PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Br. Alphonse Vu...............01
Fr. Thinh Nguyen.............06
Br. Peter Duoc Le.............08
Fr. Ted Montemayor..........13
Fr. Al Mengon................19
Fr. Emanuel Camilleri.........24
Br. Albert Chavez.............30

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Doris Roche
(Mother of Fr. John Roche who is in a critical condition)

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

Salvatore Billante
May 6, 1939 - Dec. 4, 2016
Salvatore was a Salesian 1964 - 1993

Sr. Refugio Gallardo, FMA
RIP on December 24, 2016
SDB Northern Ca’s Christmas Celebration at Berkeley Community
SDB Southern Ca’s Christmas Celebration at St. John Bosco community
Do We Welcome Jesus into Our Home?

By Sheila Kun, Cooperator

The Posadas or the re-enactment of Mary and Joseph’s cold journey to Bethlehem is not an unfamiliar celebration in Latin America. From December 16 to December 24, heralding the birth of Christ, a party (religious observance) is held each night in a neighborhood home in remembrance of the nine months that Mary carried Jesus in her womb. Today at our St. Joseph Youth Renewal Retreat Center, the parishioners did the Posadas. What is striking is not the activity as we all know what a Posadas is. But this year, the “three angels, Mary and Joseph” were radiant with the message.

“Do we welcome Jesus into our home?” This question kept haunting me all morning. How many times did we say “no” to Jesus in our daily life? The singing continued: “I don’t care who you are, let me go back to sleep, I already told you, I will not be opening.” Shutting the door to those who are in need is one of our ways to say no to Jesus. However, when those angelic faces peeped through the front door of the chapel today, our chapel resonated with the hospitable phrases: “Welcome, enter, holy pilgrims … Welcome to my humble home… All I have please call your own.” What a heart-warming moment that was! Yes, for those of us who are grounded in love and faith, we will provide the lodging to welcome Jesus in our heart. And for those who need help, the angels remind us of their divine intervention.
Fr. Beto, S.D.B. and the Salesian Cooperators organized the posadas for the Advent season. The posadas began after the evening mass. The parishioners were led by Fr. Beto and Sr. Rose around the block singing traditional songs before entering the parish hall.

Inside the parish hall volunteers and the Salesian Cooperators disturbed food and drinks to all the people in attendance. The food, drinks, candy, and everything else was donated by parishioners.
After eating tamales and hot beverages, the people were invited outside to break two piñatas.

The youth group was in charge of setting up and cleaning up after the piñatas.

Bishop David O’Connell celebrated mass and invited all of the parishioners to the posadas. He also thanked Fr. Jesse S.D.B., Fr. Beto S.D.B., and the Salesian Cooperators (all pictured above) for organizing the posadas.

Bishop David O’Connell dropped by. He came from an organizational meeting held in our church that same night. [See article that follows]
Helping the Undocumented Community

By Teresa García

Bishop David O’Connell is responding to Archbishop Jose H. Gomez’s call for parishes to continue the Catholic Church’s longstanding and historical tradition of walking with and helping immigrants. Our parish volunteers are joining the other parishes in our region (9) to form teams. These teams have been attending multiple meetings to receive training to organize and lead parish based orientation sessions on naturalization. They will then work with Catholic Charities and other attorneys to prepare those eligible to go through the application process. They are also forming groups to deal with the possible life changing deportation plans in the future. They will plan strategies to teach the undocumented about their legal rights.

Hall Repairs

The parish hall was updated. The kitchen was deep-cleaned and a new epoxy floor laid. Both the men and women’s bathrooms were fully gutted and remodeled. Electric hand dryers were installed. All of the windows of the bathrooms and kitchen were replaced. All of the racks and kitchen utensils and all of the counters were cleaned and polished. The community’s contribution made all of this possible.
MISSIONARY APPEAL OF THE RECTOR MAJOR
TO THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO

Dear Confrères,
I am writing this letter today, December 8\textsuperscript{th}, 2016, on the 175\textsuperscript{th} year since the commencement of the Salesian Oratory, when, as Don Bosco himself tells us, he recited that \textit{Hail Mary} with Bartolomeo Garelli. I do it with a precise intention. This is a favourable day to launch a missionary appeal "\textit{ad gentes}" to all the Provinces of the world and to all those confrères who feel called by the Lord to live their Salesian vocation in this particular form: being available to be Salesian missionaries "\textit{ad gentes, ad exterum, ad vitam}" ("to the peoples", "abroad", "for life"). My appeal is a voice that must resound in all the Provinces and Salesian presences in the world in order to favour generous responses.

The fundamental reason for this appeal is threefold:

- The \textit{Evangelizing mission} in the world requires from us, Salesians of Don Bosco, that we go beyond, that we open up even more to give a response to so many requests that continually come to us from the Church, for a mission of evangelization in diverse places and among many peoples.

- There are some presences of the Congregation we can no longer sustain because in some nations of the five continents \textbf{there are no Salesians} who can offer their service, whereas in other places the apostolic strengths are more numerous. I think in particular of the youth that are waiting for us in the context of Project Europe, in the Middle East, in countries with a Muslim majority, in the islands of Oceania, in South Sudan, in Mongolia, in Siberia, Cambodia and Malaysia, as well as among the young migrants of the American continent... and in many other places!

- The third motivation is intimately linked to the missionary passion of Don Bosco. After the great missionary challenge of Argentina, in 1875, to arrive, in due time, in Patagonia, it was – as some of his successors stated – as if he lived only for that project. Fr. Albera writes: "Missions were always the heart of his heart and it was as if he lived only for them... He spoke about them with such an enthusiasm, that we were amazed and strongly edified by his inflamed love for souls\textsuperscript{1}.

\textsuperscript{1} ALBERA, P. \textit{Circular Letters}, 134.
Don Bosco himself, in the note he sent in 1880 to Pope Leo XIII, explicitly says: “Foreign missions were always a subject cherished by the Salesian Congregation”.

On the occasion of the journeys I made in these years and that allowed me to visit 44 Provinces, I often said that we have to reflect on this fact: if Don Bosco had decided to limit the field of the pastoral educative activity of the Salesians only to the needy youth of Italy – which would have been a legitimate priority, considering that Italy was very much in need of his Salesians – and if he had not had the great passion and the great missionary vision that spurred him at every moment, today the Salesian Congregation would be a small congregation, limited to one nation. It was the missionary spur of our Father that made the Congregation universal in the Church and in the world.

Dear Confrères, for the above reasons, I now address to you this strong appeal and invite you all to generosity. First of all I ask the generosity of those confrères who hear this explicit call from the Lord. Then I ask the generosity of the Provinces, Rectors and, in particular, of Provinceals, that they do not stifle in any way the missionary unrest of young confrères and of no other confrère, confining their view and their interest only to their own Province. We cannot forget our origins and our charismatic identity.

You know well how we proceed in these cases. As soon as the Rector Major receives a call, a letter or an email from a confrère who expresses this wish, the Dicastery for the Missions begins a serene, serious and profound discernment with the Confrère and with his Provincial. Everything is then brought to the knowledge of the Rector Major. Discernment often highlights the suitability of the candidate; but sometimes it is not so. In any case, we only look for the good of the persons and of the mission.

This is my appeal, my dear Confrères.
I invite you to pray for this intention in the entire Congregation. Many are the persons who have not yet been reached by the announcement of the Gospel. Many young people need a friend, a brother, a father whom they will be able to find in the Salesians they will meet.

May Mary Help of Christians bless this generosity of yours and may Don Bosco continue to accompany us in our commitment to being true missionary disciples of Jesus.

Yours affectionately

Rector Major

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2 MB XIV, 624.
The St. Joseph's Residence was the location where nearly 40 Salesian Cooperators, candidates in formation, and SDBs, gathered to celebrate the last Sunday of Advent and have an early Christmas celebration.

It was a very festive gathering where a delicious potluck was enjoyed by all in addition to an opportunity to visit with fellow Cooperators and other members of our Salesian Family. We sang Christmas carols and benefited from a moment of prayer in the Chapel, which nourished our spirit of unity and friendship. The Southern California Cooperator Centers that participated were St. Joseph's, St. Dominic Savio's English and Spanish Centers, St. Bridget and St. Mary's.

We intend to repeat this annual Christmas celebration and make it a traditional gathering, as it is always a joyful and happy occasion to celebrate the gift of our Salesian Family.

Merry Christmas to all!!!

The ASC Provincial Council
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).

Chronic lower–back pain is quite common. For those of us who work long hours, especially in an office setting, lower-back pain is very prevalent. This abstract from JAMA might provide an opportunity to seek better pain control.

Mindfulness-based stress reduction and cognitive behavioral therapy may reduce lower-back pain. Researchers randomly assigned roughly 340 people with chronic lower-back pain to one of three groups:

Mindfulness-based stress reduction. For two hours a week for two months, instructors led participants in stress-reduction techniques like yoga and meditation. A key goal: help people accept physical discomfort and difficult emotions.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). For two hours a week for two months, psychologists taught participants relation skills (like abdominal breathing and guided imagery), how to change dysfunctional thoughts, and other strategies to understand and cope with pain.

Usual care. The control group received $50 but no training.

After six months, 44 percent of the mindfulness and CBT groups – but only 27 percent of the usual-care group – reported less pain. Similarly, 60 percent of the mindfulness and CBT groups – but only 44 percent of the usual-care group – reported better function.

What to do: If you have chronic lower-back pain, give mindfulness-based stress reduction or cognitive behavioral therapy a try.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: try a stress reduction method that works for you.

The Care Ministry welcomes your comments/suggestions: kunlouis@gmail.com
Evangelizing the Young in a Secular Age

Don Bosco Hall in Berkeley operates the Institute of Salesian Studies in affiliation with the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology. The January Inter-session seminars are open to the public. For more information contact us at Salesianstudies.org or call (510) 204-0801

The Psalms: The Treasure of Biblical Prayer

16–20 January

Daily schedule:
- 9am–noon | Session 1
- 12:30pm | Lunch
- 2:30pm–4pm | Session 2

Instructor: Fr. Bob Bauer, SDB: Scripture scholar

Details: This seminar will explore the types of psalms, as well as the theology and spirituality of them. The seminar will also examine the use of the psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours for daily prayer. Fr. Bob will offer an updated bibliography as well as other resources for this study.

Perspectives on Evangelizing the Young

23–27 January

Daily Schedule:
- 6pm | Dinner
- 7pm–9pm | Seminar

Instructor: John Roche, SDB: Director of the Institute of Salesian Studies

Details: This five-day seminar offers the opportunity to delve into the depths of a distinctly Salesian response to the cries of this secular age. For eight years, Fr. John Roche, SDB has taught “Evangelizing a Secular Age” at the Graduate Theological Union, and has woven into this study the giftedness of a Salesian school of spirituality and ministry. The Salesian approach offers much to the challenge of helping the young and their families discover and rediscover Christ in their lives. Salesian ministry, then, is “meaning-making.” It reaches far beyond curriculum or scholastics, and demands an approach that is nothing less than deeply relational. Your registration fee covers the cost of the seminar, and all who attend are invited to join us each night for a meal.
JANUARY WORKSHOPS

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TO REGISTER VISIT
salesianstudies.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
Fr. John Roche, SDB
510-204-0801

Cost

Early Registration (payment RECEIVED by 20 Dec ’16):
$95/person for one seminar or
$175/person for both seminars

Regular registration (21 Dec ’16 or later):
$125/person for one seminar or
$220/person for both seminars

Cost does not include housing. Limited housing is available at Don Bosco Hall on a first come-first serve basis. Contact Sean at info@salesianstudies.org for inquiries regarding availability and cost.