

Canada and Eastern USA



# Salesian Family Snippets



*News of the Salesian Family Near and Far*







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**Nov. 1:** All Saints Day  
**Nov. 2:** All Souls Day  
**Nov. 3-9:** National Vocation Awareness Week  
**Nov. 5:** Mass for Deceased Members of the Salesian Family and Benefactors  
**Nov. 13:** St. Artemides Zatti, SDB (Worldwide)  
**Nov. 14:** St. Artemides Zatti, SDB (Canada and U.S.)  
**Nov. 15:** Bl. Madeleine Morano, FMA  
**Nov. 25:** Anniversary of Death, Mamma Margaret  
**Nov. 28:** Thanksgiving Day (U.S.)  
**\*Nov. 30:** Novena to the Immaculate Conception begins

*\*Due to the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception being Decemeber 9 this year*



Have an article you'd like featured in *Salesian Family Snippets*? Send it to us!

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Fr. Stefano Martoglio, SDB  
Courtesy of Agenzia Info Salesiana (ANS)

## The Rose Path

"How lucky Don Bosco is! His path is forever strewn with roses! He hasn't a worry in the world. No troubles at all!" But they couldn't see the thorns that were piercing my poor legs." Nevertheless, I kept going. Every life is interwoven with thorns and roses as in Don Bosco's famous "Dream of the Roses and Thorns." [1] Hope is the force that keeps us going despite the thorns.

FR. STEFANO MARTOGLIO, SDB

Dear Readers, friends of the Salesian Family and benefactors who help with Don Bosco's work in all situations and in all contexts, in sending you a thought via the *Salesian Bulletin*, I have chosen to reflect a little longer, as we did last month, on the topic of Hope. I do so not only for the sake of continuity, but mainly because it is a topic that begs to be addressed because we all need it so much. It is an acceptance of God's gentleness in our lives. But when we speak about Hope, let us remember, first of all, that it is a component of profound humanity and a clear criterion for interpreting life in all religions.

Hope has much to do with transcendence and faith, love and eternal life, Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han points out. He underlines in his writings that while we work, produce, and consume, there is no form of openness to the transcendent and no Hope when living in this way.

We exist in a time deprived of the dimension of celebration, even though we are surrounded by things that dazzle us. A time without celebration is a time without Hope. The society of consumption and performance in which we live is in danger of making us incapable of happiness, of rejoicing over the reality of our lives (even the most difficult situation always shows glimmers of light!).

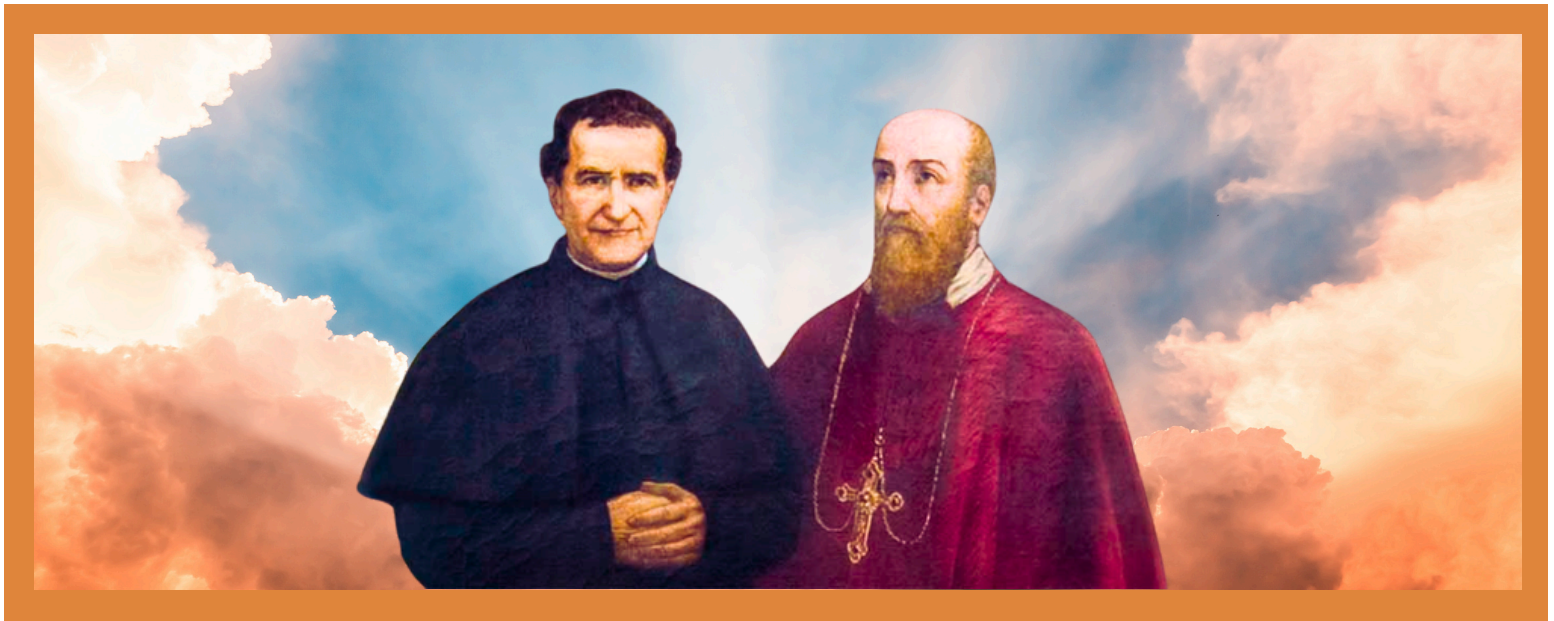
Hope makes us believers in the future because the place where we experience Hope most intensely is in the Transcendent. Czech writer and politician Vaclav Havel, president of Czechoslovakia in the era of "The Velvet Revolution," which many of us will recall, defines "hope" as a state of mind, a dimension of the soul.

Hope is an orientation of the heart that transcends the world of experience in the here and now; it is a mooring somewhere else beyond the horizon. The roots of Hope lie somewhere within the Transcendent. That is why having Hope and being satisfied because things are going well are not one and the same thing.

*hope*

When we speak about the future, we understand it in relation to what will happen tomorrow, next month, or two years from now. The future is what we can plan, predict, control, and make optimal. Hope is the construction of a future that connects us to *that* future that never ends—to the transcendent, to the Divine dimension. Cultivating hope is good for our heart because it puts energy into our efforts to construct our way to Heaven.





*Don Bosco and St. Francis de Sales*  
Designed by Ms. Julia St. Clair, SUE Province Communications Director

### The word most uttered by Don Bosco

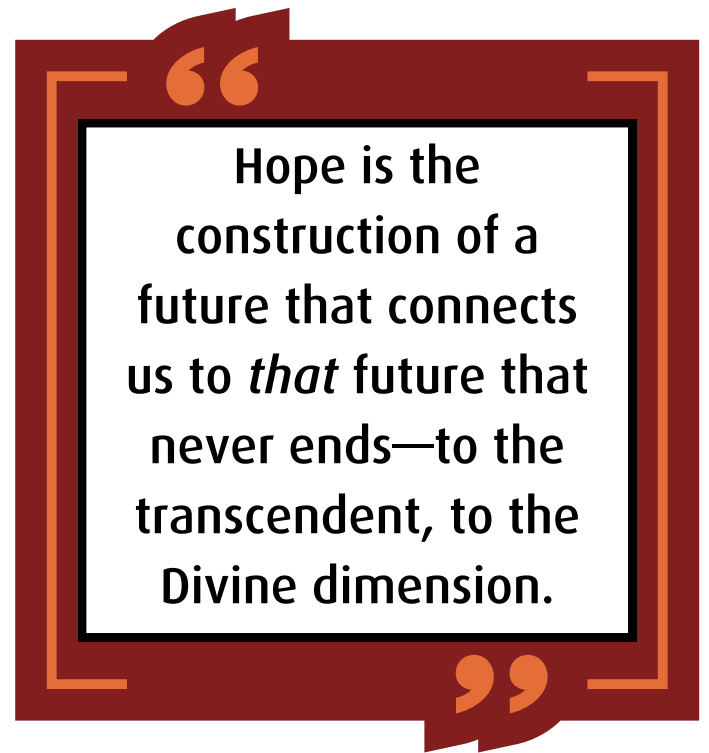
Fr. Alberto Caviglia wrote: “Leafing through the pages that record Don Bosco’s words and speeches, one finds that “Paradise” was the word he used to employ in every circumstance as the greatest compelling argument for every activity for good and for every forbearance in adversity.”

“A piece of Heaven fixes everything!” repeated Don Bosco in the midst of difficulties. Even in modern schools of management, it is taught that a positive vision of the future turns into a life force. When, old and bent over, he would walk across the courtyard in strides as lengthy as an ant’s, those who were passing by would give him the usual mindless greeting, “Where are we going, Don Bosco?” The saint would reply, with a smile, “To Paradise.” How much Don Bosco insisted on this: Paradise! He raised his young people to keep the vision of Paradise in their hearts and before their eyes. We all know that we can be Christians, even convinced Christians, but not believe in Paradise.

Don Bosco teaches us to unite our here present with the hereafter. And he does so through the virtue of Hope.

Let us carry this in our hearts and open our hearts to charity and to our humanity that incarnates our deep beliefs.

When you receive this brief message in the month of November, live this Hope together with our Saints and with your beloved deceased, like of group of mountain climbers tethered together by a rope that has its origins in our everyday lives and is anchored, at its end, in the Infinite.



Like Don Bosco, let us live as though we see the invisible, nourished by the Hope that is the Provident Presence of God. Only those who are very grounded, practical, and solid, as Don Bosco was, are able to live by fixing their gaze on the invisible.



[1] “The Dream of the Roses and Thorns.” *The Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*. vol. III. pp. 25-28. Online. [https://donboscosalesianportal.org/wp-content/uploads/BM\\_03\\_en.pdf](https://donboscosalesianportal.org/wp-content/uploads/BM_03_en.pdf)





*FMA and SDB Salesian Family Delegates Sr. Teresa Gutierrez, FMA, and Mrs. Andrea Zimmerman, Salesian Cooperator  
Courtesy of Mrs. Andrea Zimmerman, Salesian Cooperator*

## **FMA and SDB Provinces Welcome** New Salesian Family Delegates

**BY SR. TERESA GUTIERREZ, FMA, AND MRS. ANDREA ZIMMERMAN, SALESIAN COOPERATOR**

As of this summer, the Salesian Family has two new delegates: Sr. Teresa Gutierrez, FMA, and Mrs. Andrea Zimmerman, Salesian Cooperator.

Sr. Teresa is an animator in Miami, FL, and the new FMA delegate for the Salesian Family in the Eastern U.S. Sr. Alphonsine Roy, FMA, remains the FMA delegate for the Salesian Family in Canada. She advises and woman who is discerning a call to religious life to: "Become a Salesian Sister!"

Based in New Jersey, Mrs. Andrea Zimmerman is a Salesian Cooperator and the new SDB delegate for the Salesian Family in the SUE Province (Canada and Eastern U.S.). Andrea has been serving the province for the past 22 years. Some examples of where she dedicated her time and talent included, but are not limited to, serving eighteen years and counting on the province's youth ministry team, having designed and implemented workshops for the men in formation on the following topics: "St. Francis de Sales" (2020), "The Salesian as Educator and Evangelizer" (2018), and "Social Media: The Playground of Youth" (2014). Served as the Salesian Cooperator Orange Center's coordinator for twelve years; and Served six years at the parish level, forming and leading the parish and finance councils. This included designing and implementing a "Why Catholic?" program for adults for three years and a pro-life parish program.

As a Salesian Cooperator for the past twelve years, I am humbled and excited to start my new SDB Salesian Family delegate role. I am grateful to Fr. Provincial Dominic Tran, SDB, for inviting me to take on this task, and I ask for prayers that our labor bears much fruit and brings many souls to Jesus.

Last, I am a very collaborative leader and worker. We can do so much more together to save souls than alone. I look forward to learning, praying, and working together for the young and the salvation of souls. We are the Salesian Family; we are the sum-total of the ecclesial groups founded by Don Bosco and those subsequently recognized by the Rector Major as bearers with them of Don Bosco's charism.

## Thank you!

*A big thank you to Sr. Denise Sickinger, FMA, and Fr. Tom Dunne, SDB, who previously served as the FMA and SDB delegates for the Salesian Family in the Eastern U.S. (SEC Province) and Canada and the Eastern U.S. (SUE Province).*

*Welcome, Sr. Teresa and Andrea! May God bless and guide you both in your new roles and chapter in your journey with the Salesian Family.*



*Fr. Cabecinhas speaks on the History and Message of Fatima.  
Courtesy of Agenzia Info Salesiana (ANS)*

## The Story and Message of Fatima

Pt. II

BY FR. JOHN PUNTINO, SDB

### A Fatima Spirituality

Recent studies identify characteristics of the spirituality of Fatima that distinguish it from other Marian apparitions. These are the combination of practices of piety, prayer and conversion through devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and a concern not only for the present but future life of the Church and the world. These characteristics in turn give rise to specific spiritual attitudes.

**Worship.** The Christian worships the One true and triune God, “who comes to meet him, who reveals himself to him manifesting his love.” The appearances of the Angel of Peace focus on adoration through faith, hope and love. The light from Our Lady’s hands brings the visionaries to an experience of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and they respond with adoration. They put God at the center of their lives.

**Reparation.** From beginning to end the apparitions urge reparation. The Angel teaches the little shepherd a prayer of reparation. The devotion of the first Saturdays links reparation with Mary’s Immaculate Heart.

Fr. Cabecinhas observes, “Adoration and reparation appear united and inseparable in the spirituality of Fatima.”

**Conversion and Penance.** The message of Fatima strongly calls for conversion and penance. The three young shepherds show a

marked conversion in their lives from the experience of the apparitions, but also a concern that stayed with them for the rest of their lives for the conversion of sinners. Our Lady’s expressions of sadness show her response to sins committed and desire for prayer and sacrifice for sinners.

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**Solidarity and Commitment to Brothers and Sisters.** The experience of the love of God stirred up in the three shepherds a longing to go to heaven, but not alone. Jacinta, aware that she would go to heaven soon and concerned about those in danger of going to hell, told Lucia, “Yes, I am [going to heaven] but I want all those people to go there too.”

### Conclusion: The Relevance of Fatima’s Message

When St. John Paul II revealed the third secret of Fatima which seems to have been fulfilled, many thought that the

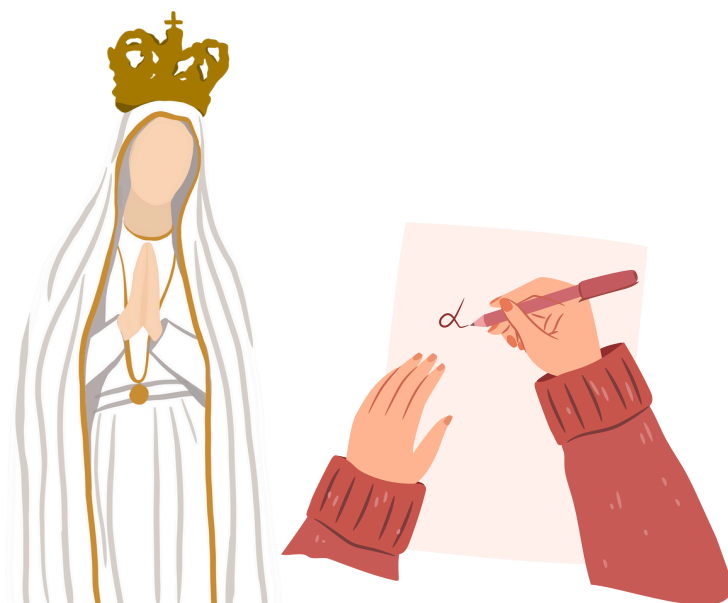


message and purpose of Fatima was complete, something belonging to the 20th century.

In 2010 Pope Benedict XVI disagreed. He sees the biblical significance of Fatima in God's search for the righteous to save the human city. Peace, implored through prayer and sacrifice for the conversion of sinners, central to the message of Fatima, is needed all the more in the world today and aligns with the call of Pope Francis to prepare for the coming Holy Year with prayer.



Fr. Tom Dunne, SDB, co-leads the Salesian Family Course.  
Photo by Mrs. Andrea Zimmerman, Salesian Cooperator



### Reflection Questions

1. What parts of the message and spirituality of Fatima speak to me personally?
2. What parts of the message and spirituality of Fatima resonate with my Salesian identity and mission?



Sr. Denise Sickinger, FMA, co-leads the Salesian Family Course.  
Photo by Mrs. Andrea Zimmerman, Salesian Cooperator

## Have Daily Contact with Jesus

### The History of the Salesian Family Course

BY MRS. ANDREA ZIMMERMAN, SALESIAN COOPERATOR

The Salesian Family Course, held October 26-27, 2024, was facilitated by Sr. Denise Sickinger, FMA, and Fr. Tom Dunne, SDB. There were forty-nine participants (forty-one virtual and eight in-person attendees).

The course covered the Salesian Family's origins, beginning with Don Bosco's "Dream of Nine," the early oratory, and the historical, political, and philosophical influences shaping his work. Highlights included:

- The 1875 Missionary Expansion;
- Salesian Family groups founded before and after Vatican II;
- *Lumen Gentium*, *Christifideles Laici*, and canonical classifications of Salesian Family groups; and
- Sr. Denise's detailed, color-coded historical timeline.

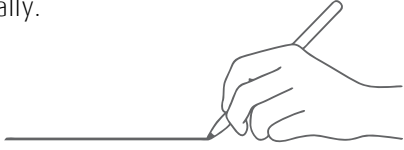
Attendees created presentations on various Salesian Family groups and discussed core questions like, "What makes us a family?" and "What are our responsibilities to the family?"

### Course Feedback

Participants appreciated the diverse presentations and cultural insights into the Salesian Family, the thought-provoking discussions on family criteria, and the perspectives on Don Bosco's dream and mission. Group collaboration reinforced a strong sense of universal family.

## Suggestions for Improvement

For future sessions, participants recommended streamlining the historical background at the start, emphasizing Don Bosco's vision of family and early collaboration more, and including examples of modern Salesian Family collaboration globally.



## Reflection: The Influence and Impact of Don Bosco's Life on Youth and the Salesian Family (all 32 Groups)

When I reflect upon the past two days of "The History of the Salesian Family Course," I have three takeaways. The first is that, from the historical and pastoral perspective, it is clear and incontestable that, from the beginning, Don Bosco's home was a "family for young people without a family" and a "parish for young people without a parish". At the founding of Valdocco, Don Bosco's priority was to create a family atmosphere and an authentic experience of church. In our Salesian tradition, every thought and action that is true to our charism flows from our "family spirit" and finds its roots in Don Bosco and the origins of his work in Valdocco. This "family spirit" is not a compartmentalized priority reserved for a part of the work or particular moments of the day; it is a style of life that permeates every aspect of the very existence and concrete manner of carrying out the daily reality of the entire Salesian work. "Family spirit," therefore, is not an optional element of our style of education; it is a dimension that weaves transversally across every aspect of Salesian youth ministry. Our charismatic identity as Salesians remains clear: we are "signs and bearers of the love of God for the young," and our houses are places where we offer an experience of family to all the young who come to us and to all of our collaborators.

I am reminded of Fr. Tom's teaching of the beginnings of the Salesian Family at Becchi and in Turin. These stories centered on Don Bosco's mission, his unwavering faith, and his way of working and collaborating with others (religious and lay people). Some of the stories shared were: "The Dream of Nine" and "The Wandering Oratory," and inviting his mother, Mamma Margaret, to share in his mission to care for his boys in Turin.

I was also awestruck when I heard about Don Bosco's feelings of loneliness, exhaustion, and declining health after the long search for an oratory for his boys. Wow! Haven't we all experienced these feelings in ministry at different points in life, especially when faced with challenges? Some thoughts may race through our minds, such as: "I just don't have the time in my life right now," or "I can quit. I tried my best, and maybe it's time to take care of myself." Then the inner voice surfaces and tugs at our hearts, and we hear, "No, I need you, and I will give you all you need; keep following me." This is a powerful reminder of the importance of having daily contact with Jesus. When we don't have daily contact with Jesus, fear and anxiety fill our lives. Daily holy moments with Jesus center our thoughts, feelings, and responses to others and how we approach our daily tasks.

A second takeaway from the course was the constant presence of Jesus and Mary Help of Christians' guide and support throughout the life of Don Bosco and the Salesian Family groups. When we sincerely desire to obey God's will and abandon ourselves, we empower the Holy Spirit to think, act, and love through us. Through the many Salesian Family groups' vocations, we find the strength to endure challenges, hope through our spiritual communion

(don't go it alone), and the joy of working collaboratively and continuing Don Bosco's mission. We only have to read the journey of the thirty-two Salesian groups (which I encourage all to read) in their forming and persevering to witness the hand of God and Don Bosco's influence, which is the expansion of the Salesian Family.

The third and last takeaway is a heart filled with awe and gratitude. Don Bosco's unwavering courage to heed Jesus' call, with Mother Mary as his guide, is a source of inspiration for us all. We are grateful for Don Bosco's "yes" to take on the mission Jesus gave him and for the "yes" of all thirty-two Salesian Family groups that share our spiritual mission.

In sum, the Salesian Family is one in Don Bosco's heart and mind! The original unity of this family has its roots in the existence of a common spirit and mission of total service to young and working-class people. Those belonging to Don Bosco's Family feel and realize a vocation—the Salesian vocation.

May we all have the courage and grace to listen to Jesus's voice in the quiet, sacred inner space of our hearts and souls, and may we answer God's call with "A Salesian yes, Lord, your servant is listening and ready to save souls." May God continue to bless our Salesian Family with more vocations to continue the mission of Don Bosco.

## What's Next?

**"Save the Date" and register for the Salesian Family Animation Course on January 2-3, 2025.**





Canada Salesian Family Day attendees and organizers with an image of Bl. Carlo Acutis  
Courtesy of by Sr. Alphonsine Roy, FMA

## Explaining Jubilee 2025 and Care of Creation Canada's Salesian Family Day

BY SR. ALPHONSINE ROY, FMA  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN **ANS**, 10/09/2022

On Saturday, October 5, Montréal was the scene of Salesian Family Day organized by the Salesian Family Council of Montréal, Sherbrooke and Cornwall. The activity took place at the Don Bosco Youth Leadership Centre (YLC) in Montréal. It focused on the explanation of the Jubilee 2025 logo, entitled "Pilgrim of Hope," on Strenna 2025, and also explored the care of creation, as well as the life of Carlo Acutis, soon-to-be canonized.

Le samedi 5 octobre, Montréal a été le théâtre de la Journée de la Famille Salésienne, organisée par la Consulte de la Famille Salésienne de Montréal, Sherbrooke et Cornwall. L'activité a eu lieu au « Don Bosco Youth Leadership Center » (YLC) à Montréal, et était centrée sur le thème de l'explication du logo du Jubilé 2025, intitulé « Pèlerin de l'Espérance », sur l'Étrenne 2025 et en approfondissant également le soin de la création, ainsi que la vie de Carlo Acutis, qui sera bientôt canonisé.



Over the years, the face of the Salesian Family in eastern Canada has evolved considerably. Along with French-speakers, English-speakers and Italians, Haitian, Mexican, Peruvian, Filipino, Cameroonian and Vietnamese communities have been integrated. In addition, there was the presence of two aspiring Salesian Cooperators from Lebanon, belonging to the Eastern Catholic rite.



Au fil des années, le visage de la Famille Salésienne dans le Canada oriental a considérablement évolué. Aux côtés des francophones, anglophones et italiens, les communautés haïtienne, mexicaine, péruvienne, philippine, camerounaise et vietnamienne ont été intégrées. En outre, il y a eu la présence de deux aspirants Salésiens Coopérateurs du Liban, appartenant au rite catholique oriental.

# Explore the Final Document Regarding the Salesian Youth Synod

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**Strenna 2025**



*Maria Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro nobis!*

*"Anchored in hope, pilgrims with young people"*