Dear Salesian Sisters and Brothers,

Yesterday, the Directors, Pastors and Delegates of the different province departments met for our biannual meeting. Usually, we meet at the beginning of the scholastic/pastoral year and again in the Spring. We meet to plan, nourish our spirits, and reconnect as province leadership. I wish to thank all those who were able to make it. I realize that this is a busy time for everyone as schools begin their programs and transfers and changes are still being either finalized or in the process of completion.

The gathering of Directors/Pastors and delegates took place at St. Joseph Retreat Center in Rosemead. We are extremely grateful for the hospitality and wonderful welcome we received from Fr. Paul Chuong and his team. Several Salesian Cooperators prepared lunch and dinner at the residence. It was all very well-orchestrated and those of us who were able to stay until dinner enjoyed a wonderful meal along with their famous “Kahlua and ice-cream.” Thank you to the staff of St. Joe’s, for their hospitality and for creating a wonderful Salesian environment in which to work.

The Director/Pastors meeting had three components to it. After a prayer service prepared by Br. Damien Ho, the Directors and Pastors reflected on Fr. Angel Fernandez A.’s letter at the conclusion of the Extraordinary canonical Visitation of March-May 2019. We reflected on 11 positive points made by the Rector Major regarding our province; 5 challenges we face as a province; and, 7 Recommendations given to the province. We had heard many of the points before but put forth in a different context.

The Rector Major praised the province for its fidelity to Don Bosco’s spirit, his charism and to his system of spirituality and education which he left to us as his legacy. The Rector Major commended us on the efforts to help poorer students enter our schools by the large amount of tuition assistance we give and the efforts to raise funds for this purpose; for the well-run institutions and communities; the collaboration with the laity and the general animation and governance of the province leadership.

The Rector Major also reminded us of the great challenges facing our province: the declining number of confreres, the declining average age and limited vocations entering our formation programs, the reduced visibility of SDBs in our ministries which weakens the visibility of the beauty of Salesian consecrated life among the young and contributes to the lessening of vocations, the restriction of our presence to California and one parish in Texas, the strong influence of a secular culture in California and the tendency to fall into a routine spiritual and fraternal way of living.

Some of the Recommendations made by the Rector Major to our province are the following: work on creating a vocational culture in our province, increase our Salesian presence and personal accompaniment of the young by choosing significant places and moments to be present among the young, place our province on the official list for receiving more missionaries from the congregation, invite the province to re-imagine and re-design our mission, strengthen our presence in Berkeley by strengthening the ISS program (Institute of Salesian Studies) and finally, commit ourselves whole heartedly to a radical renewal of our religious life as mystics,
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.

I find Fr. Angel’s comments challenging and loaded with food for deeper reflection and action by the part of the province and, especially, the provincial leadership. I encourage us all to take the letter given to each director and pastor and meditate on it together, digest its elements (don’t just scan through it and place it on the shelf) and ask the Holy Spirit to help us find ways to implement these ideas and recommendations that will help our province grow stronger and be a more vibrant Salesian presence in the West. More on this in the months to come.

The rest of the Directors/Pastors day was spent on a reflection with several young Salesians on the future narrative of Religious Life. And in the afternoon, we spent some time looking/studying our Province Organic Plan.

In future InTouch letters I hope to focus more on Fr. Angel’s letter and our Organic Plan. For now, I wish to mention briefly some highlights on the second topic of our day, namely, the future narrative of Religious Life.

In early August I attended the CMSM conference in San Antonio, Texas. This is an annual conference for the Major Superiors (Provincials, Abbots, Priors, etc) of the United States. The three days were spent processing this question: What do we want to dominate the narrative of Religious life over the next three to ten years? Unfortunately, we do not always control our narrative and story. So, the story which is repeated “ad nauseam” is the abuse situation in the Church, the aging of confreres, the lack of vocations and the challenges of limited and ill prepared confreres for the mission. But, the story we tell must be one of hope, despite the challenges, trust in a God who accompanies us and gives us the grace to do marvelous things with the little we have (multiplication of the bread and fish), the witness of fraternal life, unity and inclusivity and not being afraid to be vulnerable and transparent in a world of fear, division, racism and secrets.

Yesterday, we invited four young people: Br. Damien Ho, Quang Nguyen, Vien Nguyen and Reegan Leedet to share with the province leadership their views and experience of religious life and how they see this unfolding in the next three to ten years. What will our narrative be? What needs to change or what needs to be emphasized? As I mentioned above, more will be written on this topic in the next Intouch letters. After the young panel’s sharing, an energetic discussion followed with the whole group present. As I heard at the CMSM conference: “who is to say that the brightest and best are not yet to come!” Why do we put limits on God’s power, grace and Spirit. We can keep telling the same story, namely, that our history (past) has been rich and meaningful but that was in the past and now we face too many challenges. But, God works in the present and the “good old days” are still to come. Our young people asked us to be hopeful, to accompany them with our presence, be more intentional in creating fraternal life, create home-go to the heart, have a growth inducing mindset, put community first, support one another, tell the story of Don Bosco, don’t hang our dirty laundry for all to see and find ways to share our experiences. Again, the next InTouch will include a bit more depth on this reflection: our future religious Salesian life.

I wish to thank our young panel and those at the directors/pastors gathering for their participation and input. Let us take that same question to heart and see what answer we come up with: What do we want to dominate the narrative of Religious life over the next three to ten years? In the months to come we hope to reflect on this and some aspects of our Organic Plan. May God strengthen our province, bless our work and ministries and help us be signs and bearers of his love to the young, especially, the poor and most neglected.

With warm regards and gratitude,
On Monday August 26th the Directors, Pastors, Delegates, and Provincial Council gathered together for a day of reflection and planning. The meeting, facilitated by Fr. Ted Montemayor, Provincial, focused on four main points: Fr. Angel’s letter from the Extraordinary Visitation of Fr. Maria Arokiam, the revised (2019) Province Organic Plan, North and South communities’ calendar and collaboration, and the reflection of four young SDBs in initial formation on their experience of community life and religious life.

By Andres Neria
Delegate for Social Communication
Induction of Pre-Novices

By Eduardo De Leon
Pre-Novice

“Here in your midst I feel completely at home; for me, living means being here with you”

- Don Bosco

This year we are happy to announce that there will be three pre-novices in our province; Christopher Green, Eduardo De Leon, and Reegen Ledet. These young men have just entered their pre-novitiate. They were inducted on Wednesday August 21st, 2019 in front of the Bellflower community where they received their Don Bosco Medal. This year, pre-novitiate will involve a heavy set of studying, learning about the congregation, and Don Bosco’s teachings.

Please continue praying for our young men in formation and for more vocations.
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ROSEMEAD, CA–August 26, 2019--Don Bosco Technical Institute (Bosco Tech) will present “Gear Up for High School,” a high school preview night for elementary and middle school students on Wednesday, September 25, 2019, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on the school’s Rosemead campus. During the complimentary event, representatives from local Catholic private and archdiocesan high schools will provide information and answer questions about their admissions process, curriculum, and academic and extracurricular programs.

“‘Gear Up for High School’ is the perfect opportunity for prospective students and their parents to get information about the quality Catholic secondary schools in our area,” said Bosco Tech Principal Jeff Krynen. “As a convenience for community families, we’re hosting representatives from local high schools in one place.”

Bosco Tech is an all-male Catholic high school that uniquely 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, including the new Biological, Medical & Environmental Technology (BMET) program.

On Niche.com’s list of top Catholic boys’ 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. Visit www.boscotech.edu or call 626-940-2000 to arrange a campus tour or to learn more about the school’s academic, extracurricular, and extensive international student programs.

Call (626) 940-2009 or email admissions@boscotech.edu for more information. Event parking is available in the lot located on San Gabriel Blvd. and the lot off Arroyo Dr., between Rose Glen Ave. and Paramount Blvd.
Carbohydrates
Part II
By Sheila Kun RN, BA, BSN, MS, FCCP
Salesian Cooperator

How many carbohydrates does a person need in a day?

Instead of counting carbohydrates, dietitians now recommend planning meals using the “Healthy Plate.” At each meal, half of the plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables and a quarter of the plate should be filled with whole grains. (Dietitians do not count potatoes or French fries as vegetables.) The last quarter of the plate should be protein – meat, fish, beans or nuts.

Why are whole grains important?

Whole grains are the best source of carbohydrates because they provide energy plus vitamins, minerals and fiber. Eating whole grains as often as possible instead of highly refined grains, like white flour and white rice, can help reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes and keep the digestive system healthy. Foods made from whole grains have high fiber content.

Why is fiber important?

Fiber is found in vegetables, fruits, legumes (beans) and whole grains. Fiber promotes a healthy digestive system by keeping the bowels moving. It also can help prevent obesity and reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes by slowing down digestion and keeping you full longer.

Fiber can be soluble (dissolves in water) or insoluble (does not dissolve in water). Soluble fiber can be found in most fruits; some vegetables, including corn, peas and carrots; oatmeal and oat bran; nuts, seeds and dry beans. When mixed with water during digestion, this type of fiber becomes a thick, gelatin material. Soluble fiber can help lower cholesterol (related to heart disease risk) and blood glucose (related to risk for diabetes).

Insoluble fiber is also found in a variety of foods, especially foods made with whole wheat flour, wheat bran, brown rice, whole grain cereals, couscous, most vegetables, and fruits. Insoluble fiber helps the body move waste through the digestive system. It also may help prevent small blood clots that can cause heart attacks or strokes.

Both kinds of fiber are important. Adult women should try to eat at least 20 grams of fiber a day. Men should try to eat 30 grams a day. The easiest way to include fiber in the diet is to eat a variety of foods that include raw, whole fruits and vegetables, beans, and whole grain breads, pastas and cereals.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week:

Name the food rich in fibers in your diet.

The Care Ministry welcomes your comments/suggestions: kunlouis@gmail.com
WHO ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR?
COME SEARCH WITHIN YOUR HEART!
ENCOUNTER JESUS
YOUNG ADULTS 18+

September 6-8

ST JOSEPH’S YOUTH RENEWAL CENTER
YOUNG ADULT RETREAT

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With gratitude to God
the Society of Jesus
and the Salesians of Don Bosco
announce the

Ordination to the Diaconate of

Justin Claravall, S.J.
San Mai, S.J.
Vien Minh Nguyen, S.D.B
Joshua Peters, S.J.
Perry Petrich, S.J.
Victor Ramos Talavera, S.J.

to be conferred by
Most Reverend Michael C. Barber, S.J.
Bishop of Oakland
Saturday, the nineteenth of October
two thousand nineteen
at nine o’clock in the morning
St Mary’s College Chapel
1928 St. Mary’s Road
Moraga, CA 94575

BELIEVE WHAT YOU READ

TEACH WHAT YOU BELIEVE

PRACTICE WHAT YOU TEACH
JOIN THIS JOB TRAINING PROGRAM TO LEARN JOB SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE!

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JOIN US! EVERY TUESDAY STARTING SEPT 10 7-8:30PM

• HOW TO MAKE RESUME
• MOCK INTERVIEWS
• NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
How many carbohydrates does a person need in a day? Instead of counting carbohydrates, dietitians now recommend planning meals using the "Healthy Plate." At each meal, half of the plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables and a quarter of the plate should be filled with whole grains. (Dietitians do not count potatoes or French fries as vegetables.) The last quarter of the plate should be protein – meat, fish, beans or nuts.

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“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