is no need to turn down young and joyful teens who are willing to serve. Our liturgical theme this camp season is strength because not only do we find strength in God, we find strength in numbers. We believe in the abilities our youth have and we channel their talents and energy towards the children so that they can give them the best summer experience ever.

Camp Savio runs for four weeks but counselors dedicate an additional week beforehand to learn how to properly deal with children and to bond with each other. Our volunteers need time to spend together so they can build trust and good communication skills to perform their best as a team. This training week they arrived every day at 8:30am and were dismissed at 4:00pm except Friday when they spent the night. The counselors were given different team building activities, talks about child psychology, inspirational witness stories by head counselors, and time to connect with God. Friday was the counselor overnighter and an adoration service was organized for them. A labyrinth of candles that led to a cross was placed in the youth center for the counselors to reflect on their lives and their relationship with God. The night went out with a bang with the different grades performing lively midnight spirit rallies where each grade competed for the spirit stick.

Overall, training week went well and taught many of the new counselors how to unleash their inner child. They have learned that it is not about them, it is about the children. Most importantly they have learned the importance of unity within a family. Many of our counselors have been pushed out of their comfort zones throughout the week, but they have grown tremendously in the process.
Our annual Golf Classic is St. John Bosco’s largest athletic fundraiser benefiting the St. John Bosco Football Program.

More than 200 guests will join us for golf, silent and live auction, dinner and entertainment. Proceeds provide vital funds used to support the St. John Bosco Football Program, including but not limited to equipment purchases, team travel expenses, technology and athletic training support.

The students in the St. John Bosco Football Program ask that you please consider supporting the growing needs of the Football Program by sponsoring or participating in the Bosco Golf Classic.

Recognition of your sponsorship will be featured throughout the golf course, as well as in the program that will be distributed to each guest attending the event.

For questions regarding the event, contact Amy Krisch at (562) 920-1734 ext. 231 or by email at akrisch@bosco.org.
SALESIAN MISSIONARY INTENTION

That our schools and universities in Latin America and the Caribbean become more and more means for the spreading of the Gospel.

Since The huge population of our Salesian schools and universities in Latin America and the Caribbean are a unique opportunity to facilitate the encounter of every young person with the Risen Lord Jesus. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to assist and enlighten our community of consecrated persons, that as the animating nucleus of the educational - pastoral service they may find and consolidate the most appropriate and fruitful ways and strategies for the effective proclamation of Jesus Christ to our young people in our schools and universities.
After more than five years, war cont(ANS – Aleppo) – The Congregation’s first “school” for provincial delegates of Salesian youth ministry concluded on May 27. At least five persons from each of the Congregation’s regions participated in this event, totaling 53 Salesians from 48 provinces. From our province Fr. Abe Feliciano was in attendance.

The formation was especially addressed to the provincial delegates for youth ministry who have been appointed within the last one or two years, as well as Salesians preparing to assume this responsibility in their provinces. It was not an initiative imposed “from on high”: the youth ministry dicastery was responding to a request from the provinces that has become more and more insistent.

The school was prepared by the dicastery around the following objectives:

1. Promoting in the delegates a profound vision of the fundamental elements of the Salesian legacy concerning the service of pastoral animation, in tune with the “Frame of Reference” of Salesian youth ministry.

2. Providing the delegates with adequate competence for the animation, management, and educational-pastoral coordination at the service of persons, groups, and educational-pastoral communities.

3. Favoring the personal growth of the delegate.

The school foresaw a modular formation system, organized around three main areas: the necessary knowledge, the “know how,” and aspects related to the person of the delegate. The use of a “portfolio” also was proposed: a free and personal logbook, to update at the end of each day. Significant were the contributions of speakers, coming from various countries and with solid experience, and the atmosphere of fraternity and globalism.

The final evaluation showed general appreciation of the course. There was the request to dedicate more time to personal study, to formation on the theme of pastoral planning, with reference to the drafting of the OPP (Overall Province Plan) and of the Provincial Salesian Educational and Pastoral Project.

The significance of the relationship between the delegate for youth ministry and the provincial with his council was underscored, as was the relationship with the Salesian communities committed in the local animation. The in-depth analysis of the “personal attitudes” of the delegate was also appreciate, including care for personal time, the study of documents, and the life of prayer. It was also requested that the study of the relational and psychological dynamics linked to the delicate role of the delegate be likewise strengthened.

Despite requests in this sense, for the time being there is no intention of transforming this school into an ongoing formation that can be attended several times in a participant’s life. Nevertheless, the dicastery plans to organize a “second edition” before the end of the six-year period.

Finally, it is to be noted that this school is in line with journey the Congregation has planned with GC27 to promote the availability for planning and collaboration, so that Salesian youth ministry may truly be prophetic (GC27, nn.70ff).
The First Step to a Healthy Retirement Plan

By Sheila Kun, Cooperator

I shuttered when I thought of retirement, even though I have passed the retirement age. Why is the thought of retirement so scary? I know this reminds us of aging and the eventual demise of our life. But the thought of staying home and doing nothing is truly scary. So, I have been opening my eyes and observing the friends around me. Who has successfully transitioned to a “good retirement plan”?

After doing my due diligence, this is what I have to share with all of you who are entering into this new phase of your life. First of all, retirement should not be a fearful experience. Rather, we should view this as an opportunity to do what our other altered ego would like us to do. The first baby step towards a healthy retirement plan, in my opinion, to ask a very basic question: Who am I? For those of you who are professionals or working in the business world, you probably would answer based on what you do: “I am a teacher, I am a doctor, I am a nurse, I am a priest, I am a manager ....”

It is easy to describe your daily life and routine through your profession. You wake up 6 a.m. and get ready for your commune to work. Your work is fairly predictable; you handle all the challenges and enjoy the fruit of your hard work. You have a group of people or colleagues that you interact with. You spend more time with your colleagues than your family.

Come retirement time – all these routines are gone. No one is going to come to you for advice, no one is challenging your mind to be creative and solve the problem, and worse of all, the familiar “Good morning, how was your weekend?” evaporates in the air. There is no deadline to complete the project. Yes, now you have all the time in the world. But where is the project?

I, therefore, suggest that we begin to accept the changes from this professional identity and all the goodies that come with that role to a new YOU. How do we do it? Let us begin with a simple question: “WHO AM I?” that is, who am I after leaving this professional job? Am I going to be a gardener, a house cleaner, a grandmother, a volunteer, a traveler, a stay home housewife? Once you figure out this new identity, then the activities would come in handy. One of the key points is that you don’t have to be stuck in one role, you could take note of what are you passionate about doing with all the ample times in your hand. Since I work in the health field, I have observed professors coming back to the hospital for the weekly grand round. Some of them even take notes as if they are interns. Being academically curious might be one of the ways to successfully fulfill your on-going learning needs. After all, retirement does not equate to no new learning. You are never done with learning.