Dear Salesian sisters and brothers,

Many of us are still basking in the glow and wonderful experience of our PAD (Province Assembly Days) held in January 12-14. My thanks to all those who made the effort to be present and participate. I have only heard good and positive things about our two and a half days together in San Juan Bautista. My thanks also to the planning committee for their hard work. They did an excellent job! Hats off to them.

The Province Assembly Days focused on the theme: “Accompanying One Another, Creating Our Future.” Throughout our time together the Assembly had a chance to listen to two different panels, mostly of young Salesians, share ways they have felt themselves accompanied by others in formation, community and in the province. On the second day, another panel shared their dreams for the next five to ten years in the province. Participants were able to break out into small groups and share their own experiences, discouraging and positive. They were able to reflect on the same questions of dreams and the story they wish to narrate for the next five to ten years. Most of the communities expressed dreams and hopes of living in communities which were fraternal, where communication and mutual respect exist and cultural diversity is seen as enriching our religious life rather than dividing. Others dreamt of a province that cares for one another with compassion, both for the elderly and the young and positively affects those whom we serve. We also dreamt of joyful, happy and authentic communities being at the forefront of evangelization and education of young people, enabled by the intentional practicing of compassion and genuine fraternity. Working together as teams and on a common project and mission was another important element to our future.

I was very pleased with the openness and heartfelt sharing. Our atmosphere during PAD was fraternal, joyful and fun. We reflected seriously, we prayed with devotion, made time for fun and relaxation together and just enjoyed each other's company. Now, the work of continuing to make real what we dreamt about is our real task. May the Holy Spirit accompany us and give us the courage and wisdom to transform our lives, our communities and our province in ways that tell the story we began narrating at PAD.

This coming Friday, we celebrate the solemn feast of St. John Bosco! Throughout the world there will be countless celebrations and visible gestures of love and devotion for our founder. He was a dreamer and had a beautiful story to tell. He had a gift and ability to be able to make his story, which was God's story, come alive. Despite criticism and naysayers, Don Bosco with great confidence, trust and faith in Divine Province and Mary Help of Christians, pushed forward until his last breath. He entrusted that dream to us and strongly encouraged us to continue making that dream a realization in our world today. Our General Chapter XXVIII which begins next month in Turin, Italy, has entrusted us Chapter members to enter into a serious reflection on “What Kind Of Salesians For The Youth Of Today?” Don Bosco also encountered a changing society which presented new conditions and challenges to the world of the young and to the Church. Don Bosco with his great trust in Mary Help of Christians and his faith in a God who loves us all un條件ally, found new and exciting ways to reach the young and bring God's presence to them. Our Salesian Preventive System and Spirituality is still...
very much alive and relevant today. We need to return to the roots of that spirituality and live it fully. Our manner and style of being with the young, our constant presence in their lives (not just in a classroom, Church or structured setting), our constant joy and optimism for a beautiful future, our embrace of all cultures and the family spirit of welcome and kindness we create are not new. But, these and other characteristics, such as our Marian devotion and love for the Church, have made us effective witnesses of God’s love to the young. We need to look at where these characteristics are lacking or are weak and strengthen them. We need to find ways to practice them in our own environments and, perhaps, in a new way. May Don Bosco bless our efforts and mission. May we not only celebrate an external feast but allow the fruits of the feast to have an effect in our lives. Happy Feast of Don Bosco to all the Salesian Family!! You will all be in my prayers!

This Sunday, February 2nd, besides “Super Bowl ” Sunday, the Church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. But, the Church also wishes us to remember it as “World Day for Consecrated Life.” It is a day that the Church sets aside to reflect, remember and pray for those who have been consecrated by God with the choice to live their Baptismal lives with greater intensity by professing the vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience. Let us pray for all those in Religious life and those who live their lives with the commitment of these three vows/promises. Please pray for all of us in the Salesian Family who have made these vows and who are asked to be witnesses to the world through our lives. I am thinking specifically of the Salesian Priests, Brothers, Sisters and Volunteers of Don Bosco. But, there are also countless of Religious men and women who belong to the branch of the Salesian Family and have taken these same vows as they carry their Salesian Mission throughout the world. May God’s grace keep us faithful and help us reflect the light of Christ, especially, to the young.

To all those celebrating the Lunar New Year, I send wishes of blessings and good fortune. Happy New Year! This day (days) are very important and sacred to many Asian cultures. Let us help them honor this beginning of the New Year as they visit family, remember the dead and celebrate with family and friends with
PRAY FOR
VOCATIONS

DCN. VIEN NGUYEN, SDB
BR. LEO IMBERT, SDB
BR. KRIS TRAN, SDB
BR. QUANG NGUYEN, SDB
BR. DAMIEN, HO, SDB
BR. JHONI CHAMORRO, SDB
BR. PETER LE, SDB
NOVICE: JOHN CASTONGUAY
NOVICE: KEVIN WHITE
PRE-NOVICE: EDDIE DE LEON
PRE-NOVICE: REEGAN LEDET
PRE-NOVICE: CHRIS GREEN
CANDIDATE: MICHAEL NGUYEN
CANDIDATE: THOMAS NGUYEN

PRAY FOR
OUR SICK

BR. PAT BARBARIOL, SDB
FR. HAROLD DANIELSON, SDB
FR. ARTHUR LENTI, SDB
BR. JOSEPH LOCKWOOD, SDB
FR. AVELINO LOZANO, SDB
BR. PAT MALONEY, SDB
FR. ARMAND OLIVERI, SDB
FR. RICHARD PRESENTI, SDB
BR. BRUNO DE PRETTO, SDB
FR. ROBERT STEIN, SDB
BR. JERRY WEIRICH, SDB

JANUARY EVENTS

1st  Mother of God
12th-14th  Province Assembly Days (PAD) - San Juan Bautista
19th-22nd  Provincial Council Meeting - Camp St. Francis
20th  Martin Luther King Jr.
23rd  Members Meeting - Richmond
24th  St. Francis de Sales - Patron
31st  St. John Bosco - Founder

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.
Lunar New Year Celebration!

INTOUCH JANUARY 30TH, 2020
The Life Story of St. John Bosco (Biography of Don Bosco)

God, it is said, sends the world saints when they are most needed—not men and women of "general holiness," but specialized experts who fit into the pattern of the times and are capable of giving God's tone to their century.

And so it was that on August 16, 1815 when one era was closing in Europe with the exile of Napoleon, and the Industrial Revolution was clanging another open, "a man was sent by God whose name was John." He came to the scruffy stone cottage of Francis and Margaret Bosco on the hills of Becchi, at the foot of the Italian Alps. "A fine healthy baby," the neighbors all agreed, "fit for the soil, to take his father's place on the old homestead." But no one went further than that in predicting the child's future.

Francis died only two years after John’s birth, leaving Margaret to raise three boys by herself. She taught them that they each needed to carry his weight and help with the keep of their home and farm. There were house chores to do, firewood to cut and gather, fields to plow, and crops to tend. Little John and his older brother Joseph, supervised by their stepbrother Anthony, tackled the endless work with energy. Margaret taught them that work was a privilege and that joy would make the work lighter. She was a woman of character and tenderness. All who knew her called her Mama Margaret. Fathomless was the love she showed her sons, not in coddling words but in deeds; innumerable were the lessons in upright living, Christian fortitude, and fear of God, which she taught by her example. A pillar of goodness, she stood before them as sturdy as the very Alps. At her knee John first heard the voice of the Master calling him to a special assignment. It was a low insistent voice, an urge that once in a while manifested itself in a sudden outburst, like the time Margaret and John were walking along the countryside and met one of the local priests.

"Hello, Father," cried the boy, to be acknowledged only by a curt bow of the head. Deeply hurt, he complained that the priest had hurt his feelings.

"When I grow up," he told his astonished mother, "I'm going to be a priest, and I'll talk to children all the time, and I'll do everything for them!"

Again the voice urged John to go among the farm boys, not just as a playmate but as a leader. More than once he came home with a battered cheek or torn shirt and in explanation would say, "But, Mama, those boys aren't really bad. They just don't have a good mother like I have, and they don't know their catechism, and their parents don't take them to church. When I'm with them, they behave better. Please, Mama, may I go with them?"

Soon the child took over completely, as God's plan called for. He learned the tricks of magic from traveling showmen. He juggled. He walked the tightrope. Then he opened his own carnival show. Admission: one rosary to be recited by all spectators; added attraction: the Sunday sermon, repeated by the little ringmaster. The show grounds were the field in front of the house, where Margaret Bosco often watched her son at work and wondered what might come of it all.

When John was nine, the Master called him openly. A mission as important as his could not be left to a mere urge. In a "dream," John found himself fighting a large crowd of rowdy lads who were cursing and carrying on abominably. He tried to stop them, but they refused to listen to him. Suddenly, a Man appeared, who motioned to John and said, "Not with punches will you help these boys, but with goodness and kindness!" "Who are you?" gasped the astonished boy.

Then a Woman appeared. Putting her arms around him, she said, "Watch what I do, John." John looked. The boys changed to a pack of snarling wild animals whose growls sent terror to his heart. Then the woman put out her hand. The beasts changed again, to a frolicking flock of lambs.

"But what does it all mean? I'm just a farm boy. What can I do?" He burst into tears.

The Lady's answer came to him, ever to resound in his heart, to be repeated auditorily several times in his life, "This is the field of your work. Be humble, steadfast, and strong!"

John now knew his vocation. But the priesthood meant studies, and there was no money on the Bosco farm. Even school was almost impossible. Due to the goodness of a farmer who taught him, John learned to read and write and do sums at the age of eight. His first schooling came the next year, when he hiked some three miles every morning to the country school of a priest. But the increasing hostility of his stepbrother, not pacified by John's attempts to put in extra hours on the farm, made life at home unbearable.

And so, for the sake of domestic peace, Margaret Bosco divided the paltry estate left by her husband and allowed her youngest son to go to Castelnuovo to attend public school and board with a good family she knew. Alone in the town, John soon learned the hardships of an orphan's...
life. He worked after school to support himself. Though he was only 15, he labored in a blacksmith shop, then as a tailor, a waiter, a pin-boy in a bowling alley, a shoemaker—anything to get a few pennies and ease his mother’s burden.

At school he did exceptionally well. True, teacher and classmates had looked upon him as a country dolt in the beginning, but his brilliant memory and steadfast application soon won him everyone’s respect. In one year he was ready for secondary studies.

As we look back over the records, we find that John did three years of high school in one scholastic year and one summer. How he ever succeeded is quite unimaginable, unless we take into account his exceptional memory and intensive study habits.

Throughout his school work John did not lose sight of his vocation which was now, more than ever, an actual conviction. “I’m going to be a priest,” he told his friends, “and I’m going to give my life to the care of boys!”

By 1835, when John was 20, he was ready for the seminary, taking with him an enviable record for excellence in studies, a reputation for solid piety, and the friendship of countless people in many walks of life. Prominent among them was a young priest, Father Cafasso, now St. Joseph Cafasso, John’s confessor, who best understood him and helped him to interpret God’s plan.

On June 5, 1841, John was ordained to the priesthood in Turin. He celebrated his first Mass the next day in the church of St. Francis of Assisi. “During my first Mass,” he said, “I asked for the gift of efficacy of speech, and I think I got it!”

With ordination came the release of a powerful spiritual energy, which, joined to his rare human gifts, was calculated to exert a lasting influence on modern youth.

The beautiful Lady of his dreams was 8, 1841, the first sign came. While vesting for Mass, the priest heard the sacristan shrieking at a poor young boy who had sneaked into the church to get warm. “Here, call the boy back,” cried Don Bosco, “he’s my friend!” The boy came over to Don Bosco.

Don Bosco asked, “What is your Name?”

“Bartholomew Garelli” the boy answered.

“How old are you Bartholomew?”

Sixteen,” answered the boy.

“Can you serve Mass?”

“No.”

“What do you do?”

“I’m a bricklayer,” he responded, head lowered.

“Your mother and father...” Don Bosco continued.

“I’m alone,” the boy responded sadly.

“Can you whistle?” Don Bosco broke in.

“Of course I can whistle!” exclaimed Bartholomew laughing.

And that friendship, struck up on the spur of the moment, began Don Bosco’s worldwide ministry to bring young people to God. He told Bartholomew to stay for Mass.

After Mass Don Bosco told the boy, “Next Sunday, bring your friends here, and we’ll spend the day together.”

The next Sunday, four ragged boys, looking badly in need of a meal and warm clothing, came to Don Bosco. They were certainly in very dire spiritual need. And their number multiplied in a few weeks, so that caring for them soon came to be a major problem.

“But my girls!” exclaimed the directress of the girls’ orphanage where Don Bosco was chaplain, “What will become of them?”

“You can always find a priest for them,” said Don Bosco, “these boys, they need me!”

In the 1840s the slums of Turin were overrun by the poverty that resulted inevitably from sweatshop factories with their hazardous machinery, child labor, and starvation wages. Walking through these slums, Don Bosco came face to face with his mission. As he visited the prisons with Father Cafasso, the conviction of his vocation seemed to shout within him: “These boys are not bad. Take care of them before they fall into crime—that is your task!”

With his heart full of trust in his Lady and his pockets empty, Don Bosco courageously took up the work. From then on, it was only “Give me souls—the souls of young people.”

Don Bosco called his weekly band of ragged young people “the Oratory,” a term which to his mind suggested prayer and organized recreation. In the beginning it was a floating thing, its membership growing daily in large proportions. There was no one place to meet because in those troublesome times people were afraid of a large group of working boys and besides, who relishes the uproar of some 200 boys enjoying a day’s freedom from the imprisonment of a factory?

Every Sunday they would meet in a different place, a city church, a cemetery chapel, or an empty lot. Don Bosco would hear their confessions and say Mass for them. An hour of religious instruction would follow, plain, simple talks coming from the heart and embodying the solid truths of the faith. Then the priest would take his band of ragged boys into the country for an all-day outing of games. A final talk would close the “Oratory day,” and the tired bunch would trail into Turin, scattering to their homes along the way.

During the week, Don Bosco used to tour the city shops, checking on his boys, making sure they had not forgotten his instructions to work hard and work well.

Those were heroic times, “those pioneer days,” the saint used to call...
One stormy night in 1850, as Don Bosco was working, a timid knock came at the door. It was a boy from becoming bad. It is based on Christian charity. Its double foundation is reason and religion: in other words, a sense of understanding between teacher and student, engendered by daily contact, friendly chats, and an interest that is felt; and secondly, a sense of religion fostered by the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion. According to the saint, where other systems of education have failed, this system of kind-understanding and mainly sincere religion, has more than succeeded.

The system is not new, though in Don Bosco's hands it achieved a freshness all its own. While it compensates for errors committed by the young, who are often changeable and always forgetful, it does not condone the errors; instead, it uses them as stepping stones to the formation of a solid character, permeated by Christian principles of Christian character.

Don Bosco's times were unsuited to the founding of a new religious congregation. Those already in existence were being torn down by a diabolical campaign of political radicals, self-styled free-thinkers. Yet it was precisely a liberal-minded politician who had closed convent doors who first suggested the idea of a new religious congregation to Don Bosco.

"Start a new order and have you suppress it in its cradle?" smiled the saint.

"No, your case is different. You work for the poor. Your schools really belong to the working classes. No one will resent what you do. Make sure your religious keep their status as citizens, and we won't touch you."

And so, still under his Lady's guidance, Don Bosco set about the task. His own boys were the best material. Little Michael Rua, who idolized him, tough Johnny Cagliero, hardworking Johnny Francesia, self-willed Paul Albera, and several others. They would be the pioneers in this experiment of a new religious congregation.

"Would you like to stay with Don Bosco?" he asked them.

"I'll do the work of four!" was
Cagliero's stalwart answer. The others agreed. On the night of December 18, 1859, was born the Congregation of St. Francis de Sales (popularly known today as the "Salesians of Don Bosco" and officially titled the "Society of St. Francis de Sales").

Today Salesian priests and brothers, bound by one rule, inspired by the same spirit of their Founder, are all dedicated to the double task of self-sanctification and the care of youth. Today the Salesians number over 15,700 Brothers and priests.

As his main work secure, Don Bosco searched the horizon for new fields of labor. Again a dream-vision revealed God's plans to him. He found himself looking down upon a screaming horde of savages who were massacring a band of white men. From the distance approached a few missionaries, wearing the garb of their orders. The natives turned upon them with wild satisfaction.

Terrified by their blood-curdling yells and inhuman cruelty, Don Bosco gasped to see another group of missionaries coming through the jungles, surrounded by children. They were his own Salesians! Certainly they would fare no better than the others, but the yelling ceased. The wild faces became human again. The natives dropped their weapons and sheepishly looked up into the missionaries' faces. Then they bowed their heads in prayer!

The dream began to become a reality in 1875; at the request of Argentina and the Holy See, Don Bosco sent ten missionaries to Buenos Aires to care for Italian immigrants.

Four years later, under the energetic leadership of Fr. John Cagliero (later Cardinal), they penetrated the hinterland of Patagonia down to the icy Strait of Magellan and the Falkland Islands. In ten years, Salesian missions were established in South America from Cape Horn to the lush jungles of Brazil's Rio Negro valley.

The young Salesian Congregation ranks highly in number among the Catholic Church's missionary orders.

"First tell the devil to rest, and then I'll rest too," Don Bosco used to say to those who urged him to let up in his activity. Indeed, rarely has the Church seen such a tireless apostle.

Trained to labor from his boyhood, he occupied himself with boys, constantly interesting himself in their activities. On Sundays, after a strenuous day with his Oratory, he often had to be carried home; more than once he fell asleep fully dressed, kneeling at his bedside. For many years he slept only five hours a night, skipping a night each week. After a day of physical work, he would spend the quiet hours of the night penning letters to friends for aid, sending letters of comfort to those who begged for his prayers, and writing books on mathematics, literature, the Bible, and Church history for boys. He began a pamphlet series, the "Catholic Readings," and for some time wrote a pamphlet a month on Catholic faith and morals. Always at the call of the Church, he was a tireless confessor; he was a popular preacher and never refused an invitation to preach a mission or a retreat.

Even when age began creeping up on him, he worked. More than once the people of Turin saw a boy leading him by the hand through the streets, dozing while he stumbled along. As an older man, he lost sight in one eye, and the other was impaired. His legs were swollen to painful proportions. His back was curved by weakness, yet his mind was crystal clear. He never laid down the burden. Besides his youth activities, he interested himself in matters of Church and State, acting even as a mediator for the Pope. He spurred boys on to Catholic action; he favored and worked for retreat movements, mission crusades, the catechetical movement, and foreign missions. Though urged by his personal friend Pius IX to rest, he would answer, "While I have time, I must work."

While at prayer one time, Don Bosco was interrupted by the visit of a wealthy noble. "Tell him I'll be there soon," he said, and he continued his prayers. Three times he was called. Finally he went. "My dear sir," he said, "you are a good friend of mine, but God comes first." He also used to repeat, "First of all Don Bosco is a priest!"

With such a marvelous sense of values, he was able to temper his activity with deep, ceaseless, and fervent piety. In fact, the energy of his work came from this carefully tended fire of prayer in his soul. And God rewarded him in a wonderful way. Toward the end of his life, his prayers wrought miracles. His blessing carried astonishing powers. Sometimes he was seen rising in ecstasy during the Mass. But, with characteristic humility, he labored to...
feed his ministry with prayer; so much so that Pope Pius XI said of him that he prayed every moment of his life.

When Don Bosco planned to build a basilica in Mary’s honor in Turin, he drew up the plans and called an architect to start the excavations. “Here is your first payment,” he said, handing the astonished man eight cents. “Mary will build her own basilica.” This was characteristic of Don Bosco: living in personal poverty while spending millions for God. “When you become a priest,” his mother had told him, “if ever you become rich, I shall never enter your house.” Describing his life, he would say, “I am poor, penniless Don Bosco, a shepherd boy of the hills. I have lived poor and shall die poor.”

Yet this impoverished priest, who lived on the coarsest of foods and wore the poorest garments (often borrowed), spent millions for his boys, opened large schools, built one basilica to Mary in Turin and another to the Sacred Heart in Rome, and financed great mission expeditions. The faith that God would provide worked miracles in his life.

Such generosity of spirit could not go unrewarded by God, for whom this priest slaved the 72 years of his life. Besides providing for his work, God gave him the gift of miracles. With his blessing, Don Bosco cured people disease. After his prayers on their behalf, the deaf heard, the lame walked, and once, a dead boy was raised to life. He had the gift of prophecy. He could read consciences, and used this gift to assist penitents in confession. He could foretell one’s vocation, as well as one’s future.

All these gifts were so common that Pope Pius XI said, “In Don Bosco the extraordinary becomes ordinary.” They were given to him in partial reward for his exceptional self-sacrifice and as a seal of divine approval of his work.

Don Bosco often told his young people that being a saint was easy. His holiness was attractive because it was rooted in charity and exceptional purity that drew people to him. Though he sometimes did extraordinary penances, he would never allow them to his boys. “Sanctity is easy!” he would say. He told his Salesians and the young people that God wants us to be happy and to rejoice in the love of Jesus. Just do your duty in school, at home, at work the best you can. Offer you life to God: the happy times and the sad or challenging things: life sends many opportunities to join in the sufferings of Jesus: bad weather, disappointments, physical illness, sorrow these will make you saints. St. Dominic Savio, one of his students who died at the age of 14, is Don Bosco’s proof to the world that holiness is not a monopoly of the monastery or of the desert. It belongs everyone, the young and the old.

The last years were difficult for him. He was old and tired but he kept up with all the activities of his Salesians, inspiring them to greater achievements for youth. But when he took to his bed in December of 1887, he said, “Now I go to my rest; I shall not get up again.” Just before his death, he summoned his sons and begged the favor of their prayers. “Do not ever forget these three things: devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, devotion to Mary Help of Christians, and devotion to (always be in support and come to the defense of) the Holy Father!” On January 31, 1888, Don Bosco’s worn-out body finally yielded to nature. With the names of Jesus and Mary on his lips, Don Bosco’s soul passed to his God and his Lady as the morning Angelus bell was summoning the faithful to prayer. “Our saint has left us,” the people of Turin mourned.

Don Bosco left a legacy. His ideals, his spirit, his constant activity are all still with us in his Salesian priests, brothers, and sisters, who strive to perpetuate his work on earth.

On Easter Sunday, April 1, 1934, Pope Pius XI declared Don Bosco a saint; the Pope styled him “a giant of sanctity.”

As for himself, Don Bosco would say, as he often told his admirers, “I have been an instrument in the hands of Mary. She has done everything. Had I been a worthier instrument, I would have accomplished a great deal more.”
Salesian Family Youth Center gets support from Latin America

By J.C Montenegro
Delegate for Mission Animation

Fr Juan Carlos Quirarte from Mexico Guadalajara and James Areiza from Colombia Medellin spend one week working at the Salesian Family Youth Center. Their main objective was to strengthen the great job being done at Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, where over 1,900 children are served yearly.

The project started by analyzing the reality at the Salesian Family Youth Center. They analyzed personnel, processes, clients, and reviewing general how the club is doing. They found out some strong points like motivated staff, good organizational structure, great location, good collaboration with St Mary's church, among others.

All this analysis was done by meeting with all personnel at different levels of responsibility and reviewing the 2018-2021 strategic plan. They contacted if what is being written is being put into practice in the daily activity.

As a result of this analysis, they also gave some recommendations among them we have:

- To improve the visibility of the club. Making sure there are clear signs and motivational posters around the club. They also suggested it may be a good idea to paint a mural at the entrance of the club.
- Salesian ongoing formation. It was recommended that the team and the children have a precise Salesian ongoing formation. This formation must be something that is combined with professional development.
- Develop an emotional salary concept at the club, understanding that money is not everything, and the question is how the club can motivate its employees emotionally.
- Ongoing recruitment activity was suggested that the club should continuously recruit children not only at the beginning of the year and during the summer camp.
- Develop collaboration among all the Salesian presences in Los Angeles as it is being done with St Mary’s church.

The visit of these two Salesians is part of the strengthening project of the social works at the regional level, where 18 countries are participating.
By Janelle Siqueiros  
Young Adult Leader - Savio

Following through on our Resolutions

What about following through with the resolution? Remember that life can get in the way, but slowly progressing your goals little by little can help and go a long way. For example, maybe just starting off by going exercising one day, and then maybe in a couple months moving to twice a day. Setting reasonable goals also helps with holding accountability. Maybe if you’ve always wanted to meal prep but know how, starting off by learning how to cook could be a start to learning how.

Here in our youth group, we discussed about how to set up resolutions and having a deadline for them. Learning and being able to set up S.M.A.R.T. goals helps with being committed. S.M.A.R.T. means: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based. Specifically, narrow down your objective to the basics. Measure and set steps to achieve by a certain time to track your progress. Ask yourself, is it really achievable and relevant? It’s time-based, so when is the deadline?

Remember that what you put in is what you get out of it! Everything is possible depending on how much emphasis and energy you put into it!
By Paul DeValle
CYM at St. Lukes Parish

St. Luke’s high school age Youth Ministries has once again been called to battle! Dragonslayer 2020 stretches out over four months serving as an instrument for evangelization and outreach to area youth and calls back those who we haven’t seen in a while. Each of our four teams: The Lords, Counts, Barons and Knights are under the watchful eyes of 2 teen captains. Each evening points are awarded under three categories: Spirit Points, for creativity, team unity, enthusiasm, posters, and sportsmanship, Tournament Points for winning the wild and crazy (and often messy) team games, and Outreach Points, 100 points for each young person who comes and joins a team. As the judges tally the scores there is a presentation that fits this year’s theme: The League of Extraordinary Dragonslayers: Saints. We are focusing in on a number of saints who faced great challenges (dragons), whether they were personal temptations or societal problems. Our first night centered on the societal challenges encountered by St. John Bosco. Our three 2019 SYLC participants, Ashonti Macabales, Gabby Villalpando, and Samantha Castillo, did an outstanding job of talking about the work of Don Bosco and our call to follow his example in reaching out to other youth. We ended with the beautifully put together video sent out by Gina on the Strenna (Thank You Gina) Our next Dragonslayer saint? St. Gianna Molla!
By Sheila Kun RN, BA, BSN, MS, FCCP, Salesian Cooperator

The New Coronavirus, known as the nCoV-2019, has sparked tremendous fear and interest within the last few weeks. I was asked if I could write on this topic in response to the inquiry about what this new Coronavirus is, and how does it affect you. As a member of the American College of Chest Physicians, I get daily updates on respiratory conditions. On January 23, 2020 I received an article from CHEST, a professional organization specializing in respiratory diseases. Their “Leading the News” session published an update on the nCoV-2019. I would like to abstract their highlights for you. But before we do that, let us understand what the coronavirus is about.

A coronavirus is a viral infection much like the common cold. It is not particularly dangerous unless you have a compromised immune system, and most people will get a coronavirus at some point in their lives. In addition, most people recover within a few days. There have been a few cases in which specialized types of coronaviruses have caused deaths. That is the case with the Middle East respiratory syndrome otherwise known as MERS. However, most coronaviruses are not dangerous and will disappear with the same sort of treatment that you would give a cold. They may cause an infection in the nose, sinuses and upper throat. In the case of MERS, the infection may cause respiratory symptoms that can be rather serious. In our case, the nCoV-2019 was first identified in Wuhan, China. This potentially deadly virus represents a threat globally similar to the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) that devastated Asia in 2003. The reported deaths (from the CHEST article on January 23, 2020) were 18. I pointed out the date because as I am writing today on January 26, 2020, the number of deaths has increased to over 22, with possibly over 2000 infected, gravely ill patients. Most of those who died were elderly men with a median age of 75 with medical conditions prior to the positive nCoV-2019 finding. One single patient infected 14 health care workers. A team of researchers at the Imperial College London predicts that there would have been 4,000 cases in Wuhan by January 18, 2020. In another words, we might not have a very accurate account of this deadly virus.

So far, five countries were infected. We did have a case in Washington’s Snohomish County. Apparently this traveler to China became the first U.S. resident with a positive nCoV-2019 finding. Reportedly 30 residents are doing well in an isolation unit at Providence Regional Medical Center in Everett, about 30 miles north of Seattle. Just heard on the news: there are five cases now in the U.S.

In the U.S. the risk to the general public remains low. However, since we are very mobile and global, international airports take steps to screen for Wuhan coronavirus. Thermal screening at the gate is not 100% effective; a good example is our SARS experience. In Canada airport screen failed to detect a single case of SARS, but 43 Canadians ended up dying from the disease. I just heard from the Hong Kong news that two of their patients did not present with fever. Hence thermal screening is not a reliable measure.

Most hospitals in the U.S. do have precautions in place. I work in a hospital outpatient setting. We are asked to screen patients’ travel history and symptoms. We have procedure in place to identify, and isolate suspected cases, and facilities to quarantine patients if needed.

But at the epic center in Wuhan, China. This is a critical time for the health authority to exercise emergency measures. The central government limited travel outside Wuhan, and two nearby cities of Huanggang and Ezhou. Theatres, Internet café, and public activities are closed. Hence 18 million citizens of these three cities are locked down indefinitely until further notice.

International group is funding three efforts to develop vaccine against Wuhan coronavirus. The group aims to have at least one potential vaccine in clinical trials by June.

At this time WHO (World Health Organization) declines to declare a global emergency in response to Wuhan coronavirus.
During this flu season, it is common to have symptoms of headache, sore throat, a high fever, chills, muscle aches, stuffy nose, dry cough, feeling very tired, and or loss of appetite. One colleague of mine did come down with a very bad flu; she reported that she felt like there was an elephant on her chest and she could not breathe well. Thus the severity of your upper respiratory symptoms would determine whether you had a simple cold or a bad flu.

The bottom line is, regardless of the flu season, do the following to build up your immune system and improve your hygiene:

1) Good nutrition.
2) Sleep well.
3) Good hand-washing.
4) Wear a mask if you need to.
5) Avoid people who are coughing, or sneezing on you.
6) Stay away from members of the family who are sick.
7) It is still not too late to take the flu-vaccine.

Your homework assignment from the Care Ministry this week: Exercise good hand-washing and avoid sick contact.

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