A MESSAGE FOR THE PROVINCE

Thus, after having indicated him as a model to all the young people of the world in the WYD vigil in Panama, on the 31st the Pope presented Don Bosco as an example for all priests, as an emblem of the priest who “spent so much time in front of the tabernacle” and a long time in the midst of his people.

“He did not go with the Catechism and the Crucifix only, [saying] ‘do this.’ No, no: he went close to them, with liveliness. He made them play, he put them in groups, like brothers.... He went, he walked with them, he listened to them, he saw them, he cried with them, and he brought them along, like that.”

The Pope then thanked God for Don Bosco and recalled his distinctive trait, which also represents the signal that a priest is going on the right path: “Joy. The joy of Don Bosco is known: he is the master of joy, eh? Because he made others enjoy and rejoiced himself. And he suffered too. We ask the Lord, through the intercession of Don Bosco, today, the grace that our priests be joyful: joyful because they have the true sense of looking at the things of their pastoral care, the people of God, with human eyes and with the eyes of God.”

As a summary of the homily, on the morning of the 31st the Pope also tweeted: “Don Bosco had the courage to look at reality with human eyes and with the eyes of God. May every priest imitate him by seeing reality with human eyes and with the eyes of God.”

(ANS - Vatican City) –
First in front of about 700,000 young people in Panama City; then in the general audience at the Vatican; finally, on January 31 during the morning Mass celebrated in the Domus Sanctae Marthae, for the third time in less than a week Pope Francis indicated Don Bosco as a model and example to follow.

On the saint’s feast day the Pope began by recalling the importance of Mama Margaret, a humble woman, “who had not studied in a school of theology” but who was able to pronounce “a mother’s prophecy” when she told Don Bosco, on the day of his ordination, “Today you will begin to suffer” – a suffering understood as a sign of commitment to the good. Then, examining Don Bosco’s apostolic action, Pope Francis observed: “In that Masonic and anticlerical era when the aristocracy paid no heed to the poor, who were really the poor, the ‘left behind,’ he saw those young people on the streets and said: ‘It cannot be!’

The Pope continued: “He looked with human eyes, the eyes of a man who is brother, even of a father, and said: ‘This cannot go on this way! These young people may perhaps end up with Father Cafasso, at the gallows.’ He was moved as a man, and he began to think of humane ways to make young people grow. And then, he had the courage to look with the eyes of God and go to God and say: ‘You have created these people for a fullness, they are in a real tragedy...’ And so, looking at reality with the love of a father – Father and Teacher, says today’s liturgy – and looking at God with the eyes of a beggar, who asks for something of light, begins to move forward.”

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We pray for the sick and suffering in our province, that they will be restored to full health.

Bless those who have grown old in your service and give them courage and strength in their faith.

Be with us as we discern our life’s work and guide us in the way we are called to follow in the footsteps of your Son.

We ask you this, that in everyone and in everything glory, adoration and love may be given to the Most High Lord of all things, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.
Deep in the recesses of the Western Province’s Provincial offices and residence lie the archives spanning several rooms. The entire operation is organized, overseen, and run most efficiently by Brother Larry King, SDB, a one-man show at the spry age of eighty-seven. I was introduced to Bro. Larry by Fr. John Itzaina, SDB last year and was encouraged to visit the archives some time.

In preparation of the centennial of the Salesian Boys’ and Girls’ Club of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in San Francisco, I was motivated to look at of our founding and history. Brother Larry has been an extremely hospitable guide. So far, I have visited the offices three times, going about once a month for a few hours at a clip. Brother introduced me to his elaborate and well-organized filing system, which is modeled after the guidelines set forth by the Society of American Archivists. What impressed me first was the amount of documents and original sources that have been collected. For instance, he showed to me some of the material on which he was
working during one of my visits: letters from students of St. Francis School in Watsonville in the early part of the twentieth century before it even became a Salesian work. To read the writings home from some twelve-year old boarders was funny, insightful, age-appropriately well written, (or not, at times!) and of course, historically relevant. I read with fascination articles and letters, either authored by, or about, some of the Salesian giants of my youth—especially Fr. Larry Byrne, Fr. Joseph Costanzo, and Fr. Louis Masereo, as well as material on Fr. Piperni and the first Salesians who were sent from Italy. There was the story of Fr. Sassio, SJ, a Piedmontese Jesuit, who had applied to Don Bosco directly to become a Salesian and was told “no,” two times. The second time, though, Don Bosco prophetically advised him that although he was not destined to join the Pious Society, he would indeed prove to be very helpful to the Salesians one day. Of course, later as Vice Provincial of the Piedmont Jesuits, he helped convince Don Rua to send badly needed help to San Francisco in the form of the first group of Salesians. Thank you, Father Sassio!

There are countless stories that make one smile and laugh, recall with gratitude, see the hand of Providence in so many instances of our history, and most especially, praise God and thank the many, many brave, self-sacrificing early, and not-so-early Salesians that have given their lives to the young here in the West. If I were a vocations director or novice master, interested Cooperator or lay person, discouraged SDB, or simply the curious type, I’d stop by the Archives Office, get some recommended reading from Brother Larry, have a cup of coffee, and watch a few hours go by before you know it. The offices are a real treasure. I’d also like to make a plug for sending in information from our various works—newsletters, bulletins, meeting minutes—not that Brother Larry hasn’t enough to do! Thanks, Brother Larry.
BOSCO CELEBRATIONS
St. Francis College Preparatory students with Fr. Tho Bui, SDB and Fr. Matthew Tri Le, SDB

St. Francis College Preparatory student choir for the St. John Bosco celebration Mass

Salesian College Preparatory Richmond school wide Mass for the Feast of St. John Bosco

Fr. Thien Nguyen celebrating Mass in Watsonville
Faculty and staff from Salesian College Preparatory Richmond

Celebration of St. John Bosco’s Feast day in Richmond

Salesian College Preparatory Richmond students preparing the gifts

Students from Don Bosco Tech and Bishop Mora Salesian High School preparing for Mass

Fr. John Itzaina, SDB proclaiming the Gospel to the student body
Bishop Michael Barber of Oakland celebrating Mass with faculty and the student body of Salesian College Preparatory Richmond

Students from Salesian College Preparatory Richmond preparing for Mass
Left to right: Fr. Adrian Mendoza, SDB (Philippines), Br. Vien Nguyen, SDB, Br. Al Vu, SDB, and Fr. Matthew Tri Le, SDB (China) at St. Anthony’s Lunar New Year Celebration.

Children from St. Anthony’s performing at their Lunar New Year Celebration.

Everyone joins in!
Dragon dance is a form of traditional dance and performance in Asian culture. Like the lion dance, it is most often seen in festive celebrations. The dance is performed by a team of experienced dancers who manipulate a long flexible figure of a dragon using poles positioned at regular intervals along the length of the dragon. The dance team simulates the imagined movements of this river spirit in a sinuous, undulating manner.

The dragon dance is often performed during Lunar New Year. Dragons are a symbol of Asian culture, and they are believed to bring good luck to people, therefore the longer the dragon in the dance, the more luck it will bring to the community. The dragons are believed to possess qualities that include great power, dignity, fertility, wisdom and auspiciousness. The appearance of a dragon is both fearsome and bold but it has a benevolent disposition, and it was an emblem to represent imperial authority. The movements in a performance traditionally symbolize historical roles of dragons demonstrating power and dignity.
Performance by parishioners on Lunar New Year
Don Bosco Technical Institute

Bosco Tech’s Admissions Information Night is February 28

By Karen Krynen
Communications Officer

ROSEMEAD, CA. – Don Bosco Technical Institute (Bosco Tech) will host an admissions information night for prospective students and their families on Thursday, February 28, at 5:30 p.m.

Middle and elementary school students will learn more about Bosco Tech’s unique engineering and applied science curriculum while meeting instructors and current students. The school’s new Biological, Medical & Environmental Technology (BMET) program, an addition to school’s five existing STEM majors, will be featured. Information on summer school, shadow visits, and financial aid will be available.

Contact Director of Admissions John Garcia for information about the event or about the school.

jgarcia@boscotech.edu
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. On Niche.com’s list of top boys high schools and Catholic high schools in California and the U.S., Bosco Tech boasts a college acceptance rate of 100 percent, with the majority of graduates pursuing STEM-related post-secondary majors. The school is located at 1151 San Gabriel Boulevard, Rosemead, 91770.

Visit www.boscotech.edu.
What do these classic pictures Star War, Mary Poppins and James Bonds have in common? Well, not only were they box-busters, but these are pictures that created indelible characters that permeated throughout generations. Hence the producers were eager to produce sequels to continue the story. Impressed by Johnny Martinez, our champion heading the Homeless Project at St. Joseph, I am going to continue the story of our care beyond our family. We all have a “black sheep” in the family, or someone at work that is not easy to get along. Often times, we have pinched ourselves to be extra kind to those folks because we do not gravitate to these people. I work in the health field, be compassionate to patients and their families comes in with the job. However, there are times that the families are very challenging, we all have to say a Hail Mary, take a deep breath before servicing them.

The homeless population is not a group that one easily establishes relationship with. Yet the dynamics that we witness at St. Joseph commands our attention and utmost respect. Watching Johnny and his team execute the Homeless Project with love and respect is a valuable lesson to learn. I am going to direct you to the picture below. When I saw this picture, what popped up in my mind was: “There is no room for depression, isolation and loneliness”. This is an image of the Holy Spirit at work- the picture is percolating with peace, comfort, the landscape of God’s beautiful garden, and a friendship that is totally spontaneous. One word summarizes the essence of this image: the power of accompaniment. For us Salesians, executing this mission is fairly effortless; we have been taught by Don Bosco to accompany those in need.

Johnny, on top of the Bible Study and Dinner Night Homeless Program, is gathering us to participate with the Ignatian Spirituality Project, an Ignatian Retreat program that provides retreats to those in active recovery and have experienced homelessness. We also hold regular shifts at St. Francis Shelter in Downtown Los Angeles where we serve meals and serve the meals “waiter style”, also in hopes of gaining an understanding of what being without a home feels like. We would like to invite you to get involved; you can reach out to:

Johnny Martinez
Retreat Program Director
(626) 280-8622
jmartinez@sjscenter.org

St. Joseph’s Salesian Youth Renewal Center
8301 Aroyo Drive
Rosemead, CA 91770
Facebook: @St.JosephsRetreatcenter
www.sjscenter.org

Johnny and I had discussed that a donation of $10 would cover the cost of a hot dinner and Bible study material. I invite you to sponsor our homeless brothers and sisters to enjoy a great dinner and experience the spiritual food prepared by our champions.
“In every young person, a point of goodness is accessible and it is the primary duty of the educator to discover that sensitive cord of the heart so as to draw out the best in the young person.”

- Don Bosco