



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE PROVINCE OF ST. PHILIP THE APOSTLE



Vicar Fr. Stefano Martoglio, SDB, during this year's Salesian Family Spirituality Days celebration in Valdocco, Turin, Italy
Courtesy of Agenzia Info Salesiana (ANS)

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Good, Faithful, and Courageous Servants

During this Jubilee Year, in this difficult world, we are invited to rise up, set out again, and, in newness of life, make our journey as human beings and believers.

Message of the Vicar, Fr. Stefano Martoglio, SDB

The prophet Isaiah addresses Jerusalem with these words: "Arise, be clothed with light, for your light is coming, and the glory of the Lord is shining upon you" (Is. 60:1). The prophet's invitation — to get up because the light is coming — seems surprising, because it is proclaimed in the aftermath of the harsh exile and the numerous persecutions that his people experienced.

Today this invitation resounds also for us who are celebrating this Jubilee Year. In this difficult world, we, too, are invited to rise up, to set out again, and, in the newness of

life, make our journey as human beings and believers.



This is important all the more now that we have had the grace—yes, because it is a matter of grace—to celebrate the liturgical remembrance of John Bosco's sanctity. Let it not be done out of mere habit: Don Bosco is a great man of God—a brilliant, courageous, and tireless apostle because he was a disciple deeply in love with Christ. He is our Father!

In life, having a father is very important. It is the same in our faith,

in the *sequela Christi* (the following of Christ). To have a great father is a priceless gift. You feel it in your being; his experience as a believer moves your life. If it is so for Don Bosco, why cannot it be the same for me?

This is an existential question that moves and changes us, in the spirit of the Jubilee, so that we become "renewed," "changed" people. This is, for all of us, the profound meaning of the solemnity of Don Bosco that we have just celebrated: to imitate and not just admire him!

Don Bosco is a shining and powerful example to us for this Jubilee year that we are living, with its theme of hope, the presence of God who accompanies us!

As I noted in the strenna for this year, when speaking of hope, Don Bosco wrote:

"The Salesian—and when speaking to the Salesians, he speaks to each of us—is ready to endure heat and cold, thirst and hunger, fatigue and contempt whenever it is a question of the glory of God and the salvation of souls." The interior bulwark for this demanding asceticism is the thought of Heaven, a reflection of the good conscience with which he worked and lived. "In all our tasks, in all our work, in our pain or sorrow, let us never forget that He [the Lord] keeps the most minute account of every least thing done for His Holy Name, and it is certain that in due time He will reward us abundantly. At the end of our lives, when we present ourselves at His divine tribunal, he will say to us, while gazing upon us with a loving expression: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Because you have been faithful in little things, I will place you over many things: enter the Joy of your Lord." (Mt 25:21) "In fatigue and suffering, never forget that we have a great reward prepared for us in Heaven." When our Father says that a Salesian exhausted from too much work represents a victory for the whole Congregation, he even seems to suggest a dimension of fraternal communion in the reward, almost a community sense of Heaven!

"Hello! By saving [another], save yourself"^[1]

Don Bosco was one of the great persons of hope. There are many elements to prove it. His Salesian spirit is entirely permeated by the certainties and industriousness characteristic of this bold dynamism of the Holy Spirit.

Don Bosco knew how to bring to life the energy of hope on two fronts in his life: 1.) the commitment to personal sanctification and 2.) the



*A violinist performs during the Salesian Family Spirituality Days celebration in Valdocco, Turin, Italy
Courtesy of Agenzia Info Salesiana (ANS)*

mission of saving others; or, better,—and here lies a central characteristic of his spirit— personal sanctification through the salvation of others. Let's remember his famous formula of the three S's: "Salve, salvando salvati." It seems like an offhanded mnemonic device, like a pedagogical slogan; rather, it is, in truth, a profound thought which indicates how the two realities of personal sanctification and the salvation of one's neighbor are closely intertwined.

Bishop Erik Varden says: "Here and now, hope manifests itself as a glimmer. That does not mean it is irrelevant. Hope has a blessed contagion that allows it to spread from heart to heart. Totalitarian powers always work to erase hope and induce despair. To educate oneself in hope is to practice freedom. In a poem, Péguy describes hope as the flame of the sanctuary lamp. This flame, he says, 'is always a descending border, in the depths of night.' It enables us to see what is now, but also to foresee what could be. To hope is to stake one's existence on the possibility of becoming. It is an art to be practiced assiduously in the fatalistic and deterministic atmosphere in which we live."^[2]

May God grant us the ability to live this Jubilee Year in this way!

May we all go forward during this month with this vision that "shines in the darkness,"—with Hope in our hearts for it is the presence of God.

During this month, I ask you to pray for our Salesian Congregation which will hold its General Chapter. Please accompany us all with your prayers and your thoughts so that we may be faithful Salesians, living what Don Bosco wanted.

Footnotes

[1] "Hello, by saving [another] save yourself" A play on the Italian words: *Salve* (Hello, hi, hail), *salvando* (by saving someone) *salvati* (save yourself).

[2] www.clonline.org/en/current-events/articles/christianity-is-not-a-utopia, accessed January 15, 2025, Memorial of Bl. Luigi Variara, SDB.

Vocation Corner *A Lived Consecration*

**By Fr. Steve DeMaio, SDB,
Province Director
of Vocation Ministry**

From Wednesday, January 29, to Monday, February 10, Bro. Rafael Vargas and I had the blessing of traveling through Florida, where we visited the Salesian Family in Tampa, Naples, Miami, Gainesville, and Jacksonville. It was a beautiful chance for us to meet with current and past students and Salesian Family members. It was also wonderful to encounter other young people who are involved in their universities' Catholic centers.

We encountered people, both young and old, who were actively striving to live out the consecration they received at Baptism. They were involved in youth groups and Bible studies, organizing parish events, spending time in adoration, helping to organize the liturgy, encouraging each other to serve the poor, and having fun in healthy ways. There were so many signs of hope and moments of real joy. For us, these were just some examples of the real blessing it is to be a Salesian and to be able to walk with young people in these ways.

One of these many encounters made me reflect deeply on our Salesian mission and my own vocation. We met two young men who were discerning priesthood and had a real passion for the education and evangelization of young people. They wanted to give their lives for "spiritual orphans." So they want to help not only children without mothers or fathers, but most



*Part of a collage of Fr. Steve DeMaio and Bro. Rafael Vargas' visit to the Salesian Family in Florida
Courtesy of Fr. Steve DeMaio, SDB*

especially those who don't know Christ, who perhaps have parents and financial security but live without direction or meaning. They recognized how many young people are lost, alone, and feel abandoned, even while being surrounded by a lot of people and involved in a lot of activity. To these young men, this apostolate among orphans was a mission that was worth laying down their lives for.

It was incredible to hear these young people speak in a way that so clearly resembled the heart of Don Bosco. They wanted to live their baptismal consecration for the good of abandoned young people. I was inspired by their gift of self, and it made me stop and reevaluate my own zeal for these spiritual orphans who are surely in all the works of our province. ***How well are we living out this mission in our province? Can we be more intentional?***

It made me remember why I joined the Salesians in the first place. In 2009, I was face-to-face with children who

were removed from their families and placed with the Salesian Sisters because the situation at home wasn't healthy. The Sisters became their spiritual mothers, and in that moment, I felt I was being called to be a spiritual father. It was the beginning of Jesus' invitation for me to live out my baptismal consecration as a Salesian priest. My conversation with these two young men reinforced the desire to go back to the roots of our founding, to really focus on the abandoned young people to whom we are called to make the first approach and invite into the family experience of the oratory.

According to my professor in Ecuador, the Salesian Congregation was founded to heal the wounds of abandonment. May we never lose the wonder of this mission that is being entrusted to us, and the courage to live it as Don Bosco did in his time.



*Camp St. Francis signage
Courtesy of Mr. Alex Tucciarone*

2025 Annual Bro. Gene Mylan Fund Award Helps Camp St. Francis

By Mr. Alex Tucciarone

(New Rochelle, NY – February 12) –

Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of the Salesian Old Boys, family, and friends, the annual Bro. Gene Mylan Fund raised approximately \$25,000 to remodel three shower rooms/bathrooms at Camp St. Francis in Aptos, CA. The camp provides religious retreats, summer camping experiences, and educational workshops for youths and young adults.

The shower rooms/bathrooms had not been remodeled since the camp opened and desperately needed a makeover. This will allow the camp to increase its capacity for additional campers with improved facilities.

The Salesian Old Boys’ major goal to assist youth through supporting Salesian activities has had a meaningful impact on multiple Salesian programs in the U.S., Canada, South America and Africa.



*Fr. Jorge Rodriguez gives a talk during the retreat.
Photo by Fr. Franco Pinto, SDB*

Port Chester: St. John Bosco Parish Hosts OCIA Retreat

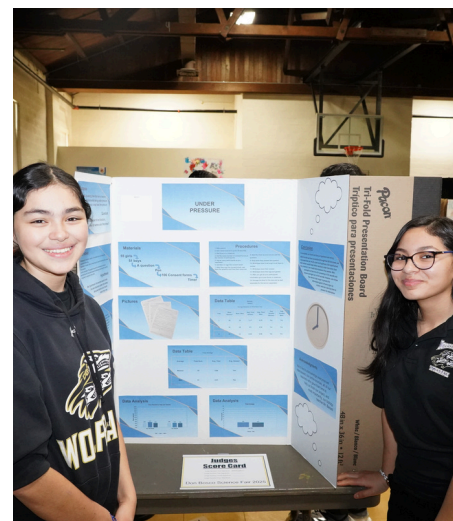
**Courtesy of Fr. Franco Pinto,
SDB, Vice-Provincial
and Interim Pastor,
St. John Bosco Parish**

(New Rochelle, NY – February 12) –

St. John Bosco Parish in Port Chester held a retreat for OCIA Candidates on Saturday, February 8, and Sunday, February 9, in the Sacred Heart Center at St. John Bosco Parish. Each day of the retreat began at 8:00 a.m. and ended at 5:00 p.m. All 50-60 candidates showed up, in spite of the bad weather.



Fr. Jorge Rodriguez preached the retreat, which was organized by Beatrice Quispe and her team. The retreat included adoration, confessions, Mass, talks and testimonies.



*DBCR students at the STEM Fair
Photo by Ms. Sasha Astrinsky*

Washington: DBCR Students Shine at STEM Fair

**By Ms. Sasha Astrinsky,
Marketing and
Communications Coordinator,
Don Bosco Cristo
Rey High School**

(Takoma Park, MD – February 12)

– The next diverse generation of scientists, engineers, and researchers can be found at Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School (DBCR) and its corporate work-study program! Over 50 student research projects were presented at DBCR’s 2nd Annual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math) Fair on Friday, February 7. They covered topics like local weather patterns, sleeping habits, and the impacts of music on heart rate.

DBCR welcomed volunteer judges from several science departments and corporate work-study program partners, including from NASA, MacroGenics, the University of Maryland, Walter Reed Medical



*DBCR students explain their project at the STEM Fair.
Photo by Ms. Sasha Astrinsky*

Center, and BOLAND. The top-rated projects will be submitted to the historic Prince George's Area Science Fair, where prizes include college scholarships for students.

The STEM Fair is part of DBCR's deepened focus on STEM education, which has also included adding new Advanced Placement (AP) courses and partnerships with Microsoft TEALS and Engineering Tomorrow.

Upcoming Events

April 10: 25th Annual Salesian High School President's Dinner (New Rochelle, NY)

Various:
National Shrine Jubilee 2025 Events (Stony Point, NY)

*Need a date added?
Let us know by emailing us at communications@salesians.org.*



*Cardinal Timothy Dolan and altar servers at the Mass for the inauguration Mass of the National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians
Photo by Fr. Franco Pinto, SDB*



*Bro. Pascal Mukuye, SDB
Courtesy of Province Vocation Office*

Weekly Prayer
for February 13-19, 2025

Let us all pray for **Bro. Pascal Mukuye**, who is in post-novitiate in Orange, NJ.



Birthdays

- February 22:** Fr. Steve Shafran
- February 23:** Fr. Martin Joseph Arul Mani
- February 24:** Fr. Enzo Trigatti
- February 24:** Bro. Henry Van der Velden
- February 24:** Fr. Tito Iannaccio
- February 24:** Fr. Joseph Vien Hoang



Salesian Holiness

February 25: Sts. Louis Versiglia and Callistus Caravario

Prayer Remembrances

- All our senior confreres in Stony Point and Tampa**
- Alejandro Acosta Lagaxio**, nephew of Fr. Raúl M. Acosta Zunini, SDB
 - José María Acosta Zunini**, brother of Fr. Raúl M. Acosta Zunini, SDB
 - Jacob Anitra**, grandnephew of Bro. Tom Sweeney, SDB
 - Fr. John Blanco, SDB**
 - Fr. Bill Bucciferro, SDB**
 - Vincent Carlino**, brother of Fr. Lenny Carlino, SDB
 - Fr. Bruce Craig, SDB**
 - Jo-Ann Donahue**, Salesian Provincial Center Receptionist, New Rochelle, NY
 - Rita Dube**, sister-in-law of Bro. Bernie Dube, SDB
 - Fr. Tom Dunne, SDB**
 - Claudia Gonzales**, Salesian Cooperator, Port Chester, NY
 - Fr. Dennis Hartigan, SDB**
 - Fr. John Itzaina, SDB** (SUO Province)
 - Ken Lindenfesler**, brother-in-law of Fr. Dennis Hartigan, SDB
 - Bro. George Marquis, SDB**
 - Bro. Charles Mayer, SDB**
 - Fr. Frank Moloney, SDB** (Australia Province)
 - John Myler**, former SDB
 - Fr. John Nazzaro, SDB**
 - Theresa Notare**, mother of Andrea Zimmerman, Salesian Cooperator
 - Salvina Pace**, mother of Fr. Mike Pace, SDB
 - Bro. Sal Sammarco, SDB**
 - Janine Serio Durso**, sister of Fr. John Serio, SDB
 - Robert Serio**, nephew of Fr. John Serio, SDB
 - Bro. Henry Van der Velden, SDB**

Deceased

Roger Baillargeon, cousin of Bro. Bernie Dube, SDB
Sr. Elizabeth Russo FMA



“Love is risky. We must take the risk of loving. Yet, though it is a risk, it is a risk worth taking, and Jesus accompanies us as we do.”

- Pope Francis

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