MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE FRANCIS
FOR LENT 2018

“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (Mt 24:12)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in his providence offers us each year the season of Lent as a “sacramental sign of our conversion”.[1] Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life.

With this message, I would like again this year to help the entire Church experience this time of grace anew, with joy and in truth. I will take my cue from the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew:

“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (Mt 24:12).

These words appear in Christ’s preaching about the end of time. They were spoken in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, where the Lord’s passion would begin. In reply to a question of the disciples, Jesus foretells a great tribulation and describes a situation in which the community of believers might well find itself: amid great trials, false prophets would lead people astray and the love that is the core of the Gospel would grow cold in the hearts of many.

False prophets

Let us listen to the Gospel passage and try to understand the guise such false prophets can assume.

They can appear as “snake charmers”, who manipulate human emotions in order to enslave others and lead them where they would have them go. How many of God’s children are mesmerized by momentary pleasures, mistaking them for true happiness! How many men and women live entranced by the dream of wealth, which only makes them slaves to profit and petty interests! How many go through life believing that they are sufficient unto themselves, and end up entrapped by loneliness!

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PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

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Br. Jerry Weirich, SDB
Br. Tony Matse, SDB
Fr. Armand Oliveri, SDB
Fr. Avelino Lorenzo, SDB
Fr. Arthur Lenti, SDB
Fr. Jack Gibson, SDB

REST IN PEACE

Fr. Mario Rosso, SDB
Dec. 15, 2017
Mrs. Aurelia Franco
Salesian Cooperator
Mr. Larry Danielson
the one brother of Fr. Harold, SDB
False prophets can also be “charlatans”, who offer easy and immediate solutions to suffering that soon prove utterly useless. How many young people are taken in by the panacea of drugs, of disposable relationships, of easy but dishonest gains! How many more are ensnared in a thoroughly “virtual” existence, in which relationships appear quick and straightforward, only to prove meaningless! These swindlers, in peddling things that have no real value, rob people of all that is most precious: dignity, freedom and the ability to love. They appeal to our vanity, our trust in appearances, but in the end they only make fools of us. Nor should we be surprised. In order to confound the human heart, the devil, who is “a liar and the father of lies” (Jn 8:44), has always presented evil as good, falsehood as truth. That is why each of us is called to peer into our heart to see if we are falling prey to the lies of these false prophets. We must learn to look closely, beneath the surface, and to recognize what leaves a good and lasting mark on our hearts, because it comes from God and is truly for our benefit.

A cold heart

In his description of hell, Dante Alighieri pictures the devil seated on a throne of ice,[2] in frozen and loveless isolation. We might well ask ourselves how it happens that charity can turn cold within us. What are the signs that indicate that our love is beginning to cool?

More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money, “the root of all evil” (1 Tim 6:10). The rejection of God and his peace soon follows; we prefer our own desolation rather than the comfort found in his word and the sacraments.[3] All this leads to violence against anyone we think is a threat to our own “certainties”: the unborn child, the elderly and infirm, the migrant, the alien among us, or our neighbour who does not live up to our expectations. Creation itself becomes a silent witness to this cooling of charity. The earth is poisoned by refuse, discarded out of carelessness or for self-interest. The seas, themselves polluted, engulf the remains of countless shipwrecked victims of forced migration. The heavens, which in God’s plan, were created to sing his praises, are rent by engines raining down implements of death.

Love can also grow cold in our own communities. In the Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium, I sought to describe the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves, and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances, and thus lessens our missionary zeal.[4]

What are we to do?

Perhaps we see, deep within ourselves and all about us, the signs I
have just described. But the Church, our Mother and Teacher, along with the often bitter medicine of the truth, offers us in the Lenten season the soothing remedy of prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

By devoting more time to prayer, we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception,[5] and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well.

Almsgiving sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbour as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. How I would like almsgiving to become a genuine style of life for each of us! How I would like us, as Christians, to follow the example of the Apostles and see in the sharing of our possessions a tangible witness of the communion that is ours in the Church! For this reason, I echo Saint Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthians to take up a collection for the community of Jerusalem as something from which they themselves would benefit (cf. 2 Cor 8:10). This is all the more fitting during the Lenten season, when many groups take up collections to assist Churches and peoples in need. Yet I would also hope that, even in our daily encounters with those who beg for our assistance, we would see such requests as coming from God himself. When we give alms, we share in God’s providential care for each of his children. If through me God helps someone today, will he not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more generous than God.[6]

Fasting weakens our tendency to violence; it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God. Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbour. It revives our desire to obey God, who alone is capable of satisfying our hunger.

I would also like my invitation to extend beyond the bounds of the Catholic Church, and to reach all of you, men and women of good will, who are open to hearing God’s voice. Perhaps, like ourselves, you are disturbed by the spread of iniquity in the world, you are concerned about the chill that paralyzes hearts and actions, and you see a weakening in our sense of being members of the one human family. Join us, then, in raising our plea to God, in fasting, and in offering whatever you can to our brothers and sisters in need!

**The fire of Easter**

Above all, I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with enthusiasm, sustained by almsgiving, fasting and prayer. If, at times, the flame of charity seems to die in our own hearts, know that this is never the case in the heart of God! He constantly gives us a chance to begin loving anew.

One such moment of grace will be,
again this year, the “24 Hours for the Lord” initiative, which invites the entire Church community to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in the context of Eucharistic adoration. In 2018, inspired by the words of Psalm 130:4, “With you is forgiveness”, this will take place from Friday, 9 March to Saturday, 10 March. In each diocese, at least one church will remain open for twenty-four consecutive hours, offering an opportunity for both Eucharistic adoration and sacramental confession.

During the Easter Vigil, we will celebrate once more the moving rite of the lighting of the Easter candle. Drawn from the “new fire”, this light will slowly overcome the darkness and illuminate the liturgical assembly. “May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds”,[7] and enable all of us to relive the experience of the disciples on the way to Emmaus. By listening to God’s word and drawing nourishment from the table of the Eucharist, may our hearts be ever more ardent in faith, hope and love.

With affection and the promise of my prayers for all of you, I send you my blessing. Please do not forget to pray for me.

From the Vatican, 1 November 2017

Francis

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**Province Calendar**

**February, 2018**

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[3] “It is curious, but many times we are afraid of consolation, of being comforted. Or rather, we feel more secure in sorrow and desolation. Do you know why? Because in sorrow we feel almost as protagonists. However, in consolation the Holy Spirit is the protagonist!” (Angelus, 7 December 2014).

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**Ash Wednesday**

- Provincial Visitation – St. Mary’s, Los Angeles
- Practical Training Workshop, SUE-SUO, California

**President’s Day**

- Provincial Visitation – Don Bosco Tech, Rosemead
- SS. Louis Versiglia & Callistus
- Caravario, Salesian Protomartyrs

(Not Celebrated this Year)

- Curatorium, Novitiate, Richmond
COME VISIT US AT THIS YEAR'S
LOS ANGELES RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONGRESS 2018 IN ANAHEIM, CA.
MARCH 16–18
BOOTH #363, 365, 367
Pope Francis invited all the faithful to take part on February 23rd in a special Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace, especially in South Sudan and RDC.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN IN

PRAYER

PRAY WITH US
Friday February 23, 7.00 PM
at
St Marcello Church in Rome

AT HOME
in your family or community

CLICK on different suggestions
- Words of His Holiness Pope Francis
- Prayers for February 23rd
- Intercessions
- Official Prayer in South Sudan
FATHER OF LOVE AND MERCY,

You created our people from every clan, tribe and nationality. It is your will that all our people should live in harmony, peace and unity, because we are all brothers and sisters. We ask forgiveness for the times we failed to live together in peace. Heal our offenses and help us to reconcile with one another. Grant to our leaders your divine wisdom and help us to promote respect, justice and true reconciliation, so that the people of South Sudan may live in unity and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PADRE DE AMOR Y MISERICORDIA,

Tú creaste nuestro pueblo de distintos clans, tribus y nacionalidades. Es tu voluntad que toda nuestra gente viva en armonía, en paz y en unidad, porque todos somos hermanos y hermanas. Te pedimos perdón por tantas veces que no somos capaces de vivir juntos y en paz. Perdona nuestras ofensas y ayúdanos a reconciliarnos unos con otros. Concede a nuestros líderes tu sabiduría divina para que ayuden a promover el respeto, la justicia y la verdadera reconciliación, de forma que el pueblo de Sudán del Sur pueda vivir en unidad y paz. Te lo pedimos por medio de Jesucristo Nuestro Señor.

Solidarity with South Sudan, Piazza di Ponte S. Angelo 28, 00186 Roma, Italy
www.solidarityssudan.org | Email: solidarityssudan@gmail.com

#southsudanwecare
Spending forty days with the four pillars of faith-based service: spirituality, social justice, simple living, and community.
Dear Friends,

Doesn’t it seem like Advent and Christmas just ended? And yet, here we are – on the brink of another Lent. Another 40 days of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Another chance to dig deeper into what these three aspects of our faith mean and how we can live them out in light of our experience of long-term service. There is a correlation between the actions of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving and the pillars of faith-based service of spirituality, community, simple living, and social justice. All of these call us to give more of ourselves than we realized we could. They call us to be uncomfortable and uneasy, but yet remain open to the possibilities this discomfort brings.

The beauty of our faith is that we can find inspiration anywhere for a deeper relationship with Christ. This encounter can occur in the acts of praying, fasting, and giving of alms. We can develop our relationship with Christ through our personal and communal prayer lives. We can learn more about the sacrifice of Christ through our fasting. We can give what we have – our time, talents, and treasure – to those who are lacking.

We are called to make a commitment to take these next forty days as a time to dig deeper into our faith and our relationship with Christ and others. This is a time for introversion, self-awareness, and growth within ourselves, much like Christ did in the desert.

For those currently in a service program, you have the freedom to take this time to grow deeper in your relationship with Christ. Even though it might seem like you are overwhelmed with your job, community life, personal relationships, and figuring out what is next, you will most likely never have a time where your life is solely dedicated on your own personal and spiritual development. Take advantage of this time to “wander in the desert” in a way. These forty days help us to grow inward so we can go outward when we experience the beauty of the resurrection on Easter Sunday.

As baptized, we are called to go forth and go outward to live as missionary disciples. Pope Francis tells us this in his Apostolic Exhortation, The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium), “Throughout the world, let us be permanently in a state of mission.” (EG 25). Once we have encountered Christ in our own way, we are called to move out from ourselves and accompany others in experiencing their own encounter with Christ. But we are not called to do this alone; we need to go through these times in a community – whether with our parish community, family community, or our service community. Then, like the apostles from the upper room at Pentecost, we are sent out to share our encounter with Christ and to meet people where they are to experience their own encounter with Christ.

These next forty days are an opportunity. A time for us to challenge ourselves to pray, fast, and give alms. It is also a time to strengthen our relationships with those around us and with Christ. Use this reflection guide as a starting off point for your Lenten journey. Take to heart the words written (and spoken) by the authors. Let them help you to dig deeper this Lent and enjoy the beauty of the resurrection at Easter.

Sincerely,

Monica Thom Konshnik
Catholic Apostolate Center, Assistant Director of Administration
Catholic Volunteer Network, Board of Directors
Thinking about recompense and repayment for doing righteous deeds and for praying in secret is an odd experience when you’re doing a year of service through a faith-based organization. Am I supposed to keep secret the work that I’m doing during this year? Should I quietly go about it and not share my experience with others? Is it wrong for me to want to tell my stories from my placement? Do I expect recompense from God for this year of service?

To answer those questions, a colleague suggested turning to Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible: Matthew by Stanley Hauerwas. Hauerwas cites Bonhoeffer when questioning how to be the light of the world (Matt. 5:16) while also doing righteous deeds in secret. He writes, “According to Bonhoeffer, the hiddenness that should characterize the disciples’ action applies to the disciple” (p. 74). Hauerwas expands on this idea by saying that we must be apprentices of Jesus and learn to forget ourselves in our actions and act selflessly as Jesus did instead of doing such things for praise and recognition.

There’s a subtle beauty of the Lenten season of fasting and praying beginning with Ash Wednesday falling on St. Valentine’s Day. Instead of worrying about all of those questions, perhaps my prayers and meditations should be on how I can follow in Christ’s way by selflessly loving others just for the sake of loving them and expecting nothing in return from them or from God.

Focus on: Spirituality

As I’ve journeyed in my spirituality this year, I’ve questioned why I believe what I do. In conversations with those who have different beliefs, I’ve learned that there’s truth in everyone’s spirituality and that none is inherently better than others. As I’ve struggled with this reading and with how I express my spirituality, I’ve learned that it’s okay to question what I believe and that growth and strength of conviction come from those conversations and that struggling. This passage confirms that for me as I continue to live out and journey in my spirituality during this faith-based year of service.

Service Suggestion

During this Lenten season, I challenge myself and others to engage even more deeply with your communities. There is so much to learn about our communities and the work that is being done there. Throughout Lent, I challenge myself to listen more intently to the needs of my organization and my city and to ask of others what I can contribute instead of giving alms without research.

About the Author: Katrina Buchanan, currently serving with Lutheran Volunteer Corps

Hailing from Erie, PA, Katrina Buchanan is serving as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Justice for Women program assistant in Chicago through the Lutheran Volunteer Corps. She is a graduate of Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, PA with a degree in English, a minor in public relations, and a secret minor in theater. A former hockey player and a lifelong hockey fan, she can be heard coaching the Erie Otters from the stands when visiting home or through enthusiastic tweets while she serves in the Windy City.

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life. Amen.
When I read this proclamation from Christ himself I am struck by the sense of urgency in his words. Jesus does not call us to repent and believe tomorrow, a month from now, or whenever we feel ready; “This is the time,” he tells us. For me, following Christ’s call has often felt so daunting that I have found myself pushing it off for later. Because “belief in the gospel” is no small undertaking. It does not merely encompass accepting Christ’s teachings, but rather following his example of radical love and self-sacrifice – even following him into the desert.

The beautiful part of this, which I often forget, is that repenting and following Christ’s example of love and selflessness is a perpetual journey. When I followed Christ’s call away from my loved ones and my comfortable life to live and work on the margins in Ecuador with Rostro de Cristo, I realized that my initial “yes” was only the beginning of becoming more open to God’s presence and plan for me in each day. After coming out of “the desert,” and returning home from this intense experience of service, I have not always retained this mindfulness. Sometimes I have fallen into the trap of believing that I can’t love and serve as deeply as I did there. This thinking prevents me from being alive to God’s call in the here and now. The truth is that we are called away from sin and towards love in big and small ways every day. Whether that call is to follow him into the desert or share a smile with a stranger, today is always the right time to listen closely and to say “yes.”

Focus on: Simplicity

When I think about simplifying my life, the first thing that usually comes to mind is stuff - cutting out superfluous material things from my life, curtailing spending on things I don’t need, using less resources such as water, electricity, etc. All of this is essential to simplicity, but we can also eliminate waste in another area: our time. Challenge yourself this Lent to simplify your schedule and cut out activities that prevent you from practicing mindfulness, staying in the moment, and taking quiet time for prayer. We don’t necessarily have to abandon society for the desert in order to find peace and quiet, but in order to hear God, we should cut out some of the noise in our lives. Consider reducing time spent mindlessly using technology (scrolling through social media or watching TV), turning off the radio, and trying to really leave your work at work in order to spend more time being fully present to God and to those around us.

Service Suggestion

Where have you been feeling God’s call to service recently? Perhaps you’ve wanted to start volunteering with a certain nonprofit or you’ve been meaning to visit someone that could use support right now. Don’t put it off any longer. This week, find a way to simplify your schedule, listen to Christ, and make time to follow that call.

About the Author: Amy Krach, Rostro de Cristo alum

Amy Krach has a heart for service which led her to spend a year volunteering in Ecuador with Rostro de Cristo after graduating from Indiana University. She now spends her days working for a faith-based health organization in her hometown in Indiana, hanging out with moms (including her own) and dogs, and applying to grad school. She loves meeting new people, traveling, being outdoors, and sharing her faith through service.
The missionary call of the Rector Major, last December, was a strong "whisper" in our Salesian ears and hearts. We pray that the Spirit will still stir a generous response!

I would also like to start drawing your attention little by little to another unexpected announcement that Pope Francis made to the whole Church: the celebration of an extraordinary missionary month in October 2019. This year, 2018, has its orientation and spotlight on the path walked by the entire Church, the Synod on the young. But I invite you already now to take up the Apostolic Letter of Pope Benedict XVI, Maximum Illud, written in 1999. Next year will be its centenary. This is what will motivate the celebration of the missionary month announced by Pope Francis. We need to take this invitation seriously. We could study this precious letter very carefully.

The title of the Apostolic Letter is very striking: "Maximum Illud", "Something Very Big". That is, proclaiming the Good News to all peoples is a "great and sublime mission". We have the right phrase engraved clearly on the obverse side of the new Salesian missionary crucifix: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all peoples!"

Fr Guillermo Básanes, SDB
Councillor for the Missions

The 51st World Day of Peace: the theme was: Migrants and refugees: men and women in search of peace. This pastoral challenge was taken up by Salesians in various parts of the world with great missionary zeal. Just look at Mexico, Colombia, India, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Ethiopia, Kenya and elsewhere. Recently a new Salesian community has been formed for refugees from South Sudan at Palabek, Uganda. Missionaries are going there from Asia, Africa and America.

In his message for peace, the Pope insists on four verbs: “welcome, protect, promote and integrate”.

“Welcome” recalls the need to widen the possibilities of legal entry. Refugees and migrants cannot be sent back to places where persecution and violence await them. There is a need to balance the concern for national security with the protection of fundamental human rights. Scripture reminds us: "Do not forget hospitality; some, who practiced it, have welcomed angels without knowing it” (Heb 13:2).

“Protect” recalls the duty to recognize and protect the inviolable dignity of those fleeing from a real danger in search of asylum and security. We need to prevent their exploitation. I am thinking, in particular, of women and children. They are more exposed to risks and abuses that may even go to the extent of enslavement. God does not discriminate: "The Lord protects the stranger; He supports the orphan and the widow” (Ps 148: 9).

“Promote” refers to support for the integral human development of migrants and refugees. There are many possible tools for this task. I would like to underline the importance of ensuring access for children and young people to all levels of education. With education they will not only be able to cultivate and capitalize on their abilities; they will also be enabled to interact with others in a spirit of dialogue rather than closure or confrontation. The Bible teaches us that God "loves the stranger and gives him bread and clothing"; He exhorts: "Love, therefore, the foreigner since you too were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deut. 10:18-19).

Finally, “Integrate” means to allow refugees and migrants to participate fully in the life of the society that welcomes them. This initiates a dynamic of mutual enrichment and fruitful collaboration. It promotes the integral human development of local communities. As St. Paul writes: “You are no longer strangers or guests: you are among the community of saints and within the family of God” (Eph 2:19).
MISSIONARY LIFE - WILL OF GOD AND A BLESSING

I would like to share with you three things that stood me in good stead during the last few months in the province of Belgium-North-Netherlands: Grace of God - Faith Vision - Prayer.

God’s grace and His will: Nothing is impossible for God. The story of Jonah in the Bible makes me reflect on my own life. God sent Jonah to Nineveh to “facilitate” the repentance of sinners. He, instead, tried to flee right from the beginning of his call and mission. He refused to cooperate with God. It is interesting to note that Jonah was not allowed to make his own plans as he wanted. In the end, God is capable of making one cooperate. He widens one’s vision. I consider my missionary life the grace and the will of God. I have my daily challenges: the language barrier, the cultural shock, the cold, the lifestyle, the way of living the faith. All these difficulties in life have an impact on my missionary life. There were times when I wanted to do things my way and according to my whim. However, what I have learned so far has made me humble and grateful. I now follow Him wherever He guides me. He does everything with me as he did with Jonah.

The vision of faith: A human being in the secularized world finds it difficult to accept anything outside the explanations and evidence provided by science. How do we find God in a world so strongly influenced by scientific dictates? I do not believe in the dualism of science and faith. I affirm that God intervenes in our life. I look back and reflect on my experiences of God’s care and protection. He did not leave me alone in difficult times. He has always been with me in all circumstances, as he had promised. “I am with you always until the end of time” (Mt 28:20).

Prayer: I am powerless to control the world myself when I face difficult situations. I need someone who understands me deeply. God is that Someone. I bring to Him all that I feel and experience. I express them through my daily prayer. I built up this relationship of trust right from the time I first began dreaming of becoming a missionary when I was still a novice. Until now, thank God, I maintain this contact with the Lord through my personal and community prayer: the daily rosary, thanking the Lord when I wake up in the morning and before I go to sleep at night, etc. This is the strongest pivot of my life. I do it regularly, faithfully and devoutly. My experience tells me that the Lord hears my cries.

These are the three elements that strengthen me. They make me happy and optimistic as a missionary: I am happy in my position here in Amsterdam (Netherlands) with four confreres from our province, Belgium-North-Netherlands. We are a multicultural community of Belgians, Indonesians, Indians and Timorese. Our community is entrusted with the mission to serve four parishes and five churches within a radius of seven kilometers of our community. We have just begun new pastoral activities for young people. We do a kind of Lectio divina and a Taizé prayer meeting. We hope that, through the intercession of our Mother, everything will be better in the next year and bear more fruits in the Kingdom of God.

Cirilo de Deus, Timorese, missionary in Amsterdam, BEN Province

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

Blessed Eusebia Palomino (1899-1935), Daughter of Mary Help of Christians. Clothed in humility and simplicity, she became a spiritual teacher and guide. When the Provincial is surprised by the number of vocations from Valverde del Camino, they tell her of a cook, who suffers from asthma and narrates beautiful stories to the girls. Later there will also be priests who seek out this humble nun, who has no qualifications in theology, but does have a heart overflowing with the wisdom of God. Seminarians, nuns, priests, and girls went to Sister Eusebia to consult her about their future. She helped them all, in the midst of hanging the laundry out, working in the vegetable garden or peeling potatoes in the kitchen. In all calm and patience she advised, predicted the future, encouraged true vocations and discouraged false ones.

For Salesians of America

Salesian Missionary Intention

That, as educators of the young and the laity, they may know how to form in them, in the light of the Gospel, the values of honesty, justice, solidarity and service.

L’America Several countries of America are marked by intense social conflicts and the scourge of corruption. We are called to educate the young and the laity in the social dimensions of charity, transparency and righteousness. We pray that the educational efforts of the Salesian Family may bear fruits of justice and solidarity in civil society.
ROSEMEAD, CA. – February 7, 2018

Roman Hernandez, an honor student studying Media Arts & Technology at Bosco Tech, was unanimously voted First Team All South Catholic League and South Catholic League Defensive Player of the Year. Both awards are voted by the opposing coaches from our league. Linebacker Roman was recently selected as a member of the prestigious All CIF Southern Section team, comprised of the top 40 individuals from each division, with our division having over 80 teams in it. For team awards, he was unanimously voted as the Bosco Tech MVP by coaching staff. He has been nominated for the San Gabriel Valley Hall of Fame All Star game, with roster selections being finalized in May. Go, Roman!

Visit www.boscotech.edu

FEBRUARY

SALESIAN MISSIONARY INTENTION

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY FATHER’S PRAYER INTENTION

For Salesians of America

That, as educators of the young and the laity, they may know how to form in them, in the light of the Gospel, the values of honesty, justice, solidarity and service.

Several countries of America are marked by intense social conflicts and the scourge of corruption. We are called to educate the young and the laity in the social dimensions of charity, transparency and righteousness. We pray that the educational efforts of the Salesian Family may bear fruits of justice and solidarity in civil society.
Understanding Free Radicals and Antioxidants

(Chemistry 101)

Abstracted by Sheila Kun, Cooperator

Many of us have been exposed to the information about how certain food such as vegetables and fruits are good for you. The term free radicals and antioxidants have been thrown around. I don’t quite understand these chemical components either. Therefore, let us go through this journey together to understand how free radicals are harmful to us, and why certain antioxidants come to our rescue. To begin with, we have to go through the chemical structures to understand the dynamics of these chemical elements. From the Health Check System, this is what I found:

What are free radicals? Why are they damaging to the human body? And how do vitamin E and the other antioxidant nutrients help protect the body against free radical damage? We will attempt to answer these questions and help you understand why eating 5-8 servings per day of anti-oxidant rich fruits and vegetables can benefit your health. But first, a little background?

**Background: A Brief Look at Chemical Bonding**

To understand the way that free radicals and antioxidants interact, you must first understand a bit about cells and molecules. So here’s a (very) brief refresher course in Physiology/Chemistry 101: The human body is composed of many different types of cells. Cells are composed of many different types of molecules. Molecules consist of one or more atoms of one or more elements joined by chemical bonds.

As you probably remember from your old high school days, atoms consist of a nucleus, neutrons, protons and electrons. The number of protons (positively charged particles) in the atoms nucleus determines the number of electrons (negatively charged particles) surrounding the atom. Electrons are involved in chemical reactions and are the substance that bonds atoms together to form molecules. Electrons surround, or “orbit” an atom in one or more shells. The innermost shell is full when it has two electrons. When the first shell is full, electrons begin to fill the second shell. When the second shell has eight electrons, it is full, and so on.

The most important structural feature of an atom for determining its chemical behavior is the number of electrons in its outer shell. A substance that has a full outer shell tends not to enter in chemical reactions (an inert substance). Because atoms seek to reach a state of maximum stability, an atom will try to fill its outer shell by:

- Gaining or losing electrons to either fill or empty its outer shell
- Sharing its electrons by bonding together with other atoms in order to complete its outer shell

Atoms often complete their outer shells by sharing electrons with other atoms. By sharing electrons, the atoms are bound together and satisfy the conditions of maximum stability for the molecule.

(Stay tune next week for how free radicals are formed).

Your home work from the Care Ministry today: review the figures and make sure you understand the terms electrons, protons, bonding and molecular stability.

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