Dear Salesian Sisters and Brothers,

Today we celebrate the feast of Blessed Michael Rua! Happy Feast day to all! We are grateful to Blessed Michael Rua, who took Don Bosco place as Rector Major after Don Bosco’s death, for his dedication and organizational skills which helped keep our Salesian Congregation alive and strong. It was under Fr. Rua’s leadership that the Salesians saw great growth and expansion. We pray that through his intercession we here in the West might also witness growth and greater holiness in our commitment to the young, especially, those who are poor. Blessed Michael Rua, pray for us!

I flew down from San Francisco on Thursday afternoon and on Friday afternoon attended the funeral Mass, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in La Habrá, for Ysabel “Ysie” Prendiville Sims, Fr. Tom Prendiville’s younger sister who passed away two weeks ago. We offer our condolences to Tom and his family and continue to offer our prayers for Ysabel and for God’s strength and comfort to the family during this difficult time.

Today I was blessed to have presided at a Mass for the induction of seven new Salesian Cooperators. The group belongs to the St. Joseph’s, Rosemead center. The Mass and simple ceremony took place in the chapel of St. Joseph’s Retreat Center. It was very well attended and the music group beautifully animated the liturgy with their music. After the Mass all were invited to the residence for a simple reception. Everything was very well done and there was a wonderful feeling of family and hospitality. I wish to thank Elizabeth Gamarra, Judy and Michael Alvarez and Br. John Razor for their commitment to helping to form these new cooperators and journeying with them. The cooperators groups are experiencing a revitalization and growth in our province. In January several centers will have new members make their Cooperators promise. Again, my thanks to all who have worked hard to form these new candidates

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- Fr. Lucian Lomello, SDB
- Br. Jerry Weirich, SDB
- Br. Tony Matse, SDB
- Fr. Armand Oliveri, SDB
- Fr. Mario Rosso, SDB
- Fr. Avelino Lorenzo, SDB
- Fr. Arthur Lenti, SDB
- Connie Boenzi, the Mom of Fr. Joe Bonzi

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

- Fr. Marc Rougeau
- Br. Jerry Weirich
- Br. John Rasor
- Fr. Steve Whelan
- Br. Vien Minh Nguyen
- Fr. Joe Boenzi
- Fr. Al Pestun
- Br. Jhoni Chamorro
- Fr. Moses Yun

REST IN PEACE

- Fr. Joseph Dinh
- Fr. Larry Lorenzoni

Former Salesian
Sept. 28, 2017
Sept. 5, 2017
and for the renewed interest in helping this branch of the Salesian Family grow and rediscover their identity. Don Bosco founded the Salesian Cooperators, as well as the SDBs, FMAs and ADMA. His vision was to form a united family. In Constitution #5 of our Salesian Constitutions, we read:

“These (SDBs, FMAs, Cooperators) live in communion with each other, share the same spirit and, with specifically distinct vocations, continue the mission he began. Together with these groups and with others born later we make up the Salesian Family.

Within this family, by the will of the Founder, we have particular responsibilities: to preserve unity of spirit and foster dialogue and fraternal collaboration for our mutual enrichment and greater apostolic effectiveness."

We congratulate and welcome our new members of the Salesian Family. We ask God to help them grow in holiness, in love for the young, especially, those who are poor and in enriching our Family. We promise our support and prayers. And, we ask Don Bosco to help us promote his vision of unity, dialogue and fraternal collaboration. We must not be afraid to speak with one another, even if we do not always agree. There is great unity and a wonderful witness of God’s presence when individuals and groups can sit and dialogue and listen to each other. Many problems are resolved when we make the commitment to listen with a compassionate heart and make the effort to understand each other. Today our country and leaders do not witness to this unity and dialogue. But, we as Christians and Salesians must live out our Salesian Spirit and be instruments of peace and communities of conversation. We must continue to strengthen our Salesian Family.

Around three weeks ago, our Province celebrated the anniversaries of nine of our Salesian Brothers and Priests. One of them, Fr. John O’Brien, celebrated from heaven. The other eight included Br. Joe Reza, Br. Bruno De Pretto, Fr. Marc Rougeau, Fr. Nick Reina, Fr. Robert Stein, Fr. Al Pestun, Fr. Leo Baysinger and Fr. John Roche. We wish to congratulate them and thank them for their many years of service to the Congregation and to the Province. I am always amazed and inspired when I hear the life stories of our Salesian brothers. Many of them have overcome huge obstacles and difficult moments in their lives but they have persevered and continue to serve as best as they can. The Province thanks them for their brotherly presence and beautiful contributions to our mission to the young. We promise them our support and prayers.

The Anniversary celebrations took place at St. Dominic Savio Church in Bellflower. After the Eucharist, which took place at 3pm, all were invited to St. John Bosco High School next door for a more formal reception. I wish to thank all those who helped organize and execute a wonderful celebration. In a special way, I wish to thank Elizabeth Gamarra, who although was unable to be present because of another Salesian commitment in San Antonio, Texas, was able to prepare, organize and put together many of the pieces that were needed to have a successful celebration, including the invitations. I also wish to thank Bettyrae Reyes for helping to coordinate the Liturgy, Fr. Nick Reina for overseeing the celebrations both at the Church and at Bosco, Mike and Jude Alvarez for coordinating the reception and to so many who volunteered and generously contributed to this occasion. THANK YOU! This includes the choir, the ministers, those who prepared the reception hall (De Sales candidates) and those who served in different capacities. Much appreciated!
Wednesday morning the provincial council will fly to San Antonio, Texas and drive to Laredo for our monthly council meetings. San Luis Rey Parish in Laredo will host us. On Friday evening, we will drive up to San Antonio and join the Salesian Sisters Provincial Council for a joint meeting. Most of the council will fly home on Sunday morning. I will take a day and a half to visit with my family. And, on Wednesday, November 8th, the provincial council will once again fly but this time to New York/New Jersey for a joint meeting with the provincial council of the New Rochelle Province. Several of us will stay a few days afterwards and visit with our brothers in formation in Orange, NJ.

I wish to remind the Salesian Family that Pope Francis has announced a First World Day of the Poor to take place on this November 19th. This is another consistent initiative from Pope Francis to keep the poor in the center of our lives. We cannot be true disciples of Jesus if we do not concretely love the poor. The Rector Major, Fr. Angel, also has often reminded us that “the poor young people are saving the Salesians.” Our vocation flourishes when we make a commitment to poor people or youth in need or at risk. Let us make the week of November 12 – 19 a special time of reflection, prayer and finding ways to encounter the poor, especially, young people who are poor. May we listen to God’s inspiration and voice as he leads us in ways to be more committed to the poor and help us encounter the poor youth around us with a concrete response.

With warm regards and gratitude,

Fr. Ted Montemayor, SDB
ROSEMEAD, CA. – October 17, 2017 - Don Bosco Technical Institute (Bosco Tech) will host its Open House for prospective students and their families on Sunday, November 5, 2017, from 12 noon to 4 pm.

Interested middle school students are invited to tour the school’s extensive engineering and applied science labs and participate in its signature Explore and Create workshops. Offered to boys in grades 6–8, these complementary sessions allow prospective students to experience Bosco Tech’s uniquely integrated, hands-on STEM education.

“The Explore and Create workshops are a great opportunity to try what Bosco Tech students actually do,” said Principal Xavier Jimenez. “They offer a sample of the interactive technology curriculum the school is known for.”

Also during Open House, the school’s athletic teams and clubs will provide information, while the award-winning Royal Techmen marching band will entertain the visiting crowds. A variety of foods will be available for purchase. For more information about Open House or the Explore & Create workshops, contact Director of Admissions John Garcia at jgarcia@boscotech.edu or 626-940-2009.

Bosco Tech is an all-male Catholic high school that combines a rigorous college-preparatory program with a technology-focused education. The innovative curriculum allows students to exceed university admissions requirements while completing extensive integrated coursework in one of several applied science and engineering fields. The school boasts a four-year college acceptance rate of 100 percent and approximately 75 percent of Bosco Tech graduates have careers in STEM-related fields. Visit www.boscotech.edu or call 626-940-2000 for more information.
Bosco Tech's 2017 College Fair, on October 10, was an overwhelming success! Sponsored by The Princeton Review, the event brought more than 70 colleges and universities from across the country to local high school students and their families.
A crowd of 400 faithful, young and old, gathered at the Grotto of the St. Joseph Salesian Youth Renewal Retreat Center. This was a special assembly. This retreat center is not a parish, on a regular Sunday, around 100 parishioners attend Mass here. Tonight, a throng of visitors gathered by 6 p.m. A parade of beautiful women in traditional Vietnamese dresses – The Liturgical Dance Group of the San Gabriel Mission, accompanied by children in their Sunday suits. Then there were the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree with 3 Assemblies of the San Gabriel Valley Chapter, under the leadership of SK Victor Martinez, leading the procession in their knightly outfit.

The team that carried the image of Fatima included the Progama Misióneros de Compton, the Vietnamese Choir of San Gabriel Mission, the Fatima Vietnamese Youth Group of Los Angeles and the St. Joseph Salesian Retreat Center. Representatives from different groups did an excellent job in their respective stations in the recitation of the rosary in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. For most of us, we felt like this gathering was a miniature Fatima celebration in Portugal. We were pilgrims from all walks of life, after beating the Friday traffic, we managed to experience the magic of Mary, our Blessed Mother, in her 100th anniversary of Fatima celebration.

October 13, 2017, St. Joseph was truly a miniature universe. The celebration was held in three different languages: Vietnamese, Spanish and English. We did not know the ones sitting next to us. However, we did speak the same language – the proclamation of God’s love for us and Mary’s presence interceding for us all the time.

St. Joseph is known as the site for Marion Devotion. It is not surprising that this small community became the center of Mary’s pride. We had a Marion Devotion every Saturday from 2001 to 2013 under the leadership of Fr. Paul Caporali and Bro. Bruno De Pretto. Today, Bro. Bruno, aged 92, the oldest professed Salesian in the Western Province again led the crowd. He did not bus around like he used to. But with the tender care of his Salesian brothers, Bro. Bruno dressed up like a groom. His walker led him from the chapel to the Grotto, cheered on by his Salesian families. After 10 minutes, he made it, sitting proudly in the front row to

THE MIRACLE OF THE DANCING SUN AT ROSEMEAD, CA

By Sheila Kun, Cooperator
attend the evening mass. We used to say, those who gathered at the Grotto were here not by accident, but it is God’s incidence.

God’s incidence continued through the night until 8:30 p.m. Fr. Richard Alejunas, a Salesian priest from New Rochelle province, currently working in Tijuana, Mexico, was the main celebrant. His Salesian spirit weaved through us all. “We are the dancing sun; we are the face and witness of God’s love. Like Mary, we accompany our families, friends to redemption.” The celebration continued with dances, songs and praises of our God most high.

It was almost 9 p.m., Bro. Bruno was dragging his frail body back to Bosco Tech; this definitely passed his bedtime. Even though his body was tired, his spirit was still high. (Check out his picture below). The simple refreshment of coffee and cookies after mass was a hit. Most of the attendees still hung around to savor the Salesian hospitality after 9 p.m.

One hundred years ago, in Fatima, Portugal, the church leaders were anxiously waiting to verify the miracle of the sun, and the three children were faced with possible blasphemy. Here at St. Joseph, Rosemead, we experienced the wisdom of our center leader, Fr. Paul Chuong Nguyen and his fearless Fatima Committee members whose faith brought us all together to perform the daily miracle of compassion and love. Thank you all for putting your best foot forward to bring glory to God.
I have the pleasure to introduce to you Monica Rosales. Our new CYM Assistance. As you may know Taaj Lewis found a new job in the field of his dreams (Marketing) and now Taaj is helping people in a different way. This led to an opening for his position. With Fr. Chinh we talked about the best way to hire a new assistant so, we develop a group from the parish that will help us in this process. We interviewed over five people and from them the group chose Monica as the best option for the CYM Assistance job.

Now, let me give you a small intro to Monica Rosales. Monica has been a parishioner of St. Dominic Savio since she was 2 years old. She completed her First Communion in the “Old Church” in 2001. As a child, she sought to always be involved with the parish by being an altar server for many years. She completed the rigorous 3-year Confirmation Program through the Religious Education in 2009.

After completing her Confirmation, Monica was chosen to attend SYLC in 2009 as a potential leader for the parish. Upon attending SYLC, Monica had not had a true education about the Salesians. She attended local public schools and was eager to discover more about her faith as a teenager. She became a Monday Night Youth Group leader, planning various talks and activities. Monica was even featured in a 2010 article in The Tidings. After graduating high school, she decided to attend Loyola Marymount University to pursue her education within the Catholic university. At LMU, she was involved with Campus ministry through Kairos and Christian Life Community (CLC) as a participant and leader, as well as a campus leader in her sorority Delta Zeta and as a Resident Advisor (RA). She was a Communication Studies major, and graduated early with honors.

After graduation, Monica dedicated a year of her life to service within the St. Joseph Worker Program in Los Angeles, working specifically at Immaculate Conception School as an instructional aide in the 5th -8th grade. Upon completing her year, Monica continued to work at Immaculate Conception School as the 4th grade teacher beginning in January 2016. She also enrolled in a School Counseling Program at LMU to receive her Master’s degree and counseling credential. Monica left her teaching position to complete her internship hours needed for counseling this school year, and was looking for a way to give back to her Savio community and this position was a perfect fit. We gladly welcome her back and continue supporting her to continue developing our youth ministry.
We welcome Salesians from Ecuador!

Our province would like to welcome Br. Diego Haro and Br. David Dela Cruz. Two Salesians in formation from Ecuador province. They are in our province to experience a different culture while learning English.

They will be in the province until Dec. 2017. After this experience Br. David will go to study theology in Chile and Br. Diego will go the Cresco in Guatemala.

The 3rd Annual Zumbathon

The Savio Dance with Me Zumba group started this beautiful work back in 2015, in which we decided to support and collaborate with the “We Care” program at St. Dominic Savio Church in Bellflower. The “We Care” program is an after school care program that gives children the opportunity to be in a healthy, fun and educational environment. This is why from the bottom of our hearts we invite you to participate in the Zumbathon on November 18th. The Zumbathon includes a variety of activities such as an outdoor obstacle course and 2 hours of Zumba, complete with different musical genres. If for any reason you aren’t able to participate we invite you to collaborate by purchasing a ticket. This will allow you to help a child in the program and support our Zumbathon. Tickets are available for purchase at www.eventbrite.com, search for Zumbathon 2017. If you prefer, we also have tickets available for purchase after each class. Thank you!
St. Luke Youth Group’s Sept. 17 Fall Kick-Off was organized, planned out, and ready to go when Fr. Ramon called me that same day and said, “Guess what? Sean Bryan, the Papal Ninja, will be here tonight to visit our Youth Group!” Now, we don’t get a lot of celebrities visiting Stockton, and especially not at Youth Group! The closest we came was taking photos with a life-size cardboard cut-out of Pope Francis a few years back! So we altered our plans and announced to the youth at our 5:30 Mass that we’d have a celebrity guest at Youth Group, following Mass.

Our group entered the gym and were treated to a video on Sean’s background, faith, and the ninja skills that brought him to NBC’s American Ninja Warrior. His buddy, Alex (the ninja in the green suspenders) prepared us for the papal ninja’s big entrance…and wearing the Vatican colors, to the roar of the crowd, in ran Joey Zarate??? As everyone was having a good laugh, from behind sauntered in the REAL Papal Ninja. Sean shared with the youth the hard work and commitment needed to prepare for something like American Ninja Warrior. He particularly emphasized the importance prayer plays in his life. He spoke about his reliance on Scripture, the Liturgy of the Hours, the rosary and other forms of prayer. Most importantly he then challenged his listeners to develop their own prayer lives and talked about how prayer will help them deal with the challenges they face on a daily basis. It was an inspiring evening they won’t forget.

The next evening was the airing of the final stages of American Ninja Warrior. Most of our teens watched it and were so proud to see that he finished as one of the top three finalists! Our prayers go out on Sean’s behalf for whatever climbs and leaps and challenges come his way, as a ninja warrior, and as a Catholic role model. Abundant blessings, Sean!

WE FLIPPED WHEN A CELEBRITY CAME TO STOCKTON…
(Actually it was our guest who did the flipping!)
Salesian Provincial Office in San Francisco is seeking an experienced Administrative Assistant for their Development Department.

Expertise and knowledge in data base management, Raise’s Edge and MS Office (required). Knowledgeable of Vietnamese and Spanish would be beneficial.

Full-time position includes processing mail, data entry, and other clerical duties.

Send resume with compensation requirements to Greg Cattalini: gcattalini@Salesiansf.org. Questions can be directed to Mr. Cattalini at (415) 441-7144, x217 or Father Tho Bui, x221. For more information on the Salesians, please visit www.donboscowest.org.

For the Salesian Family in the countries of Asia, that they may know how to initiate always the first step to reach out to their neighbour, learn to live with a heart open to the young and to the followers of other religions. In this way may they grow by listening to and understanding other religions and thus foster the interreligious dialogue of daily life.
October, missionary month par excellence! The whole Church stirs up and wakes up, recognizing once again its deep missionary roots. Pope Francis, through his message for the World Mission Day 2017, reminds us also of the synodal and youthful path that we are already going through together: “Young people are the hope of the mission. The person of Jesus and the good news proclaimed by him continue to fascinate many young people” (No. 8). We have just seen this fascination in Valdocco on the face of each of the young Salesians from around the world, members of the newly commissioned 148th Missionary Expedition. We have also admired it in many Provinces all over the world. We see the courage and enthusiasm of so many young people who give to God and to the world a generous part of their lives through the Salesian Volunteer Movement. Our common missionary responsibility, Pope Francis concludes, needs the “rich imagination and creativity of young people” (No. 8). It is, indeed, the young who are renewing the missionary spirit in our houses and Provinces. May they keep us awake!

In this missionary month of October we encourage you to study deeper the message from the Holy Father. For lack of space we share, just a few phrases:

“This Day invites us to reflect anew on the mission at the heart of the Christian faith. The Church is missionary by nature; otherwise, it would no longer be the Church of Christ, but one group among many others that would soon end up serving their purpose and passing away. So it is important to ask ourselves certain questions about our Christian identity and our responsibility as believers in a world marked by confusion, disappointment and frustration, and torn by numerous fratricidal wars that unjustly target the innocent. What is the basis of our mission? What is the heart of our mission? What are the essential approaches we need to take in carrying out our mission? [...]"

The Church’s mission, directed to all men and women of good will, is based on the transformative power of the Gospel. The Gospel is Good News filled with contagious joy, for it contains and offers new life: that of the Risen Christ who, by bestowing His life-giving Spirit, becomes for us the Way, the Truth and the Life (cf. Jn 14:6). He is the Way that invites us to follow him with confidence and courage. In following Jesus as our Way, we experience Truth and receive His Life, which is fullness of communion with God the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. That life makes us free from every kind of selfishness and is a source of creativity in love.

The Church’s mission, then, is not to spread a religious ideology, much less to propose a lofty ethical teaching. Many movements throughout the world inspire high ideals or ways to live a meaningful life. Through the mission of the Church, Jesus Christ himself continues to evangelize and act. Her mission thus makes present in history the kairos, the favourable time of salvation. Through the proclamation of the Gospel, the risen Jesus becomes our contemporary, so that those who welcome him with faith and love experience the transforming power of His Spirit, who makes humanity and creation fruitful even as the rain does with the earth [...]"

Thank God, many significant experiences continue to testify to the transformative power of the Gospel. I think of the gesture of the Dinka student who, at the cost of his own life, protected a student from the enemy Nuer tribe who was about to be killed [...] We can think too of countless testimonies to how the Gospel helps overcome narrowness, conflict, racism, tribalism, and to promote everywhere, and among all, reconciliation, fraternity and sharing [...] Young people are the hope of the mission. The person of Jesus and the Good News He proclaimed continues to attract many young people. They seek ways to put themselves with courage and enthusiasm at the service of humanity. There are many young people who offer their solidarity in the face of the evils of the world and engage in various forms of militancy and volunteering [...] How beautiful it is to see that young people are ‘street preachers’, joyfully bringing Jesus to every street, every town square and every corner of the earth!”
These days we celebrated in Rome with great joy the release of our missionary brother, Fr. Thomas Uzhunnalil, who had been kidnapped in Yemen on March 4, 2016 and was released in September this year. As everyone knows, he has had an exciting meeting with the Pope and our Rector Major.

Though tired and weighing 30 kg less, he communicated his experience with great serenity and peace. Also the group of missionaries who are going through the on-going formation course in Rome met him. We share with you some elements of his apostolic spirituality:

- The first thing he asked for when he arrived in Rome was the sacrament of Reconciliation. Not having this gift for 18 months had been a heavy burden for him.
- Though he could not celebrate the Eucharist sacramentally, he repeated its prayers every day from memory. In fact, he made of his cross a continuous Eucharist.
- He was not allowed to read, write, walk; he could only think. His thoughts were a continuous prayer for the Church, the Congregation, young people, the sisters who had been killed, his mission in Yemen, the Holy Father and also his captors. He reminds us of Paul’s urging, “Pray without interruption.”
- The secret that enabled him to live his imprisonment with serenity was his full conformation to God’s will. He said that after he had put his life completely in God’s hands and only to do his will he felt great peace, which allowed him to sleep at night with great serenity. And this conformation to the divine will was not merely his personal offering; it was the result of his obedience to the Congregation that had asked of him to serve in Yemen. According to him, when obedience is seen as a response to the will of God, it becomes a source of serenity and peace.
- A witness of Christ. When he was taken to the Islamic commander, he was asked direct and clear whether he was a Muslim, and he replied, “I am a Christian.”
- Both in his private conversation and in his lectures, he showed a great attitude of forgiveness. He certainly suffers deep pain from the killing of his sisters, but he did not harbour any hatred or resentment. He spoke respectfully of his captors.
- The conviction that in God’s plan each one has his own specific mission. Everyone is called to a unique and irreplaceable mission.
- A feeling of gratitude was constant in his speech. Gratitude to God for his life and his delivery from captivity, gratitude to Mary Help of Christians who, he felt, was very close to him; gratitude to the Church, to the Congregation, to every Christian who offered prayers and sacrifices for his release. There have been so many testimonies of just ordinary believers on all continents who daily offered prayers and sacrifices for him.

Let us implore the Lord to continue sending to his abundant harvest.

Don Martin Lasarte, SDB

Witness of Salesian Missionary Sanctity
Fr. Pierluigi Cameroli, SDB, Postulator General for the Causes of Saints

Blessed Maria Troncatti (1883-1969), Daughter of Mary Help of Christians and a great missionary in the Amazon rainforest, among the Shuar of Ecuador. She worked with great tenacity for the promotion of women and the freedom of choice of one’s partner in life. When it was announced that, for the first time ever, a Christian marriage was to be celebrated in the rainforest, where for the first time, the partners, both of Shuar’s tribe, had made their own free choice of each other, not pre-arranged by their relatives, it was a great joy for her. She then wrote in a letter: “We are all here for them: for the big and the small, for the sick, for the savage and for the civilized.”

FOR SALESIANS IN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING CENTRES

So that vocational training centres may continue to be schools of Christian growth and humanism in the world of work.

Vocational training is one of the most distinguished contributions for which Salesians are known and appreciated all over the world. It continues to be a priority of Youth Ministry today: to support and educate young people to enter the workplace. This precious mission requires of us professional competence, educational wisdom and evangelizing audacity to give a meaningful answer to the ever-changing challenges of the world of work.
Let us continue the conversation on osteoporosis and diet. So in addition to vegetables, fruit, plenty of grains, protein which is 30% of our daily intake and good fat, calcium is an essential part of building up healthy bones. The rest of the article is on “what not to eat.”

3. Get plenty of calcium

Calcium is critical to bone health. This mineral is a key building block of bone, and it helps prevent bone loss and osteoporotic fractures in older people. Although the recommended daily intake for most adults ranges from 1,000 to 1,200 milligrams (mg) or more, the typical diet provides much less.

If you’re not getting enough calcium, try to increase your consumption of foods that are high in the mineral. Milk and other dairy products are the richest food sources, but calcium is also found in kale, broccoli, and calcium-fortified foods such as juices, cereals and tofu products.

If you can’t get enough calcium in your diet, then you should consider a calcium supplement. A calcium supplement is often recommended for postmenopausal women because it can reduce the rate of bone loss. Calcium should not be taken alone, however. Vitamin D is essential for proper calcium absorption, and magnesium helps direct the calcium to the bone, keeping it out of the soft tissues.

4. Limit sugar, salt and phosphate additives

Foods that contain sugars added during processing generally provide a lot of calories, additives and preservatives, but very few vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. For this reason, dietary guidelines often recommend that you limit processed foods and beverages. Soft drinks are often the biggest culprit.

Too much salt in your diet also can be harmful. Not only can salt cause high blood pressure, but too much salt also can increase the amount of
calcium you excrete from your body with urination. Aim for a limit of 2,300 mg of salt daily — the equivalent of about one teaspoon.

Phosphorus is used as an additive in many processed foods. Too much phosphorus in your diet can interfere with how much calcium is absorbed through your small intestine. To limit your intake of these problematic ingredients, check the labels on the processed foods you buy at the grocery store and choose fresh foods whenever possible.

5. Limit alcohol and caffeine consumption

Consuming more than one or two alcoholic drinks a day hastens bone loss and reduces your body’s ability to absorb calcium. If you choose to drink alcohol, do so in moderation. For healthy adults, that means up to one drink a day for women of all ages and men older than age 65, and up to two drinks a day for men age 65 and younger. And drinking alcohol with meals will slow calcium’s absorption as well.

Caffeine can slightly increase calcium loss during urination. But much of its potentially harmful effect stems from substituting caffeinated beverages for milk and other healthy drinks. Moderate caffeine consumption — about 2 to 3 cups of coffee a day — won’t be harmful as long as your diet contains adequate calcium.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: Talk to your friends about what food might promote calcium loss.

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