



Australian

Salesian Bulletin

Published by the Australia-Pacific Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco

Winter 2019



**In winters and tragedies, flowers even as they fade
send us messages of love and hope**

FrontLine

“Let all condemn these terrorist acts, inhuman acts, never justifiable”

Pope Francis



Once again hatred and violence stain the main Christian festival with blood, the very one that announces the victory of the Lord over death.

“I wish to express my affectionate closeness to the Christian community, struck while it was gathered in prayer, and to all the victims of such cruel violence. I entrust to the Lord those who have tragically disappeared and pray for the wounded and all those who suffer because of this dramatic event” was the message pronounced by Pope Francis from the central gallery of St Peter's Basilica on Easter Sunday.

“I am very close to the whole archdiocesan Church of Colombo. I pray for the many victims and wounded, and I ask everyone not to hesitate to offer this dear nation all the necessary help. I also hope that everyone condemns these terrorist acts, inhuman and never justifiable”.

According to data provided by "Open Doors", an organization that monitors religious freedom in the world, from January to date 4,336 faithful have been killed for matters related to their beliefs, an average of 11 per day. In addition, another 2,625 have been imprisoned. There is an increase in pressure across Asia, Africa and the Middle East, which sometimes take the form of obvious discrimination but other times it is in the form of latent marginalization from social life.



Cover

A young family lies flowers by the wall of the Botanic Gardens in Christchurch, New Zealand, in memory of those who had their lives taken during the 15 March terrorist attack.

Photo by Carl Court

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Fr Frank Freeman SDB
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Blood's red thread



Since the dawn of civilization humankind has been faced with violence. There has been fighting within families and tribes, battles between states, wars between nations. Humankind always seems to be bent upon the aggression that results in exactly the violence we have come to deplore. Judith Wright, the Australian poet, reflects on violence in her poem "Trains": "...and how shall the mind be sober. Since blood's red thread still binds us fast in history." Violence for her is like an ever-prowling tiger; "Tiger you walk through all our past and future."

Over the past months we have witnessed all the horrors that come with massacres of the innocent, as highlighted by the events in Christchurch New Zealand and Sri Lanka. Daily do we hear about blood-soaked streets across Africa and the Middle East. Gun-violence in the U.S. is as relentless as ever. As this pure destruction was beamed into our living rooms, we must have realised how terrible it all is and yet how surreal. Terrible in its bloody cost and so brutal in its disconnection from the sacredness of life and the more ennobling achievements of the human mind.

As the passing days give way to months, somehow we need to make sense of all this violence. On many evenings we are presented with the views of psychologists, sociologists and political commentators as the media tries to make sense of it all. But how can they? Their eyes are on distant horizons; 'evil doesn't exist at home - it resides in the domain of faraway places.' Yet, the human mind and heart are the same everywhere. There are the violence on our streets and the home invasions from which neither the young nor elderly are spared. The hearts of many

homeward pedestrians jump in fear at the sound of following feet! Violence is now so very pervasive in our nation - in our homes, our schools, on our streets, in our cars, in the news media, in the lyrics of our music, in our novels, films and video games. It is so prevalent that we have become unconscious of it, right up until the extraordinarily terrible happens, forcing us into the discovery of how bitterly real it all is.

Yet we can make sense of it if we realise that the cause is very simple: we are losing God, and in losing Him, we are losing ourselves. The disregard for human life shown by our society is not an accident or an anomaly, it is precisely what we create when we live in contradictions. We cannot systematically kill the unborn, the old, the infirm and the condemned prisoners among us; we cannot glorify sickening brutality in our entertainment and then hope that somehow our young people will build a better society imbued with the culture of life.

We cannot whitewash evil. We cannot condone what is immoral because of public opinion or the sensibilities of a religion. Knowing the utter chaos of violence, we can never justify stamping out evil through the use of hatred or violence. Hatred spawns more hatred; violence breeds more violence, until people are totally dehumanized and then destroyed.

The only real solution to violence is the message of Jesus that was so well personified in the reactions of Jacinda Arden, Prime Minister of New Zealand to the horrors her people faced in Christchurch. Our Parliaments may legislate but only religious faith can touch the hearts of violent people and motivate them to respect life and accept peace.



Editor

Frank Freeman SDB,
editor of the Australian
Salesian Bulletin



Blood poured forth brings great life



Fr Ángel Fernández Artime

Ángel Fernández Artime is the 10th successor of Don Bosco and the first Spaniard and third non-Italian to become Rector Major of the Salesian Order.

My dear readers,

Not too long ago, I was visiting and accompanying the people in the Salesian works in Mato Grosso and Southern Mato Grosso in Brazil – specifically in the tiny village of Cuiabá where our first Salesian missionaries arrived 125 years ago. Today it is a very beautiful little town.

I told my brother Salesians that, just as I had done in El Chaco, Paraguay, I wanted to visit our work among the indigenous peoples in Mato Grosso, as well as our missionary presences there. We arrived in Meruri, the settlement of the indigenous Bororo people, around dusk.

In 1894, our Salesian missionaries made their first contact with the Xavantes Indians of the area. That first encounter was a sad one. The indigenous people killed the first two Salesian missionaries to arrive. Nonetheless, the missionaries soon founded the Sacred Heart Colony and began the evangelization of the Bororos living in this region. In 1906, they founded the Sangradouro Colony and it was to this colony that the Xavantes came after having been expelled and almost annihilated by the rival Parabuburi of the area.

By 1926 the Salesian missionaries had continuous, stable, and solid presences in those settlements among the Xavante and Bororo peoples. When the Xavante arrived at the Sangradouro settlement – where they were welcomed by the Salesians and the Bororo (even though they had been enemies throughout their history) – they numbered only 900 members. Today, thanks to the protection given to them and respect for native cultures and formation that has enabled them to be able to establish relations and work with organizations and governments, they now number 30,000.

The people of Meruri welcomed us in their traditional style. I used as much of the time as possible to meet with all the missionaries who live among these peoples at present: 18 SDBs and 8 FMAs were there along with two religious sisters from the Congregation of St Laura, Colombian sisters with whom we work very harmoniously for the good of these native peoples, our brothers and sisters.

The following morning we experienced two events of great historical significance. The first: 40 Xavante boys and girls came to join the Bororo people for the day because we were there. Never before had the Bororo and the Xavante come together like this. The Bororo and Xavante youths made possible what the adults never had been able to do before in their history: we met, chatted, and entertained various questions; they did their traditional dances; we celebrated the Eucharist and had all our meals together. In total, there were a few hundred gathered together!

The second significant event that we celebrated was the Eucharist, in the very place where Salesian Father Rudolph Lukembein, a German missionary, and Simao Cristino, a native, were assassinated. They were killed by powerful landowners who were upset because the Salesians defended the native peoples and their rights to the land. On 15 July 1976, these landowners came to the settlement and, after a short argument, shot Fr Rudolph. Simao went to defend Fr Rudolph, and he, too, was executed.

On the day of my visit, I was able to greet, speak with, and enjoy the presence of an elderly man who also had been stabbed in that very same confrontation but managed to survive. He was there in the morning for our Eucharist, a humble presence. The cause for the beatification and canonization of these two martyrs is now underway; both are now "Servants of God."

It was very moving for me to be there where the Bororo live and to meet with the Bororo and Xavante youths who had asked to be together for this occasion. I was also moved to meet with the missionaries who share day-to-day life with these peoples and to celebrate our Faith where the martyrs met their deaths only because they sought to help better the life of the natives and who had their lives stripped away only because they sought to defend their fellow people.

Early the next morning, together with the Bororo community once again, we made a short procession and visit to the cemetery at the settlement. There, at the tombs of Simao and Fr Rudolph, we prayed

for everyone. My thoughts flew from there to Africa, to the border of Burkina Faso and Togo, where our Salesian confrere Fr Cesar Antonio Fernandez, a missionary from Spain, had his life cut short just a little more than two months ago at an absurd border roadblock. It was one of the most senseless shootings by radicals, simply because he was a priest and missionary.

Blood poured out brings forth so much anguish but can also generate great life. I saw this among the Bororo and Xavante peoples, and we see it in Africa, where "life miracles" happen daily.

These few lines hope to be a "thank you" for the so very many dedicated persons of boundless generosity. It is also meant to be a thank you to so many of you, dear friends and readers of the Salesian Bulletin, who continue to trust in the good which we do together in this world – this world that never ceases to need good things and good news to cheer the heart, and actions that change lives. Indeed, not everything that happens in this world is bad. On the contrary, the world has been redeemed, and there is so much good that is sown and happens each day – but the good doesn't make news. It seems that only evil, tragedies, violence, and murders do.

Then let us be people who spread good news. The last thing I want to share with you is this: despite the suffering and pain in the face of these murders, they are realities that bring forth life.

With affection,
Don Angel



It is I, do not be afraid



In the present atmosphere of a global brooding fear of terrorism, the following thoughts of Mother Evonne are indeed timely. Editor



Mother Yvonne Reungoat

Mother Yvonne Reungoat is the 9th successor of St Maria Mazzarello and is French, making her the first non-Italian to be elected as Superior General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians

At the meeting Free from fear, Pope Francis highlighted significant biblical episodes through which God speaks to us even today. They orient and guide with the same gaze of compassion the migration phenomena that increasingly assume planetary dimensions (Cf. Homily, 15 February 2019).

The Israelites, terrorized because they are being followed by Pharaoh's army, are encouraged by Moses who invites the people to not be afraid because the Lord is with them: "Do not fear! Stand your ground and see the victory the Lord will win for you today" (Exodus 14: 13). In the long and tiring pilgrimage in the desert, the people of Israel are urged to look beyond the adversity, and not succumb to fear, but to trust fully in God's action that always brings salvation.

Pope Francis continues, recalling the scene of the tempestuous sea, and the boat battered by the impetuous wind, putting the frightened disciples at risk to the point that they did not recognize Jesus who is walking on the water towards them. He reassures them: "Courage, it is I, do not be afraid!" (Mt 14: 27).

They are two very timely biblical references: they tell us *not to be afraid* in the face of difficult situations that endanger our security, but to believe that fear disappears when we abandon ourselves to the presence of the Lord of history. If this were not the case, due to the risks associated with entrenching ourselves in our fragile human security and in the reassurance of routine, it becomes inevitable for us to retreat into the narrow circle of people who we know and love. These are attitudes, the Holy Father underlines, that mark defeat and increase dread and fear, especially when we are "faced with the arrival of migrants and refugees who knock on our door in search of protection, security, and a better future".

The awareness that we are all migrants on this earth helps us to overcome fears that are based on doubts, are legitimate and are fully understandable from a human point of view. Fear is in those who welcome the 'new arrivals' for fear that they may 'steal' something that has been painstakingly built; fear is also in the 'newcomer' who lives the non-hypothetical risk of prejudice, rejection, discrimination and failure.

Regarding this, Pope Francis says that “having doubts and fears is not a sin. The sin is letting these fears determine our response, conditioning our choices, compromising respect and generosity, fueling hatred and rejection. The sin is renouncing the encounter with the other, the encounter with the diverse, the encounter with the neighbour, which in fact is a privileged occasion for encounter with the Lord” (Homily, 14 January 2018). This is why “we need the impulse of the Spirit so as not to be paralyzed by fear and by calculations, to not accustom ourselves to walk only within safe confines” (Gaudete et exsultate, n. 133).

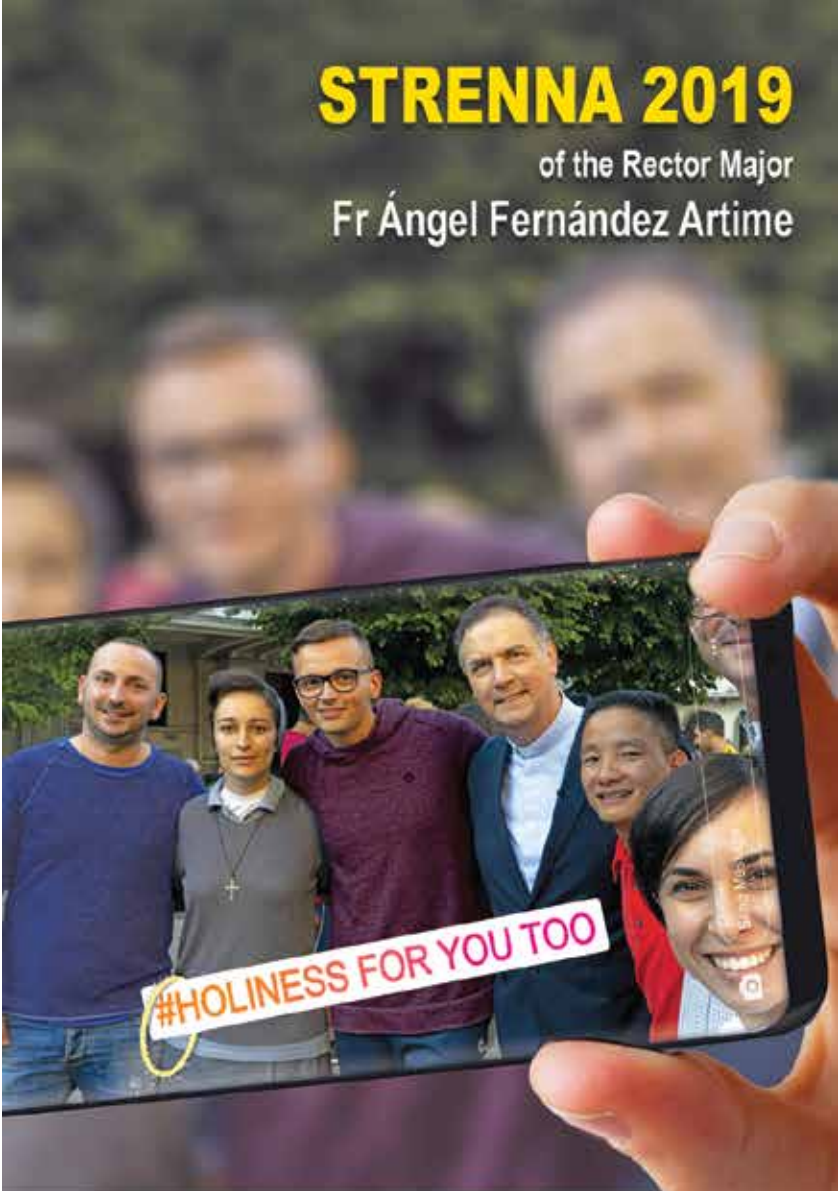
This historic hour, so complex and disquieting, asks us to conquer with the strength of trust every form of fear, to open ourselves, to welcome and encounter. We speak a lot of this today. However, we do not want it to remain only words, slogans for the moment, or just sterile affirmations. We work and commit ourselves so that reception and solidarity may become a habit, a life orientation, a supportive and lasting mentality.

I would like our communities to ask themselves the question: how can we develop personal and communal attitudes open to welcome and encounter? What choices can we make together with institutions, associations, movements and church at various levels so that the joy of being recognized in their dignity as children of God and of looking at life with hope and serenity may be restored to so many brothers and sisters, especially minors?

To welcome and meet the other is to meet Jesus. He himself tells us: “Truly, I say to you, all you did to one of these least brothers of mine, you did to me” (Mt 25: 40). If this word of Jesus is the key to interpreting the history of our times, we should begin to thank those who give us the opportunity for encounter, that is, those who knock on the door of our heart and of our homes, giving us the opportunity to overcome fears and dread, to welcome and meet in the person of the other, Jesus in person (cf. Homily, 15 February 2019).

This is not utopia, it is a mission that we live as Church, pilgrims on this earth that is mother of all, with renewed missionary ardour. It is a mission-vocation that restores the joy and marvel of the feast of encounter, of sharing, and of solidarity.


Mother General, Yvonne Reungoat



STRENNA 2019
of the Rector Major
Fr Ángel Fernández Artime

**HOLINESS
IS
HAPPINESS**

“So that my joy may be in you”
(John 15: 11)

 Salesians of Don Bosco
Australia-Pacific

How can we help you?



Fr William Matthews
SDB

Fr Will is the Provincial of the Australia-Pacific Province which includes Australia, Samoa, Fiji and New Zealand

The experience of being greeted genuinely by a receptionist either in person or over the phone like ‘How can I help you?’ is something unique. This has the power to change the mood of a person for the better. The experience becomes even sweeter when being accompanied with a smile!

Salesians all around the world are blessed with lay people, Christians and non-Christians alike, including precious young people who play vital roles in their life and ministry. Salesian life loses its meaning and becomes joyless without participation from lay people. The intention of St John Bosco is that they all form a family for the glory of God and the good of the young. The glory of God is the glory of the Church made up of believers like you and me.

In the last few months, Salesians all over the world have been asking a question to themselves and to you, ‘What kind of Salesian for the youth of today?’.

The very core of Salesian life is their readiness to fulfil the needs of others while fulfilling their religious duties. Don Bosco had fulfilled the needs of the young for the good of the society with help from his own mother and many other lay collaborators. He provided leadership roles and opportunities to senior young people under his care to help in his mission.

In the charism of St John Bosco, Salesians have been helping the needs of the young all around the world since 1859. They have also been in Australia since 1923, and have now ventured into Samoa, Fiji and New Zealand. Recently, Salesian delegates of the Province of Mary Help of Christians (Australia-Pacific) gathered together with lay collaborators and young people to reflect on how they can serve lay people better.

Salesian Brothers and Priests will appreciate any advice and support from you. All I say on their behalf is ‘How can we help you? Please, let us know – we are listening!

Fr William Matthews,
Provincial

If you have anything that you would like to suggest to the Salesians, you can contact the Provincial at:

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Salesians in New Zealand



L-R: Fr Joseph Pham, Fr William Matthews, Fr Mosese Tui (Rector), Fr James Adayadiel, Fr Mathew Vadakkevettivazhiyil, parish priest Avondale

On 15 April, Fr James Adayadiel celebrated his 65 years of Salesian life with his community in New Zealand. Fr James joined the province in 1979 and has since held positions of responsibility as well as being Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Apia. Fr James has been an outstanding missionary in Samoa and New Zealand, and he has contributed enormously to the life of the Salesian Mission wherever he has gone.

Provincial Fr Will Matthews was also able to be present as he was on a pastoral visit to the community at the time. The New Zealand community currently has five Salesians who are responsible for the ministering of two parishes, Avondale and Massey, which are both northern suburbs of Auckland. A feature of the Massey parish is that it is populated by a wide variety of migrant families. One such group is that of the migrants from Burma, who have been settling there for over ten years.

Fr Will's time in Massey coincided with the recent school holidays, so he also joined the Burmese youth as they gathered at St Paul's presbytery for a day of catechetical discussions run by him.

These young people play active roles in the life of the parish, particularly during service at Sunday Masses. The Burmese families in general are extremely appreciative of the love and support that is provided to them by the Salesians in Massey.



Fr James pictured on the right, during his time in Samoa



I don't want a job



Teaghan Dolan

Teaghan is a dedicated contributor to the Salesian Youth Movement in Australia and having spent a year volunteering in Cambodia with the Cagliero Project, she now has a second place that feels like home!

The title of this article is a lie - of course I want a job! Do I want a job as much as I feel that I need a job? No. As much as somewhere inside me there is an urge for a job, if I were to get a job tomorrow, it would be purely to fulfil my financial needs. "Isn't that why everyone has a job?" I hear you ask, and to that I answer: "Well, maybe it is, but oh how I hope I (we) can work for so much more!"

I don't have a job currently, and it has opened me up to a whole new world of invasive and difficult-to-answer questions. Or at least, being able to answer those questions to an extent that the question asker is satisfied that even though I'm jobless, I still might have my life together enough to take onboard their 101 top tips and tricks to sorting out a career for myself so I can 'get on with it'.

Sure, these questions - 'What do you do?', 'What do you want to do?' 'Have you spoken to Helen? -she has experience' or 'Have you tried...?' all undoubtedly come from a good place - a place of support for your existence in a world that equates your worth through the lens of (financial) productivity. But that is where the problem lies. Well, there may be an argument that suggests that we humans have a need to be productive so we can also feel a sense of worth, but there is also an argument that says productivity which brings in an income isn't the only worthy form of productivity and that telling young people employment will solve all their problems just isn't right.

Nearing on four months of being unemployed, haphazardly and unenthusiastically looking for a job, I've developed a great monologue to deliver to each self-proclaimed career advisor I find myself encountering. Yet in my mind I'm listening to an entirely different voice that just wants the confidence to say "Um, no, I don't really know what I want to do or what job I want, Mavis, but that's alright, I have plenty of other good things in my life if we can take being unemployed off the agenda for the 600th time." I was in the car recently with a few friends, one of whom asked me how I was going - without a pause I launched straight into my monologue - 'I still don't have a job, it's hard because I don't really know what I want but everyone tells me to keep looking so I guess I'll keep going' to which they replied - 'Yeah, but how are YOU? I feel like you can only ever tell me about trying to find a job'. And there it is. Unconsciously I'm letting myself become a product that conforms to all the things I want to tell our society to stop doing.

It's hard. We all have something inside of us that is stewing away wanting to step up and fight against the 'normal' - but are we encouraged to do that? No. If you're unemployed you might as well start to quieten down until you 'contribute' and if you're young person, then keep quiet until you have more 'life experience' to comment on such things.

I could easily get side-tracked by the many factors that play into this rhetoric we are living, and one of those factors that we continually use to gain leverage on anyone and particularly the marginalised is “hard-work”. Young people apparently don’t know what it is, people won’t work hard if they can live off welfare (which you can’t) or, heaven forbid, letting refugees seek asylum because they might just take our jobs, but as I said – I won’t get side-tracked. I come from an incredibly hard-working family, my parents are two of the most hard-working people I know and it’s one of the greatest things I’ve learnt from them. But does my current ‘status’ make my ability to work hard or be productive any less? No!

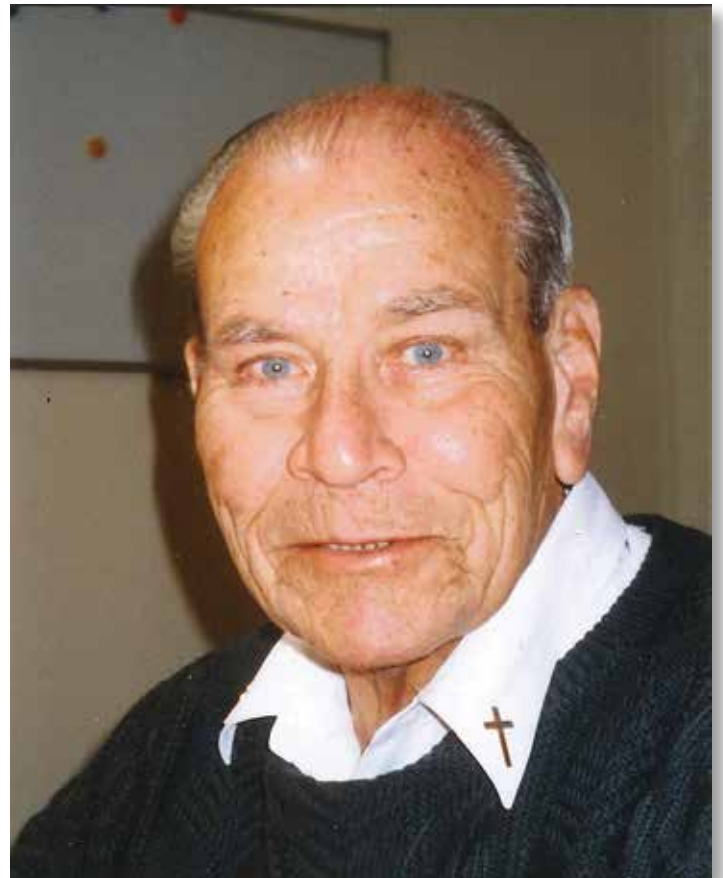
When a young person tells you they are unemployed or are unsure what to do next, don’t let yourself translate that into this idea that they aren’t trying hard enough and if they don’t work NOW then how are they ever going to hold down a job?! I tick all the boxes of someone who is ‘supposed’ to be employed – high school complete, uni degree done, countless hours of volunteer work, and skills to match. Does it make me employable? Yes. Does it mean my worth and satisfaction should revolve around being employed? No.

We need to speak differently about the state of young (and all) people being employed or ‘knowing what they want to do’. Of course, being employed plays a role in our mental and physical well-being, but it’s not the only thing, and we shouldn’t be offering up employment as this glorified answer to life’s struggles. Don’t let young people feel limited by not ‘being where they should be’, because who decides what the measure of what that is and what does that even mean?! Encourage them of course, support them please, but encourage and support young people’s passions, interests, and non-income related endeavours with the same zest you have when it comes to how much they ‘should get a job’.

Working and living without an income for the past 16 months has taught me so much about the worth young people deserve to know they have in our world, and particularly how wrongly we are taught to equate that worth. So, next time you meet someone new, ask them how they are – not what they do, someone without an income is just as worthy as someone who has.



Vale Fr Michael Keogh 1926-2019



Early in the morning on Friday 22 March, Fr Michael Keogh entered eternal life after serving in the provinces of Calcutta and Australia for 69 years as a Salesian, 59 as a priest. He died peacefully at Calvary Flora McDonald Retirement Community where he has spent the last few years.

A memorial Mass was held at St John Bosco parish in Brooklyn Park, South Australia, on Wednesday 29 March. It was presided over by Fr Brian Ahern, rector of the Salesians in South Australia and attended by many of Fr Michael's friends and parishioners. Blaise Fernandez, who has known and collaborated with Fr Michael for many years, gave a special tribute to the life and works of Fr Michael.

"I stand here today to express my sentiments as a close friend of Fr Michael Keogh and, hopefully, I will also be able to represent the thoughts of most of those gathered here today. I also stand here as a Salesian past pupil, having done my schooling at Don Bosco in Goa.

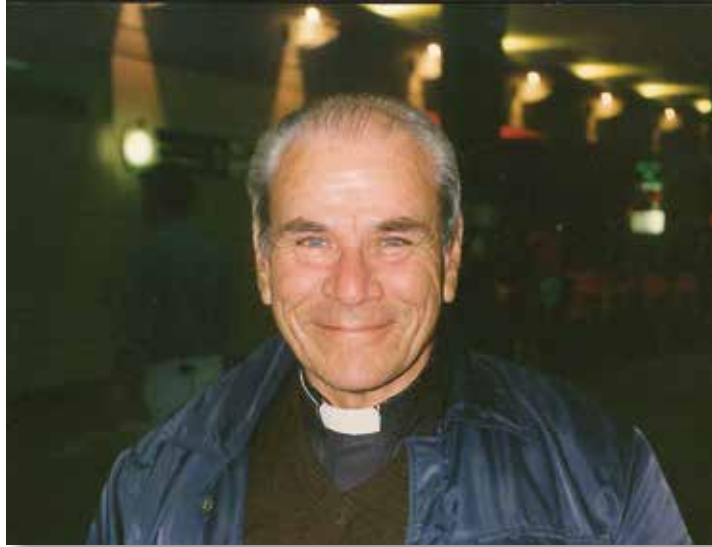
I am sure that we would unanimously agree that Fr Michael was a good priest, educator and especially a good friend. These qualities he exemplified during his early days in India as well as in the years he served in Australia."

The Requiem Mass and burial took place on Wednesday 3 April at the Salesian College Sunbury chapel and cemetery. Fr Provincial presided over the Eucharist and preached the homily reflecting on the life and service of Fr Michael. Many members of his family and friends were present, including Fr Michael's sister and brother, Kathleen and Desmond. In fact, Kathleen gave a wonderful eulogy on her brother, speaking fondly of the man who had always wanted to become a priest, ever since childhood!

"His Celtic qualities of warmth, forthrightness and religious fervour were tempered with the Iberian qualities of kindness and gentleness which ran in the family. Being the son of a British soldier, discipline was not hard to notice. He, on the other hand, chose to be a soldier of God. Fr Keogh's connection and love for his family was always apparent and many of us here got to connect with them as well over the years. Fr Keogh's difficult childhood in India inculcated within him a deep sense of concern and empathy, of a bonding and camaraderie unique to the Indian subcontinent. That, I am sure, most of us have experienced especially as new migrants, and which was so reassuring and uplifting. Those blue eyes were able to twinkle at the sound of good, clean humor and at the same time comprehend when there was anxiety and pain."

Fr Michael Keogh, the eldest of five children, was born in Quetta, India, now part of Pakistan, to Bartholomew Keogh, an Irish soldier, and Bernice D'Souza on 21 September 1926.

At the end of his secondary schooling, he joined the Salesians, making his first religious profession on 24 May 1950. Fr Keogh worked in numerous places in India and Australia, including Park Circus, Bandel and Liliuah (Kolkata), Krishnagar (West Bengal); Engadine, Sunbury, Chadstone, Brooklyn Park, Port Pirie, Victoria Park and Kelmscott in Australia. Fr Keogh was always a willing participant with all parish activities besides liturgical duties and loved going on the bus trips with the seniors of Brooklyn Park and Richmond.



Fr Anthony Erathara of India recalls Fr Keogh as “a mesmerising storyteller” who knew how to interact with youngsters. A good teacher, he co-authored a text book for teaching English to Bengali students when he was at Don Bosco Krishnagar. A lover of cricket, hockey, football, drama and storytelling, he had all that boys love. He was also an outstanding actor who enjoyed bringing memorable smiles to many people.



Another Salesian confrere, recalls, “Keogh was a decent human being, one who cared about the Salesian charism in its most refined simplicity.”

The Golden jubilee of his priestly ordination was held on 26 June 2010 with a large gathering of family, friends, parishioners, guests and confreres at St John Bosco Church, Brooklyn Park, South Australia. Members of Fr Keogh’s family from Victoria and Queensland were present, particularly his sister Kathleen. At the end of Mass, it is said, Fr Keogh joined three other parishioners and as a quartet sang a hymn in Latin, Laudate Dominum (Praise the Lord).





Tony De Groot

A life given to the lay people, for the world

Tony De Groot is a Salesian priest who has been quietly empowering thousands of some of the world's poorest young people for over 45 years, living and working amongst the indigenous Q'eqchi people of Guatemala, in Central America. Recently, he returned to Melbourne for a quick refresher; a reunion with family, a health check-up and to touch base with friends from long ago!

Of course, one does not simply just dedicate the bulk of one's life to a remote part of the world on a whim. After the successful completion of his novitiate, philosophy and practical training, Tony went (as did all Australian Salesians at the time) to Columbus, Ohio, USA to study Theology. During this time, Tony became interested in Latin America and received permission from his superiors to travel south to El Salvador and Guatemala for the semester break on a holiday. Years later, after the successful completion of his degree and final profession, he volunteered to join the Salesian missions. With Guatemala already being somewhat familiar, it was a logical choice and so a

5 year plan was drawn up; one that, as it turned out, went more than a little bit over time!

It's not so much the enjoyment of the work, or the culture that brings about such a drastic life change. "You learn the language (Spanish as well as the native Que'echa) and you become committed, you become committed to the community and also the culture... I would have also been very happy to come back to work in the Australian province, but over there, there were fewer priests working in the mission".

As with all things, the workloads and level of involvement have changed throughout Tony's time away. Nowadays, he oversees three boarding schools, caring for approximately 1500 students, and has been an active presence in over 50 communities around the diocese. His main focus is the boarding schools, as this is the best way in which the neediest and the most marginalised of people can be helped. Due to the remote nature of many of the villages, minimal roads and communication technologies make it extraordinarily difficult to reach them, and so the students simply stay at the school. On average, everything required for a day's worth of education for any given child equals to about 7 Australian dollars – this figure includes teachers' wages, food, workshop materials, general maintenance and so on.

The three schools are all secondary schools; they offer education as well as trades such as carpentry and electrical skills. These, Tony believes, are the entire point of the Salesian Congregation's mission in such areas: "Give them something practical, so they can get some work!" He has found this to be a winning formula; not only do many end up with lifelong employment in a region characterized by extremely high unemployment rates, but quite a number of the students are able to maintain their work and income as they then go on to study at university.

It comes as no surprise then, that Tony frequently receives messages from grateful students on Facebook or Messenger or even WhatsApp, even from those who have since left Guatemala for greener pastures. "It's a wonderful thing and a source of great encouragement," he says, as he fondly relates one story. Someone said "Look, when I was a student I wasn't all that obedient, but now that I'm a father of a family and I look back, I'm very grateful for all that I've learned there; I can see that it's very useful for me now."

This, of course, is very much the Salesian preventive system at work. "We treat them in a way they feel they're very appreciated... Having hundreds of boarders would sound like a very difficult thing, but it is an easy task to look after them. We have almost no disciplinary problems. We've had some past students go to the city in Guatemala and participate in schools there, and when they came back, the boys they've returned to all seemed like saints!" The boys are not only treated well, but also treated to fantastic facilities; the centres are surrounded by sports fields that allow for social (non-competitive) sport every day, where everyone plays – not just the best. In fact, one of the greatest signs of the success of the schools can be seen in the long-term; there is a significant number of past pupils who have also sent their children to the schools!

An average week for Tony is a very busy week. On Mondays, the people from the parish come for different reasons, so he makes himself available to them all day for whatever they may need. Tuesdays are the Salesian community days, when the eight Salesians working in the rural region come together to pray, to plan, to catch up and, once a month, to go on retreat. On each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Tony spends a full day in each of the schools. They are up to three hours away from one another, so a lot of time is spent on the road. Clearly, he is no longer in the position to be able to teach; however, he uses his experience to check up on how things are going in each centre, and to assist in organizing, planning and evaluating. This involves liaising with the coordinators and the (roughly) 200 workers who are a part of the school staff.

On top of the work related to managing a school environment, Tony has somehow also found time to minister to the locals on the weekends. Saturdays and Sundays have often been spent travelling between rural villages, offering catechesis and celebrating the sacraments, as required by the community. He hopes to pass this work soon to other Salesians in

order to concentrate fully on the schools. Whilst it is "wonderful work and I like it, you can't do everything!" he says with a wry smile.

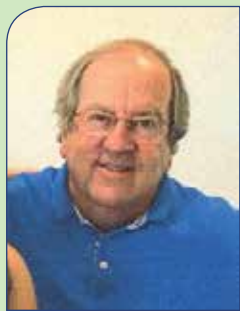
Tony has found that some of the challenges that face the church in Australia are also rearing up in Guatemala. There are fewer Salesians working in the missions than there were a few years back, and yet the general population continues to grow. More work to do, with fewer people to do it! Fortunately, a feature of the Guatemalan church is that it is well managed by lay people. They have a very active participatory role, a necessity, Tony says, that is a great advantage. "You have a very well-planned pastoral organization: you have pastoral work or activities for young people, preparation for baptisms and for marriages. We visit and participate and help with planning. We are involved, but we do not have to be directly involved every time!"

The remote nature of many of the villages also exacerbates this feature. Given that he (and the other Salesians working in the region) have 50 villages to visit, he gets to each one at least roughly twice a year, and the bigger ones every two months. Yet, every Sunday the various communities still gather, celebrate the Liturgy of the Word and extraordinary ministers of Communion are present. The communities are extremely religious, and will have Communion every three to four weeks, but are united by their joint work in keeping the church alive in their society.

And so, it is in this faith of the Q'eqchi, accompanied in the purest sense of the term by Fr Tony de Groot, that we can find a lot to learn. The work of the Church has never been more important. The efforts of modern-day saints have never been more vital. Young people will always cry out for a sense of meaning and belonging bigger than themselves. However, it is up to both religious and lay people, working, socializing and journeying together, to strive for the mission Jesus left his Church.



80th Anniversary of Boys' Town Engadine



Christopher Lonergan

Christopher is a long-term parishioner of St. John Bosco Parish Engadine with his wife and 3 children. He commenced work at Boys' Town in 1983 and is currently serving as a Director of Boys' Town Engadine and the Chairperson of the Governance and Strategic Planning Committee. His main loves in life are his family, 8 grandchildren and the Sydney Swans!

Originally from Ireland, Father Thomas Dunlea emigrated to Australia soon after he was ordained



2019 marks the 80th Anniversary of the establishment of Boys' Town Engadine, now known as the Dunlea Centre – named for its founder, Fr Thomas Dunlea. There are numerous similarities between Fr Dunlea's story and Don Bosco's; particularly reminiscent is how they were both forced to bounce around between locations, due to the blindness of authorities to the great work being done.

It is clear, however, that Fr Dunlea's work in establishing the institution of Boys' Town Engadine was made possible by his absolute trust in Providence; forging ahead without any real "professional advice" from economic rationalists – those unfortunate people who insist upon the existence of a sound and viable business plan before a step is taken, or a brick laid, for any new venture.

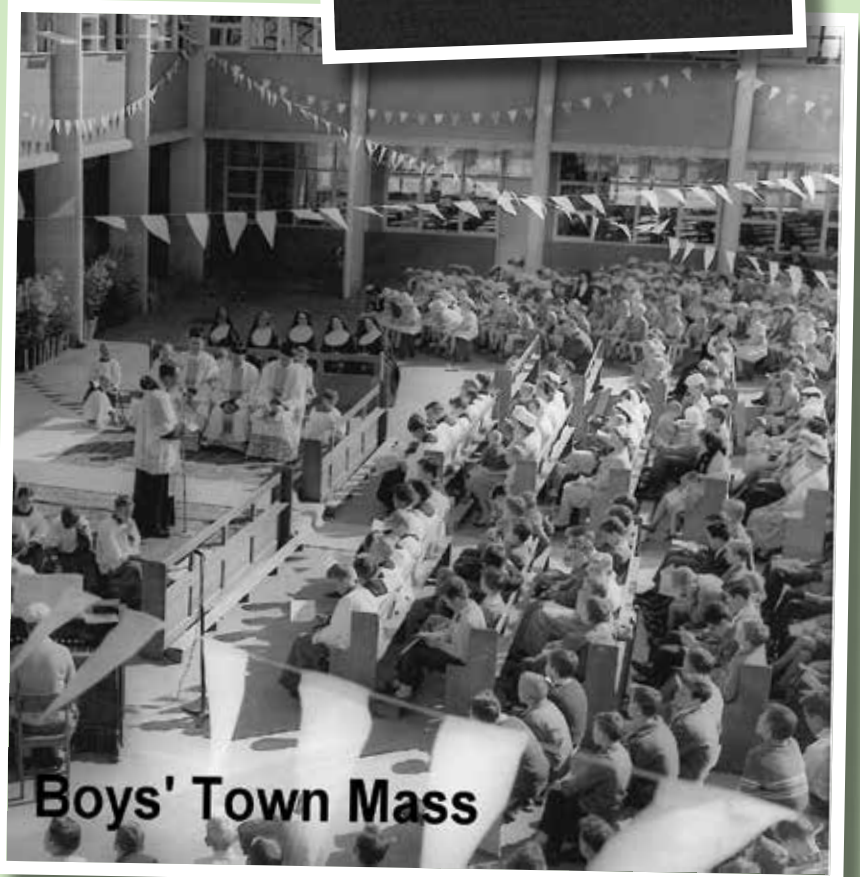
Originally from Ireland as one of eleven children, Thomas Dunlea emigrated to Australia soon after he was ordained. The dangerous situation that many young boys found themselves in quickly became his chief concern and, coincidentally, it was about this time that he saw the film "Boys Town" based upon the work of Fr Edward J. Flanagan in the USA. It seems clear that Fr Dunlea was greatly impressed and moved by Fr Flanagan's work, and he set about establishing a similar institution in Australia.

As it happened, soon after, in 1939, Fr Dunlea was forced to relocate from the Sutherland Presbytery to the nearby "Boyles Cottage", due to the Presbytery becoming 'overcrowded' with young boys under the care of Fr Dunlea. But rather inconveniently and with extraordinarily bad timing, the Sutherland Council decided to condemn the run-down dwelling and set about issuing the relevant order of eviction upon Fr Tom Dunlea. Not to be discouraged, and displaying an astonishing blindness to all hindrances, Fr Dunlea set about "advertising" his predicament and, on 17 July 1940, famously led a march, protesting against the eviction along with 20 or so boys and one goat!!



But, nonetheless, evicted he was. Fr Dunlea bravely continued his work, moving/wandering between a few sites, one being described as a "Tent City" near Engadine. Eventually, in the latter part of 1940, Fr Dunlea was able to purchase a site at Waratah Street, Engadine (the current site), utilizing what was then a very significant grant of 7,000 pounds from the Australian Meat Industry and its Allied Trades.

Boys' Town Engadine was established after a long period of tireless work, effort and begging by the humble priest, and it grew into the fantastic institution that it is today. It wasn't a solitary path that Fr Dunlea trod, however; he had help and support from many people and organizations. His Archbishop (Cardinal Gilroy) regularly offered support and encouragement. Organisations and businesses such as The Australian Meat Industry and many lay volunteers assisted Fr Dunlea. With the approval of his Archbishop, the De La Salle Brothers also provided a presence for a few years at Boys' Town. However, the enormity of the task began to take its toll on the founder of Boys' Town, both physically and mentally. Nonetheless, with the approval and help of Cardinal Gilroy, Fr Dunlea made a trip to the U.S.A in 1946-7 to visit Boys' Town Omaha and discuss with Fr Edward Flanagan issues that could benefit the workings of Boys' Town Engadine. But by 1951 Cardinal Gilroy could see that Fr Dunlea was worn out, and he approached the Salesians to take over the running of Boys' Town.





Fr Dunlea addressing the boys



Fr Dunlea watching a trampoline exercise



It was in 1952 then, that Fr Joseph Ciantar was sent to take the helm at Boys' Town as the first Salesian Director. He commenced a renovation program to improve old and sub-standard buildings on the site, which was soon followed by a significant construction program. A chapel was constructed, as a part of these works, which then became the first parish church of Engadine, and was dedicated on Sunday 19 June 1955. Fundraising endeavours such as Gala Days and Button Days became regular fixtures in the Boys' Town's calendar, and for good reason; the population of boys at Boys' Town and the size of the Parish of Engadine continued to increase dramatically.

Fr Dunlea and Fr Ciantar greet boys



By 1964 Fr Ciantar's full attention was required in the ever-growing parish at Engadine, and yet he still took on more tasks, most notably the construction of the Australian shrine of St John Bosco. The foundation stone was blessed on 6 March 1966 and was completed and blessed just over a year later, on Sunday 8 October 1967, in what was a grand occasion. Then, just three months later, Fr Ciantar died (28 December 1967) – the first Salesian Director of Boys' Town and parish priest of Engadine.

As for Fr Dunlea, his health had improved since leaving Boys' Town and, in 1955, he was made parish priest of Hurstville, another southern suburb of Sydney – a role he held until 1970. On 12 June 1965 Fr Dunlea was made an Officer of the British Empire "in recognition of service to social welfare". In June 1970 Fr Dunlea celebrated his golden jubilee of his ordination as a priest and, just a couple of months later, passed away on the morning of 22 August 1970, aged 76 years.

No local church was large enough to accommodate the anticipated number of mourners at his funeral, and so Archbishop Gilroy recommended that the Requiem Mass for Fr Dunlea be conducted at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney.

The legacy of two great visionaries in Fr Thomas Dunlea and Fr Joseph Ciantar still runs deep into the core of what the Dunlea Centre is today. Their greatness was demonstrated in their trust in Providence and a vision for the needs of the under-privileged youth.



OzBosco 2019



By now, OzBosco has well and truly established itself as the premier youth event on the Salesian calendar in Australia, and for very good reason. The latest rendition, held from 3 to 5 May at the Don Bosco Camp and Centre in Safety Beach was another roaring success; a weekend full of friends, fun and formation for more than 120 young people gathered there from all around Australia.

Proceedings began with icebreaker games, held just as the last light of the day gave way to night. Following this, Bunurong Elder Uncle Shane Clarke welcomed the participants to country, as he extolled the significance of so many different people from around the country gathering together. After dinner, the theme for the weekend was introduced - “Holiness is Happiness” – inspired by the strenna of the Rector Major.

The participants were then separated into their pre-assigned ‘oratory groups’ for the opening activity. These oratory groups are a feature of OzBosco; they are the groups in which discussions are shared, and as each group is organized to consist of a few people from each of the schools and parishes present at the event, it becomes a great way for the young people to meet new people and build connections around the country. The inaugural activity these oratory groups undertook was for everyone to write on a tag where they came from and what they had come to OzBosco for. Then, all the members of the oratory group tied their answers together, forming a tangible bond within the group; these were then connected to the rest of OzBosco as they were draped around a model Earth.

Day Two of OzBosco was similar to the previous night; after breakfast games and activities were run. Then came one of the highlights of the entire weekend, as the group gathered in the gym for the keynote address of Gen Bryant and her band. Gen is an exceptionally talented musician who quickly displayed her talent for getting the whole room up and dancing, singing along to songs of praise and worship. As a part of Gen’s time with us, she also put her guitar away and spoke about some of her own struggles, touching on many of the experiences that young people go through. It was an incredibly touching and powerful testimony, as the extremely fruitful oratory-group discussions afterwards can attest.

The afternoon’s activities involved an excursion off-site, as the group was bussed to the nearby Enchanted Adventure Garden at Arthur’s Seat. This was a great opportunity for all participants to mingle, as they solved all manner of mazes and puzzles together. It was especially touching to see the young people choosing to spend time socializing with their teachers, brothers, sisters and priests, building bonds that transcended age gaps or living conditions.



After the 'Al Fresco' pizza and pasta-themed dinner came the much-anticipated Saturday night activity, 'Holiness for You Too'. In it, each of the oratory groups first designed their ideal saint, and then had to power up their saint with the assistance of the traditional saints such as Don Bosco or Francis d'Assisi through a series of challenges and activities. Then, with the assistance of modern saints (that is, people affiliated with the Salesian Youth Movement who had pre-recorded videos explaining who they are, what they do and how they bring goodness into the world) the oratory groups set about bringing goodness into the world, building up the level of holiness in the world, and learning that holiness is indeed a call for all people, not just a select few.

As is usually the way with these sorts of events, Day Three came far too soon, though there was no time to feel sad about it, as there was plenty still to do! The OzBosco workshops took place that morning, a great opportunity for the young people to choose which content they were most interested in. There is always a great variety in the workshops on offer, such as exploring masculinity, femininity, what it means to be a young Salesian (co-run by Julia, who had come all the way from Austria to be involved with OzBosco!), as well as guided Q&A panel discussions.

After lunch it came time for Mass, as all participants gathered to celebrate the Eucharist in what is the perfect way to cap off a weekend of friends, fun and formation. After Mass the last thank-yous and announcements were made and with that, OzBosco was done for another year. As tears of farewell were stifled in many an eye, resolutions were made amongst the young people; in a year's time, they would catch up once again at the next OzBosco, wherever that may be!

Truly, OzBosco has established itself as one of the most important opportunities for young people in this province. It is hard to imagine a more Salesian event as faith-based formation from goodnights, good mornings, prayer mingled with fun, joy and happiness, as all participants are made to feel at home for a couple of days. Already, we count down the days until OzBosco 2020!



Once an Austrian went to Australia – OZBosco 2019

If someone told me two years ago, that I would be travelling to Australia for a Salesian event, I would've asked, if they're crazy. Well, what can I say? Crazy happens. So, I packed my suitcase and made my way down to Safety Beach for the annual OZBosco. Never in my wildest dreams I could've thought of such an incredible weekend. Everyone made me feel welcome from the very beginning. I was able to share my thoughts about God and the Salesians in a completely different way than I was used to. Not only did I learn a lot about the Salesian Youth, but also about me and my relationship to God. Playing games, singing and praying in a true salesian manner, were one of the most precious experiences during OZBosco. I met the kindest people, who share my passion for the salesian life. I'm eternally thankful for the opportunity to be part of this amazing adventure. Truly days to remember and cherish forever. I cannot wait to come back one day!

-Julia Kerschofer



FIJI

Education the hope for the future



“If we want to have a good society, concentrate on the development of the young.”

St John Bosco



Fiji, a nation of about 330 islands, has always experienced the movement of people to the capital city, Suva, in search of work and in the hope of better living conditions. As tends to be the way, this has served to increase an already high level of youth unemployment, but also increased social problems as increasing numbers of young people are lured into drugs and crime.

The Salesians established a house in Fiji in 1999 to enable the Samoan-born SDBs to attend the Pacific Regional Seminary. From the outset they have been involved in organizing weekend games and sport in the neighbouring villages. In addition, they also assist with community needs such as helping the elderly with home maintenance and other emergencies that may arise from Pacific cyclones or other such unexpected events.

Salesian Missions

Whether it be through healthcare, nutrition, water, housing, clothing, education or training, countless people have been given a new lease on life. All of this is made possible by our generous donors.



Through Salesian involvement with the locals, the need for a proper youth gathering place was identified, and work is well and truly underway to make that dream a reality. The Don Bosco Community and Youth Centre is currently under construction in the suburb of Nasinu and will be a "drop-in" venue for youth where they will be able to learn life-skills and teamwork and to participate in educational training programmes.

Br Stan Rossato, an Australian Salesian, is helping to co-ordinate this project. With his previous experience of running the Don Bosco Youth Centre in St Marys, NSW, he appreciates the importance of providing a positive, supportive environment that will help keeping young people from disruptive and unlawful behaviour through full or part-time training and volunteer work.

The local Fijian community is very much looking forward to the completion of the new Don Bosco Community Centre. Your support for this worthwhile venture would be very much appreciated.



Salesian Missions Australia

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Courtesy of the ASMOAF Missionary Magazine
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Dominic college captains meet with Salesians



Fr Peter Rankin

Fr Peter is currently the rector of Dominic College, Tasmania. He emphasises the need to reach out and listen to the students of the school community

Just before the end of Term one, the Salesian community at Dominic College in Glenorchy invited the School Captains, Vice-Captains and four Mission Captains to discuss the 4 questions given by the moderator in preparation for Provincial Chapter 21. They were accompanied by the Principal Beth Gilligan and Alicia McMahon, Director of Mission, as they collectively came up with the following list as to what kind of Salesians these Year 10s want at Dominic College:

- ◆ Salesians who are approachable
- ◆ Salesians who are connected to students on a deeper level
- ◆ Salesians who put others needs before their own
- ◆ Salesians who are kind hearted
- ◆ Salesians who show joy
- ◆ Salesians who 'get involved in stuff... like playing basketball with us at recess and lunch'
- ◆ Salesians whose actions influence others positively

- ◆ Salesians with whom it is easy to have a conversation
- ◆ Salesians who are good adult role models
- ◆ Salesians who help us connect with God
- ◆ Salesians who can unpack the Christian tradition.

In a recent school newsletter I wrote 'I can assure the whole College community that Fr Damien, Br Barry, myself and any other Salesian who is appointed to Dominic College will endeavour to put all those characteristics into action.'

After the discussions, the student and school leaders joined us for Mass and Dinner in what was overall, an extremely worth-while and fruitful exercise.

It just so happened that the Provincial Fr Will Matthews was in Glenorchy that day visiting the community and his presence was an added bonus.

SAMOA

Education provides opportunities



“If we want to have a good society, concentrate on the development of the young.”

St John Bosco

The two Don Bosco Schools in Samoa were established to provide young people with the skills that would enable them to find work in a country that otherwise experiences high levels of youth unemployment and non-completion of formal education.

Despite these challenges the Samoans retain their strong family based cultural identity. The Don Bosco schools encourage students to deepen their understanding of who they are through music, dance and sport.

One of the pioneering Salesians at Alafua in 1985 was Fr Peter Carroll.

In building the initial school premises, valuable guidance was given by Mr Marco Pradel, a Master Builder from Victoria, and a group of Australian volunteers directed the overall construction. Fr Peter recalls a means of reducing costs: they made the concrete bricks for the building on-site! The Technical Centre in Alafua was completed and ready in 1988.

The Salelologa Co-Educational College & Vocational Centre (on the island of Savai'i) was opened in 2011 after the community identified that the local youth were educationally disadvantaged. Fr Moses Tui, a Samoan who had been stationed previously at Alafua, was responsible for overseeing the development at Salelologa and stayed on as Principal for eight years. His “Walk-For-A-Bus” (with the assistance of Cagliari volunteers) and other fundraising endeavours have been a means of securing places in the school to girls and boys from economically poor families.

Sustaining the schools has been a challenge over the years as the parents of students are mostly subsistence farmers who are unable to provide little more than what their families need to survive, let alone to pay school fees.

Both Don Bosco schools are providing students with job skills and preparing them for employment, with most securing work soon after graduation. Your assistance through scholarships can provide an education to a student that would otherwise go without.



Sr Runita visits the South Pacific Region

Sr Runita Borga is the FMA's worldwide delegate for youth and recently toured the province, hoping to gain a "bird's-eye" view of Salesian Youth Ministry in Australia, Samoa and the Solomon Islands.

Unfortunately, visa complications meant that she was not able to arrive in Gizo, Solomon Islands, on the intended date and had to forgo meeting that community. However, she was able to visit the other Salesian community in the Solomon Islands, Henderson, where she met young people and all those collaborating with the Sisters in their various ministries. In true Solomon Island style, Sr Runita got a taste of the rich culture through the simple hospitality and joyful nature of all the people she met there.

Her next stop was in Samoa, for what was a truly Samoan experience! Sr Runita was given an extremely warm Pacific welcome, as celebrations included plenty of singing, dancing and food! Throughout her trip Sr Runita was keen to meet as many young people as she possibly could and so young people from the schools and the other various youth ministries were invited by the Sisters for this very special encounter.

Next on the itinerary was Sydney, for visits to the communities at Engadine and St Marys, meeting the people, engaging with the young and participating in the ministries there. Melbourne was the next port of call, where she celebrated the feast of St Dominic Savio with the staff and students of the Savio campus at Salesian College Sunbury. Thanks to the efforts, efficiency and planning of Mr Stephen Connelly, Director of Faith and Mission, Sr Runita had the opportunity to spend a whole day at the college where she was made to feel very welcome by the Leadership team, students and staff alike. Sr Runita delighted in meeting and speaking with students as she toured the classrooms and was shown the beauty and expanse of the college.

On 27 April a Youth Encounter was held in Scoresby, where a group of young people representing the various aspects of the Salesian Youth Ministry in Australia came together for an afternoon with Sr Runita. After a short introduction each of the different groups present nominated a representative to speak on how they live the Salesian spirit, carry on their ministry among other young people and what is it that keeps them returning to and giving of the Salesian charism.



Sr Runita responded to all she heard and left the group a few thoughts to ponder and reflect on as they went forward. "Go deep into what God is asking of you, in order to go out and give of your best to make a difference" was her message to the young people gathered. The group then participated in the Eucharist celebrated by Fr Bernie Graham, followed by a light dinner that featured lots of noise, cheer and laughter, as Salesian young people do so well!

Thanks to the Scoresby community for hosting this Youth Encounter event and my sincere thanks to the Youth Ministry team for their support and presence at this event. My sincere thanks to the young people who took the time to be there, in spite of the many other commitments they have. My thanks also go out to all those who have played host and done such an incredible job of making Sr Runita feel welcome throughout her journey in this province!

Thanks to Sr Runita for her very simple, unassuming and very approachable personality that enabled us and the young of Solomon Islands, Samoa and Australia to engage with each other on a deeper level.

God bless you Sr Runita and thanks to you and your team for all you do on behalf of young people across our Salesian world!



Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Rise Against Hunger

By SC Cambodia Delegation



Providing technical education for some of the poorest of the poor in Cambodia and Timor Leste

Thanks to the on-going partnership between Salesian Missions and Rise Against Hunger, almost 4,000 young people in Cambodia and close to 2,000 young people in Timor Leste have received rice meals to keep up their nutrition levels, allowing them to concentrate on their studies. Proper nutrition is vital to the development of young people and these rice meals allow the students to focus on gaining the skills they need for long term employment.

The Don Bosco schools in both these countries are providing a range of technical education for some of the poorest of the poor in a range of fields such as electrical, mechanical, welding, automotive, electronics, computer and information technology, printing, media communication, hospitality and tourism.

There is another benefit to such generous donations as Father Roel Soto (delegation superior of Don Bosco Foundation of Cambodia and rector of Don Bosco Technical School Phnom Penh) explains: "Rise Against Hunger meals are very important to our mission so we are able to reduce our expenses by not buying rice from local markets. With this donation, we are able to use that funding for other necessary projects that provide income in order to sustain our projects and upgrades for our training materials."



Hong Kong, Salesian Youth Day

By Ms Phyllis Tang



Salesian Youth Day in Hong Kong, "to accompany"

The Salesian Youth Day is an annual event organized by the Salesian Youth ministry office based in Hong Kong. Young people from all groups of the Salesian Family are called to meet to celebrate their common identity and to reflect in depth the pastoral theme of the year. The participation – the youth, Salesian priests, brothers, sisters and cooperators was once again record-breaking, amounting to 600 people.

The key theme of the day was "to accompany", following the invitation of the Rector Major to accompany the young to encounter the Lord and to discern their vocation. A wide range of activities took place, such as the cookery workshop for making dumplings with meat and cabbage, the magic and tricks workshop, and the musical workshop on playing a Peruvian percussion instrument called Cajon.

SYD concluded with a solemn prayer in which the Lukan story of the two disciples of Emmaus was proclaimed. The two disciples, disappointed and on their way leaving Jerusalem, were accompanied by Jesus. The participants were asked to recall the moment in their life in which they were accompanied by: Jesus in the Eucharist, a teacher or a friend. These experiences of being accompanied are precious because they give us confidence and, what's more, serve as reference to our "mission" of accompanying others.



Port Morsby, PNG

Don Bosco students on climate change

By Fr Ambrose Pereira SDB



"Climate Change and its effect on our lives"

Don Bosco Technical School, Gabutu students were live on-air for the first Chat Room Session at NBC (a radio station), Port Moresby on 13th March 2019. Chat Room is a program that strives to share the thoughts and reflections on social issues that affect society and in turn have an impact on the fabric of our people.

'Climate Change and its effect on our lives', was discussed by 5 students. They shared their views on Climate Change, the need to create awareness amongst their peers and what they can do when they enter the work place to reduce the effects of climate change. They mentioned that the leaders and those in authority need to give them the space and a platform to express themselves and share their thoughts.

While on air, an engineer dialled in and asked them, "How will you carry what you learn to the workplace?". Their answer: awareness of the issue and the need to look at alternative materials that will reduce the carbon footprint. "Well done boys", was the response from Vinna Wingur, the radio presenter.

"Giving young people a platform to share their views is building their commitment to the values that are deeply ingrained in them", said Fr Ambrose Pereira.



Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Don Bosco bakery opens

Br Domenico Nam SDB



The new Don Bosco vocation training bakery opens in Ho Chi Minh City

Four years after the opening of the Majcen Centre - Bistro, Restaurant and Vocation Training Centre in Ho Chi Minh City, last Sunday was a great opening of the humble outreach of 'Don Bosco Bakery - Cafe'. It is located in one of the central districts of Ho Chi Minh City, just near the British International School, where many expatriates live.

The new Don Bosco Bakery - Cafe offers opportunities for the young people of Vietnam to learn bread and sweet-making skills as well as to learn about management and marketing, marking a new step toward the self-sustainability of our Vocation Training Centre. The Grand Opening was celebrated on Sunday April 14th with a blessing and handing out of simple cultural items to make the new Bakery - Cafe known in the neighbourhood.

Four Salesians are assigned to this new pilot project (two Salesian Brothers and two Salesian Priests), who are still members of the large Ben Cat Community (Rector Fr Peter Hoang), but fully involved in Majcen Training Centre. We wish and pray that the new Don Bosco enterprise will help many young people in Vietnam prepare for life and also that the Salesians will learn how to grow in the sustainability of our vocation training institutions.



Houston, USA Salesians win Robotics World Championship

Source: ANS



Students from Don Bosco Institute of Verona are celebrating their win at the LEGO League World Championship

The students of the Don Bosco Institute of Verona are celebrating their first-place finish at the LEGO League World Championship in Houston, Texas! The competition saw 108 teams from all over the world compete against each other and it is the first time that an Italian team has been crowned the winner of the main world science and robotics competition.

NASA - the US space agency - challenged participants with the theme "Into orbit"; a matter of inventing solutions to improve the living conditions of astronauts in space. The winning Salesian team alongside their teachers came up with the "Wemit" project, an innovative "space washing machine" designed to provide for the washing of astronauts' clothes in zero gravity and without water.

As often happens with innovations originally conceived in the space sector, the "Wemit" system may eventually be adapted to day-to-day usage, in this case reducing the need for large amounts of water to be involved in the washing process. For this reason the Don Bosco Institute has already patented their project, thus bringing its eight young students into the ranks of inventors.

The success of Salesian students confirms the importance of engaging in the field of education, to excite and inspire young people to scientific and technological subjects, using creative and unconventional methods.

"The Salesian model is once again confirmed as a reference point in the panorama of the educational and formation system," commented Elena Dozzan, the Veneto Region's Councillor for Formation.



Lusaka, Zambia Support women, support the world!

Source: ANS



At the City of Joy, vulnerable girls are given a loving home and family where they feel safe and cared for

Education is power. Historically, this fact has limited access to education based on factors such as gender, class and ethnicity. Even today, access to basic schooling in countries such as Zambia is often not available to female students. Pregnancy, early marriage and extreme poverty are all factors in restricting girls, as well as an expectation that they should stay at home to cook, clean and care for siblings.

Share the Light is a charity organization that was created through the mutual efforts of people in Zambia and staff and students of Salesian College Farnborough, Great Britain. It seeks to support vital work that is being undertaken by Salesian Sisters' in Zambia, such as the City of Joy project.

At the City of Joy, vulnerable girls are given a loving home and family where they feel safe and cared for, and where they are encouraged and supported in their education and training. Share the Light helps catering for the medical and nutritional requirements of the girls, as well as providing clothing, school uniforms and other equipment.

Maureen was one of the first girls to live at the City of Joy, and the first to reach Grade 12 and finish school. In 2015, she started nursing college but unfortunately, due to a range of factors, could not maintain the funds needed for continued study. Share the Light continues to fundraise to support her until she qualifies as a nurse this year.

Maureen says: "My education is very important to me, because it will make my future bright. I would like to build an orphanage so that I also can help young ones who have no one to help them."

Ashaiman, Ghana

Water for the thirsty

Source: ANS



The only water supplies for some communities can be up to 5km from some villages and not always hygienically safe

The Salesians of the English-speaking West Africa (AFW) Province operate in over 50 villages and communities, each of them with a population ranging from 70 to 3,500 inhabitants. Due to the small size of many of these communities, they are often cut off from the main cities – their basic utilities often becoming mere afterthoughts. The only water supplies for these communities are streams or surface water, which can be up to 5 km from some villages and not always hygienically safe. During the dry season, often, even this meagre water supply dries up, leaving residents in a state of desperation that leads to internal conflict.

For this reason, the Salesians of AFW are working to supply these communities with drinking water, thanks to the international support gathered by various Salesian Mission Offices throughout the world. Eighteen interventions are being planned for the extraction of water, 13 of which will be wells with hand-pump boreholes, as well as a water tower, three mechanized borehole wells, and a mechanized solar-powered water pump.

Overall, these interventions will benefit the lives of around 4,020 people in the area of Sunyani and another 3,430 in the Tatala area.

"Provision of water, as well as works of mercy, are integral part of our pastoral strategy based on holistic human development, respect for human rights and preventive pedagogy," says Benson Osei-Savio Boateng, of the Office of Planning and Development of the AFW Province.



England, UK

Vacations for young refugees and asylum seekers

Source: ANS



Holidays for young refugees and asylum seekers aged between 14 and 17 years

The Salesian Youth Ministry of the Province of Great Britain is developing a new project, offering a holiday for young refugees and asylum seekers aged between 14 and 17 years. The project intends to respond to Pope Francis' appeals for compassion towards refugees and asylum seekers as well as answering the invitations of the Rector Major to look for practical ways to offer assistance regarding the refugee crisis, paying "particular attention to unaccompanied minors and young people."

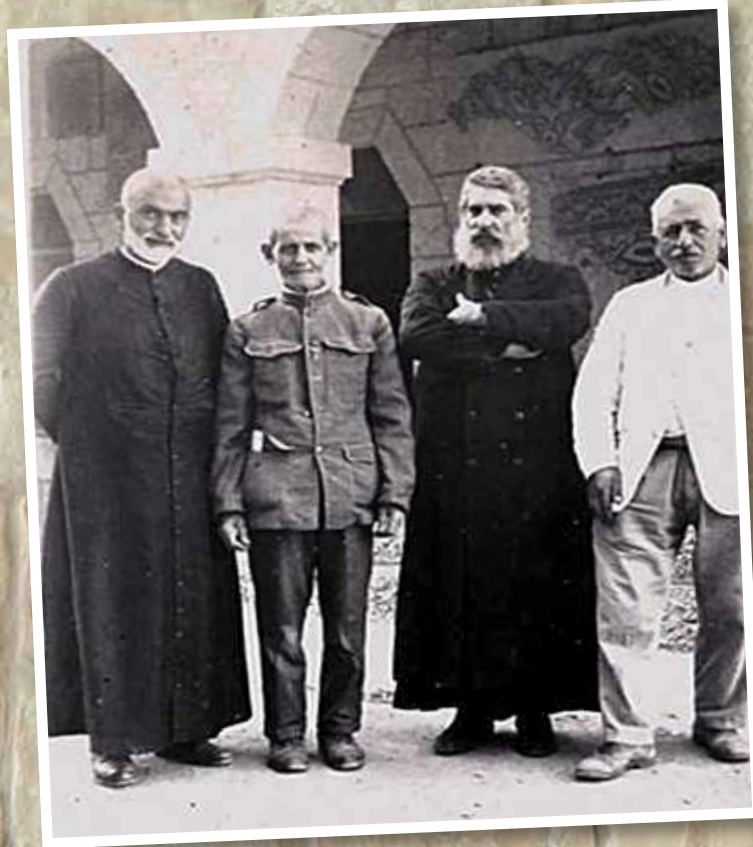
These holidays offer a sense of freedom and normality, away from the exclusion, uncertainty and hostility, that many young asylum seekers and refugees experience. Danny Sweeney, one of the team members, said: "For this pilot program we thought of Liverpool because it is one of the areas where asylum seekers are dispersed to, after initially raising their claim. As this is a new area for our Salesian Youth Ministry, this experience will also allow us to take root in a local community."

The team of volunteers and organizers are intent on reaching these young people, whose childhoods have been upset by war and persecution. The managers of the "Valdocco Project" hope that the long-term effects will provide a basis for young refugees and asylum seekers "to build their lives in a positive way and to be able to fit responsibly into society".



Simon Srugi

Salesian Brother, Servant of God



The venerable Simon Srugi SDB, second from left, together with three Arab Salesians in the Salesian house where he lived for 51 years.

1877: He was born on the 15th of April in Nazareth. His parents were Anza El Srugi, a saddler by profession (the word Srugi means 'saddler') and Dalleh Ibrahim El Khauali, both Greek Catholics. They came from Lebanon and had ten children. Six of them died before they were two years of age. Simon was the last of all.

1882: At six years of age, he was left an orphan by his father and mother and was brought up by his grandmother.

1894: Simon was sent to Beit Gemal as a Salesian aspirant and completed his school education. There, in 1895, he started his Novitiate and in 1896 he became a Salesian. He did not leave Beit Gemal until his death.

He was a teacher, an assistant, a doorkeeper, in charge of a small shop of food and knick-knacks, and above all a nurse. As the head of the dispensary, he attracted the sick people from the fifty nearby villages. The patients came to meet him more than they did the doctor. His mill was the only one within a range of thirty kilometres; the peasants ran to him from everywhere and put their trust in him blindly. 'After Allah there is Srugi', the local Muslims used to say.

1943: He died at Beit Gemal on the 27th of November, at the age of 67. One of the Muslim elders commented: 'It is a pity he was a Christian. If he had been a Muslim, we would have made him one of our holy men.'

1966: On the 28th of November he was declared Servant of God.

1993: On the 2nd of April he was declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II