WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

This past Thursday, October 13, our province leaders, along with a number of Cooperators, Salesians and animators of the Salesian Youth Movement, gathered with those who were participating in the Interamerica Preferential Option for the Poor Meeting for a day of formation and reflection. The theme of the day was based on the parable of the Samaritan found in the Gospel of Luke, which invited everyone to reflect on “Who is my neighbor?”

The day began with a simple bilingual prayer lead by students from St. John Bosco High School which was followed by a provocative and thought provoking keynote given by Fr. Thomas Brennan SDB. Drawing from Pope Francis, Fr. Tom challenged the assembly to embrace their call to authentic relationship; in particular with those who are poor and on the peripheries. He asserted that “Francis calls us to tear down the walls that make us blind to the sufferings of the others that deaden our empathy.” The theme of recognizing God in “the other” was further illuminated in our two workshops. Each workshop was given in both English and Spanish. Dr. Jesse Rodriguez facilitated a panel made up of local experts who are currently ministering among undocumented immigrants. The other workshop was given by Fr. Juan Carlos Quirarte, SDB who serves a director of our Salesian work in Ciudad Juarez. In his workshop, Fr. Juan Carlos unpacked how we understand and see “the other.”

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

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. Jerry Weirich, SDB
Fr. Leo Baysinger, SDB
Fr. Rafael Saiz, SDB

REST IN PEACE

Maria Le Thi Nhan
Aunt of Fr. Thien Nguyen, passed away on October 19, 2016, age 70.

Dominic X. Rodriguez
Alumnus Bosco Tech Class of 2011, passed away on October 12, 2016.
After two rounds of workshops, the community gathered for Eucharist. A poignant moment during Mass occurred after Communion when student representatives from St. John Bosco High School, Don Bosco Tech, and Bishop Mora Salesian High presented Fr. Jean Baptiste Withney, Province Youth Ministry Delegate of Haiti, handwritten letters from young people from all over the province. Students from Salesian College Prep in Richmond down to St. Dominic Savio Parish shared prayers and words of encouragement to the young people of Haiti who struggle with the aftermath of the recent hurricanes.

Following lunch, representatives from each country in our Interamerica region created mini-exhibits and shared the work each respective province is doing on behalf of preferential option for the poor. Our province leaders were able to get a glimpse of Don Bosco’s charism alive in our region.

The day ended with a festive luau and the delegates from the region were treated to some Hawaiian and Polynesian dance.

The success of the day was due in part to a great team of individuals who labored for many weeks in preparation. Most notably was the great hospitality by Fr. Paul Chuong Nguyen and the St. Joseph Retreat Center community. The delegates were blown away by not only the amazing food all week, but also their care and attention. Much thanks also needs to be given to Bro. Khoa Luong, Gina Robles, Andres Neria, Hoang Nguyen, Bro. Gustavo Ramirez, and Elizabeth Suarez who worked tirelessly behind the scenes cleaning, making beds, running a series of errands, and giving attention to the smallest detail in order to host our delegates.

Our hospitality continues this week as the Province Youth Ministry Delegates of our Interamerica region meets together with Fr. Fabio Attard, SDB, General Councilor for Youth Ministry at St. Joseph’s. Please keep us in your prayers these days!

Br. Al Vu, SDB
From October 10 through the 14th were gathered in Los Angeles California, SDBs, FMA and laity who animate various province works for the Preferential Option of the poor. The meeting focused on giving a deep and thoughtful look into human mobility and to form and articulate a strategic plan 2015-2020 of our Inter-America region to be able to respond to the issue of migration in our region. Participants came from the provinces of USA West, USA East, Peru, Mexico-Mexico, Mexico-Guadalajara, Bolivia, Columbia-Medellin, Colombia-Bogota, Haiti, Central America, Venezuela, and the Antilles.

The week also included a visit to our works in Tijuana, in particular the Desayunador and the various oratories on the border. A group also went to visit various places in Los Angeles to better know the immigrant ministry that is done here. Participants were able to see first hand the struggles and complex nature of our undocumented brothers and sisters. The week helped to shed light on our region’s commitment to articulating clear strategies for networking among the provinces in the region to address the needs of migrants.

Br. Gustavo, Ramirez, SDB

“It is not enough to love the young. They must know that they are loved.”
— St. John Bosco
The annual Columbus Day Bazaar is a lively and fun North Beach tradition that Saints Peter and Paul (SSPP) hosts annually during San Francisco’s Fleet Week. The weekend event celebrates the neighborhood’s heritage featuring iconic American, Italian, and Asian foods; an abundance of games and activities; plus great entertainment and community engagement.

Columbus Day Bazaar Highlights:

Food: Pizza and Italian fare by A16, full BBQ, Asian kitchen favorites, and carnival-inspired snacks.
Drinks: Italian cocktails by Rye on the Road, plus a wide selection of beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages.
Sports Zone: Bouncy slide, salami toss, batting cage, basketball shoot-out and more.
Kids Activities: Face painting, Halloween crafts, pumpkin and cookie decorating, bingo and carnival games with prizes.
Adult Fun: Wine and spirits raffle, silent auction, card games.

SSPP has hosted the Bazaar in North Beach since 1919. It is staffed entirely by volunteers. All proceeds benefit the educational and scholarship goals of The SSPP (Grades Pre-K – 8).
The 97th Annual Columbus Day Bazaar
Seniors in Bosco Tech’s Architecture & Construction Engineering (ACE) program are developing and testing biodiesel fuels as an alternative to petroleum-based diesel gas in their Green and Energy Efficient Engineering class. Using a foundation of cooking oil, the students are achieving remarkably effective results. The environmentally friendly biodiesel emits less smoke and is equivalent in energy produced.

On the night before (Thursday, 10/6), the school hosted the first ever homecoming bonfire that featured both the football and cross country teams, band, cheerleading squad and homecoming court.

South Catholic League Football: Bosco Tech Gets First League Win Since 2012; Tigers Cruise 44-6 Over St. Bernard.
St. Luke’s Youth Group was disappointed when Sept. 17 was selected for Fr. Ramon Zarate’s Installation as Pastor. St. Luke’s pulled out all the stops to make the Installation and dinner a joyful event for all the parish. The problem was, that was also the date for the Nor-Cal dioceses’ ON FIRE Rally at Six Flags, Vallejo. Tickets were purchased, the bus was chartered, and the free bus trip to the rally has been St. Luke’s annual way of thanking our Summer Camp Counselors for their hard work and commitment.

Fr. Ramon, a true son of Don Bosco, always spends time with our parish youth; before and after masses and at most youth gatherings. He knows most of the teens by name! The Camp counselors and Youth Ministry all agreed that it was more important to be at the installation Mass and celebration. Fr. Ramon wouldn’t hear of it. He knew the value of attending the rally’s mass and hearing the speakers and musicians. He also wanted to be sure the counselors were properly thanked for their Camp work. We decided the youth would have its own celebration with him at a later date… and what a celebration we had! Our thanks to his brother Joey for filling in the details of Fr. Ramon’s growing up years.

Our youth team put on a hilarious (but respectful) Fr. Ramon bio-skit. We followed it with our own wonderful dinner, but we made Fr. “sing for his supper” as he crooned a tune for us. The cake said it all. Fr. Ramon, “Now you’re STUCK with us.” And we’re so glad he is!

Paul DeValle
CYM St. Luke’s, Stockton
Dear brothers, dear friends,
we are in the month of World Mission Sunday which has a particular significance this year: we are celebrating the 90th World Mission Sunday and at the same time, it crowns the year of Mercy. The message of Pope Francis, “missionary Church, a witness of mercy” speaks to us with such clarity and incisiveness (see below).

Basically it is about helping us understand that we are called to be missionaries to all peoples, above all because the Father is merciful, “He is merciful to all, his love is for all people and he has compassion over all creatures.”

Thus, I invite everyone this month - and especially the Delegates for Missionary Animation - to: (1) study and meditate personally and diligently this message; (2) make it known with intelligence and creativity at the level of the Province and the Salesian Family; (3) collect and disseminate the best Salesian experiences of being a missionary and merciful church. I see in this message of the Holy Father a wonderful opportunity to strengthen systematically, year after year, our missionary formation. Have a fruitful study, and thank you!

Fr. Guillermo Basañes SDB
Councillor for the Missions

MISSION “AD GENTES” IS AN IMMENSE WORK OF MERCY

The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, which the Church is celebrating, casts a distinct light on World Mission Sunday 2016: it invites us to consider the missio ad gentes as a great, immense work of mercy, both spiritual and material … All peoples and cultures have the right to receive the message of salvation which is God’s gift to every person. This is all the more necessary when we consider how many injustices, wars, and humanitarian crises still need resolution. […]”

For the complete message of Pope Francis for World Mission Sunday 2016 - see: http://tinyurl.com/j7od7ar

THE NEW SALESIAN MISSIONARY CROSS

Starting this year, the members of the Salesian missionary expedition will receive a common mission cross
- The Cross: the first powerful symbol is the cross itself.
- The Good Shepherd: the cross is lived according to our charism in unlimited pastoral self-giving: pastoral charity which is the nucleus of the Salesian spirit.
- Da mihi animas coetera tolle: the salesian motto, in missionary context, acquires a particular significance: leave everything in order to devote oneself without limit to those to whom one is sent, to be an instrument of salvation for them.
- The Holy Spirit descending on the Good Shepherd: Without the Holy Spirit, and without his light, discernment, strength and holiness, all missionary activity is no more than a series of activities, sometimes empty, carried out in distant places.
- Mt 28,19: “Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti” is the heart of the missionary mandate given by the Risen Lord.
- Invio (Send off): The expression is simple and meaningful. The missionary is sent; he goes in the name of the Lord, of His Church, of the Congregation, to realise the apostolic mandate.
- Basilica of Mary help of Christians: From this temple the first expedition was sent on November 11, 1875. Like Mary we welcome the missionary vocation, like her we go immediately to serve; like her we are attentive to the needs of the young and we show them the sources of joy: “do whatever He tells you”!
OCTOBER

SALESIAN MISSIONARY INTENTION

That all Salesians of Don Bosco may rediscover the joy and the responsibility of evangelisation.

Pope Francis invites us to overcome tomb psychology, pastoral acedia and faint melancholy, lacking in hope, which sizes the heart (Evangelii Gaudium 80-83). We pray that all Salesians may rediscover the passion for the salvation of others and the joy of sharing the experience of the fullness of life in Jesus Christ.

The month of the Holy Rosary

Pray for world peace!
OUR FATHER

who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

We pray for our faith to be strengthened as we pray...

HAIL MARY

full of grace. Our Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

We pray for a vibrant hope in life eternal as we pray...

HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

We pray for the grace to more fully and completely love our one human family as we pray...

HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

GLORY BE
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
WE PRAY FOR THE GRACE OF HUMILITY.

Our Blessed Mother said yes to God, to being the vessel for the eternal life of the world to enter into time and take on our humanity.

This humble virgin lovingly said “yes” to God’s call and “yes” to her giftedness. Each of God’s sons and daughters has been uniquely and irreplaceably called and gifted by God.

We all need one another’s gifts. When one member of our immediate family is suffering, everyone in the family suffers; the same is true when one member of our global family is suffering, we are all suffering.

In 2011, over 12 million of our brothers and sisters in East Africa suffered due to famine. At the same time, millions of our brothers and sisters in the United States were suffering economic hardship. For many, the suffering is still going on.

In our mutual need, we stand together and pray for one another. We recognize that we are not only called to share one another’s needs, we are called to share our gifts with one another.

May the grace of the mystery of the Annunciation fill our souls and help us to be truly humble, to recognize the unique gifts God has given us and to use those gifts to serve our global family.

We pray...

OUR FATHER... deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (10)

GLORY BE... world without end. Amen.
JOYFUL MYSTERY
SECOND

The Visitation

“During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.” Luke 1:39 – 56

WE PRAY FOR THE GRACE TO BE MORE CHARITABLE.

Mary, pregnant herself, crossed rough terrain to be with Elizabeth in her need and she stayed with her for three months. Both women were in need and both gifted the other with love.

Mary and Elizabeth are such beautiful examples of true charity based upon mutuality, giving and receiving one another’s gifts.

Lord, it can be so difficult to receive help when we are in need.

We pray for the grace of true charity to fill our hearts. What do I receive from learning about my brothers and sisters who are suffering from famine?

These brothers and sisters have traveled hundreds of miles across rough terrain, like Mary, leaving everything behind in order to provide food and water for their families.

Help us reflect during our meditation on this decade of the Rosary on how we, like Mary and refugees around the world, can not only go to great lengths for our global family, but also recognize what beautiful gifts we receive from our brothers and sisters around the world.

May the grace of the mystery of the Visitation fill our souls and help us to be truly charitable.

We pray...

OUR FATHER... deliver us from evil. Amen.
HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (10)
GLORY BE... world without end. Amen.
THE NATIVITY

“While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” Luke 2:1-21

WE PRAY FOR THE GRACE TO BE DETACHED FROM WeltDLY THINGS AND TO LOVE THE POOR.

Jesus Christ was born in a stable and laid in a manger.

God, who became man, could have chosen anywhere to be born; he did not choose a fantastic palace, but rather a simple stable.

Simplicity helps us to focus on what is truly important in our lives. Refugees, people who are forced to leave their homes because of a lack of food or water or the presence of violent conflict, know what is truly important: their loved ones and providing for them.

What in my life is cluttering my heart and keeping me from focusing on what is truly important: loving God and my neighbor?

What does it mean to be detached from the world?

What do we really need in life?

What did God need that day when God became man?

Something to be wrapped in, a place to sleep, food...and the angels sang nearby.

“And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest and on Earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.’” (Luke 2:13–14)

It was not by chance, it was by God’s choice — a choice to live simply.

And there was rejoicing! There was song, there were stars, and there was beauty in it all.

May the grace of the mystery of the Nativity come into our souls and make us truly poor in Spirit.

We pray...

OUR FATHER... deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (10)

GLORY BE... world without end. Amen.
JOYFUL MYSTERY

FOURTH

The Presentation

“When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.” Luke 2:22 – 38

WE PRAY FOR THE GRACE OF PURITY IN BODY AND MIND.

The ritual at the time of Jesus’ birth was to present the first born son in the Temple. And so Mary and Joseph did. This ritual was done by all members of their community. Today we as Catholics perform the ritual of baptizing babies in order to give them new life and to welcome them into our faith communities. Think of the pure water poured on a baby’s head at baptism.

Think of clean water that so easily comes from the tap here in the United States, and imagine it running over your hand, cupping it in your hand to splash on your face.

Imagine what it would be like to not have access to clean water.

What would it be like if the amount of available water and access to sufficient food were out of your hands? What would you do? Where would you turn?

Would you walk for hours a day to find water and walk hours back to then cook a meal with that water for your family?

Would you walk for days to another country, like so many are forced to do in order to access food and water? Our Catholic Church is helping to provide food, water and temporary housing, so that people around the world may experience the fullness of life and their dignity. As we return to our sites all over California and these United States, may we continue and expand upon the work of our Church, with a special place in our hearts and devotion in our ministries for the young and the poor.

May the grace of the Presentation fill our souls and make us pure in body and spirit.

We pray...

OUR FATHER... deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

(10)

GLORY BE... world without end. Amen.

INTOUCH • October 23, 2016
“After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers.” Luke 2:41 – 51

WE OFFER YOU, JESUS, THIS FIFTH DECADE — IN HONOR OF YOUR FINDING IN THE TEMPLE.

And we ask You, through this mystery and through the intercession of your Mary Help of Christians, to make us truly wise.

Mary lost Jesus for three days; imagine what she must have felt. Think of times you have lost someone or something dear to you.

Many of our brothers and sisters have lost loved ones due to famine. Imagine what it must be like to lose someone to hunger. This is not meant to cause us to feel guilty. Rather, it should break our hearts open to pour out more compassion and love for our global family.

We are then able to see where we stand with our one human family in poverty and need.

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said “We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty.” Sometimes, in a culture that is so consumer-oriented, we feel pressured to “need” things that really are not needs.

I do not need anything like I need God and my family.

How can I amend my life to live more simply and build community so that others may not just simply live but live life to the fullest?

Let us pray for the wisdom and grace to live more simply, to be mindful of and share our resources with the poor.

God, give us the grace to clear the way in our hearts to see and love what is truly important in our lives.

May the grace of the Finding in the Temple of the Child Jesus make us truly wise.

We pray...

OUR FATHER... deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY... now and at the hour of our death. Amen. (10)

GLORY BE... world without end. Amen.
I am approaching the subject of weight gingerly. Why? I don’t want people to think that I am critical of you just because you might be on the “heavy” side. I want to have a deeper understanding of weight and how that affects your health. For the coming weeks, we will unravel how our weight could change our health and more importantly what can we do about it. I dare not offend you by making broad statements about weight or obesity. Hence I was extremely happy to come across this website “Weight Matters” in their introductory statement about why weight matters. It begins with an opening statement which reflects my belief and my motivation to begin our conversation on weight.

The issue of weight matters to people in many different ways. It evokes many different emotions and can often be difficult to talk about with your healthcare provider, spouse, friend, loved one or others. The most important reason why weight matters is because of your health. There are many health implications that accompany excess weight, such as diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea and others. Sometimes weight can even affect emotional health as well. It is not uncommon for someone dealing with weight issues to be affected by depression or a lack of self-confidence.

Gaining excess weight and realizing the health implications is not always the easiest thing to recognize. In fact, most Americans do not realize that they are affected by excess weight or obesity, or even at risk for weight-related conditions. This is why it is so important for you to realize that YOUR WEIGHT DOES MATTER!

Let me begin by going into the physiological component of a fat cell this week. From Wikipedia in its definition of Adipocyte: Adipocytes, also known as lipocytes and fat cells, are the cells that primarily compose adipose tissue, specialized in storing energy as fat.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: get your weight and height ready. Next week we will need these measurements to know your BMI (Body Mass Index).

“Hearing loss is strongly linked to a higher rate of cognitive decline and a greater risk of developing dementia over time,” says Frank Lin, associate professor of otolaryngology at the John Hopkins University School of Medicine. And hearing loss is more common than you may think. “The percentage of people with hearing loss doubles every decade,” says Lin. “By the time you look at adults 70 and older, nearly two-thirds have a clinically significant hearing impairment.” Poor hearing may not affect your blood vessels or your risk of Alzheimer’s. “Hearing loss may be an independent hit on the brain,” says Lin. The key theories:

Cognitive load:

“When you have hearing loss as you age, the cells in your inner ear are damaged and can’t regenerate,” explains Lin. “So instead of sending a crystal clear signal to the brain, the cells send a much more garbled signal.” Decoding a garbled message takes more effort. “We know from neuroimaging studies that the brain has to work harder to process a degrade signal,” says Lin. “So the brain rededicates resources to help with hearing, and it comes at the expense of memory and thinking abilities.”
Brain atrophy:

“Hearing impairment may lead to faster rates of brain atrophy,” says Lin. “That makes sense, because if you have a very impoverished auditory signal, those parts of the brain that handle sound will atrophy faster. And those parts also serve other areas of brain function.”

Social isolation:

“For some people hearing loss leads to a loss of social engagement, which leads to social isolation,” says Lin. People may feel like a nuisance if they keep asking others to repeat inaudible words, so those with hearing loss often give up and stay on the sidelines. “They are less likely to be engaged, which is largely a risk factor maintaining cognitive health,” says Lin. Would a hearing aid delay memory loss? “That is the big question,” says Lin. He is currently planning a five-year trial to find out.

Below are some of the tips to improve communication with seniors with hearing loss. (Not research based, but just some common sense approach off the top of my head.)

• Patience, patience, patience.
• Speak slowly and clearly.
• Face the person when you talk.
• Avoid talking while you are eating.
• Show pictures as visual aide.
• If they don’t recognize you, introduce yourself.
• Avoid asking seniors to guess your name.
• If their voice becomes feeble, listen with patience.
• Stoop down to their level if they are sitting or wheel chair bound.
• Distinguish between fatigue and inattention to your conversation.
• Seniors might remember “old stories”, but forget recent events – short term memory loss. Choose interesting conversation topics.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: can you come up with other strategies to help with your friends who have dementia?

The Care Ministry welcomes your comments/suggestions: kunlouis@gmail.com