

SALESIAN BULLETIN

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Young people of St. Ambrose Church
at Cinco de Mayo fiesta.





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The Family Cradle of Life



Death is part of life

By Fr. Pascual Chávez, SDB

Once, **death** was part of life. Grown ups and children were not surprised when they came across it. With more people town dwellers and with medical developments people have become unfamiliar with the simple and natural fact of death. They lack the words and the gestures to deal with this modern way of death, often solitary, without any ritual, which is seen merely as a sign of medicine's failings. In this way the whole approach to death, our relationship with this ultimate limitation, has radically changed. Death forces the family to face a variety of choices.

It's possible to choose to "deny" death. Pascal, three centuries ago, wrote: "Not having succeeded in conquering death men have decided not to think about it any more." So, in front of the children, death becomes an unspoken subject, as sex was for a long time. In this way death is denied its proper place in life; it isn't recognised as a law written in the nature of life itself; it loses its real meaning and it becomes an *accident*. Obviously this is an attempt doomed to failure from the start: the cinema, tv drama, news programs and electronic games are packed with death on a huge scale, and all within children's reach. The development of the idea of death occurs in stages and children gradually cope with the various elements until at about eight years of age, they come to understand that it is irreversible and universal. Then the questions start: *What happens afterwards? Does everything disappear? Is death a full stop to life or only a comma? Will we die too, and mom and dad? Won't we see them anymore? Will I have to die?* Death is always shrouded in suffering and the family is the place where mourning can be understood and experienced. Human beings are familiar with a special sort of feeling called *consolation* which almost always manages to relieve the spiritual pain. Children too know about it: crying in the arms of mother or father makes them feel better. Weeping together, sharing the pain, can help us bear even the most heart-rending loss. Love doesn't die, and in some way, support and closeness fill the emptiness left by someone who has died.

It's also possible to nourish "memories": death doesn't take away forever the people we love if we can remember them. A memory almost seems to be one way of keeping alive a person who has died. That's why we go to put flowers on the grave in the cemetery and we speak about them. To remem-

ber important people streets or squares are named after them, monuments are built or foundations set up. Through a memorial someone no longer alive continues to be present. In the hearts of those who were loved, the memory of the one who has died can be very strong and very sweet so as to bring relief and ease the pain.

It's possible to choose to look at things "rationally." This world is not our home, it's only a kind of hotel: we are here for a while and then we pass on. Each day something is born and something dies; people come and people go. Only the Creator can give a satisfactory answer to such a fundamental question, and He has done this, since He gave an answer to the question of death that no one would ever have imagined. He has passed through death Himself and has put an end to it, opening the way to eternal life to everyone. In this way no one can ever say: "God doesn't know what it means..." From the Christian understanding of death one can draw the strength to live. Some one who believes in Jesus believes in this promise: when God loves someone He makes them live for ever. "God doesn't destroy the life He has created, He transforms it!" Life is not a matter of blind and cruel fate but of responsibility, since we all have an appointment we mustn't miss. It's precisely when talking about death that faith makes a difference. Christians don't say: "Life is beautiful but then *unfortunately* we die," but "life is beautiful and then *finally* we die." One of the essential tasks is to teach young people that they have the possibility each day of choosing between life and death. From this point of view the teaching role of the family assumes an altogether special character. We have only one life. It begins on this earth and continues in the "house" of God. The family of believers lives in an atmosphere of joy, of profound hope and knows the strong pull of an exhilarating goal.

What was the word most used by Don Bosco? Fr. Alberto Caviglia wrote: "Leafing through the pages of what Don Bosco said and spoke about we find that heaven was the word he repeated in all sorts of circumstances as most effective, when dealing with doing good or with putting up with hardships." All's well that ends well, and life is a feast. "We are festive people," a Salesian song proclaims. "A little bit of heaven will make everything right!" Don Bosco used to say this in the midst of difficulties.

Thanks to Don Bosco Associates

Dear Friends,

Thank you for all your past support. The Salesians of Don Bosco—USA West enjoy the generosity of many altruistic individuals like you. Throughout the year, gifts to the Don Bosco Associates are collected and then directed to the area or areas in the province that are most in need.

While we have great needs in many areas, this year I have directed the gifts of the Don Bosco Associates to three very special projects. I feel that these projects are very important in sharing and increasing the spirit of Don Bosco throughout the province.

The three programs that received the support of the Associates this year are:

- * The Salesian Youth Leadership Conference (SYLC) is an experience of leadership training and networking for young people from Salesian ministries throughout the Western United States. Since the summer of 1985, young people have gathered at SYLC to develop their abilities as youth ministry leaders and to grow in friendship as members of the Salesian Youth Movement. SYLC is for young people between the ages of 15 and 21. Students come from Salesian schools, parishes, youth centers, and camps; and are either already in leadership roles or have demonstrated the potential for being Christian leaders.
- * The Salesian Education Seminar (SES) is a five day residential program for Salesian teachers and administrators who have been engaged in educational ministry for at least a year. The SES seminar challenges participants to look at their vocation as teachers and administrators and to begin to understand the theological and philosophical framework from which the principles of Salesian Education have emerged. Through lecture, discussion, group work and community building, participants are encouraged to deepen their own sense of being called to Salesian ministry.
- * For sixteen years the SES at Don Bosco Hall in Berkeley has offered to lay and religious Salesian educators a five day seminar immersion in Salesian spirit and

praxis. This has proven so beneficial that requests were made to go to the next stage of reflection and study. In July 2005 the Institute launched a new two year program that it called the Salesian Leadership Institute for Ministry (SLIM). The focus of the program is to deepen and qualify women and men, both lay and religious, how best to put Salesian ideals into action.

All of the above programs seek to put into action this year's Province theme:

Celebrate Family! Be home for others.

These three vital programs benefited greatly from the generosity of our donors and especially the Don Bosco Associates. To continue to be successful in our work, I feel that it is important that we develop Salesian leadership skills in all of those dedicated individuals—religious and lay personnel, young and adult, men and women—who minister in all of our varied programs throughout the province.

The support of the Don Bosco Associates has helped to make these programs possible.

Should you have any questions about the above programs, please feel free to contact me at anytime.

Thank you again for your generosity. You have truly joined with us to make a positive difference in the Western Province. I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Yours in St. John Bosco,

Fr. David Purdy, SDB
Provincial



Resurrection of Saint Ambrose



Father George has raised Saint Ambrose to new heights.



St. Ambrose Church, built in 1952, signals God's presence in a section of Berkeley.

The Oakland Diocese includes Piedmont and Bay Point, the Lamorinda suburbs and Richmond Triangle, the gated community of Blackhawk and the tough streets of East Oakland. Here there are endless opportunities for Catholics to obey Christ's command that, "whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none." Poverty is only one challenge faced by our Church, but changing demographics can also affect a parish's vitality and economic health. One of the most important purposes of the Bishop's Appeal is to move resources from our more prosperous parishes to those that are financially strapped. Most parishes pay an

assessment to support the many works of the Diocese. Poorer parishes pay reduced or no assessment, and the poorest receive a subsidy from the Diocese.

If you ask Fr. George Alengadan, Pastor of Saint Ambrose in Berkeley, a subsidized parish, what hurdles he faces, he will answer, "no school-no parking." Catholic schools enliven their parishes by providing daily encounters between Catholic families and their faith. Without parking, Saint Ambrose was overly dependent on Catholics within walking distance to fill the big church. Raising money was hard.



Parishioners of St. Ambrose with Fr. George Alengadan and Fr. Emmanuel arrive at St. Luke Parish, Stockton for the Ordination of Fr. Chinh Nguyen and Deacon Tho Bui. Both Fr. Chinh and Deacon Tho have ministered at St. Ambrose Parish. June 10, 2006.



Fr. George Alengadan, SDB, with the youth group of St. Ambrose church.

Patron names on the stained glass windows of the beautiful gothic style church, built in 1952, attest to the ethnic makeup of Saint Ambrose's neighborhood during the first half of the last century. Most were Irish or Italian. Fast forward to Fr. George's arrival in 2001. Most parishioners are elderly. Young families with children have migrated to the suburbs. Berkeley has become more culturally diverse and now includes many new groups that aren't predominantly Catholic. The parish had fewer than 200 families. The church was in critical need of repair.

But Father George is an optimist. "From other parishes, I knew that if you work hard and have good programs, any parish could flourish." Fr. George comes from India and is a Salesian of Saint John Bosco. Belonging to a religious order delayed his appointment as Pastor, since it took over five years to obtain permission from his provincial to accept the Bishop's invitation to take over Saint Ambrose. Parishioners can be thankful that it was granted.

His first initiative was to build up what the parish lacked by not having a school—children. As a Salesian devoted to the charism of St. John Bosco, patron saint of young people, where else could Father George possibly have started? The youth movement of St. Ambrose began modestly with a children's choir. Along with the singers, came their families. Next was a summer day camp. Don't think of towering pines, canoes, and campfires. This summer camp takes place mostly in the parish hall, where children sing, learn musical instruments, work on computers, play board games, shoot pool and hear the occasional lecture from a police officer about the dangers of drugs and gangs. Small—very small—soccer games are staged in the 12-car parking lot across Gilman Street. Not ideal, but necessary, since Father George himself is usually among the players. If the soccer field is small, the basketball court is smaller. A portable backboard is set up on

the narrow concrete strip along the backside of the church. Shots that miss the backboard usually clear the fence too. As a sports complex, Saint Ambrose is wanting, but as a safe environment for summer learning and play it has become a magnet, drawing young people from far beyond the parish boundaries.

Step three of the youth movement, was the Youth Group for teens. Besides holding their own slate of activities. Saint Ambrose teens serve their community. The counselors for the children's day camp come from the Youth Group and every one is given special training as camp counselors from the Salesian Youth Leadership Conference.

The final element of the Saint Ambrose youth movement was young adults. The church is only an eight-block walk from the new UC Village, a housing development for married couples enrolled at UC Berkeley. Many are post-graduate students, and the Saint Ambrose congregation now includes a significant number of PhD's.

The next major initiative for Father was the Spanish Mass. He was intrigued to learn that most of his neighboring parishes didn't have a Spanish Mass, despite the clear emergence of



Fr. George Alengadan, SDB, with young adult group members of St. Ambrose church at Cinco de Mayo fiesta.

Hispanics as a significant portion of the community. Nearby Golden Gate Fields racetrack employs a large number of Hispanic workers, and they faithfully attend Spanish Mass at Saint Ambrose. The Saint Ambrose Hispanic community has created and donated beautiful art and decorations for the parish Cinco de Mayo fiesta which remain in place long after the event.

All of this new activity has sparked a resurgence of parish pride at Saint Ambrose. All of the maintenance and grounds keeping is accomplished happily by a group of parish volunteers. Eight of them can be found at the church every Tuesday. To Father George, their work is a blessing for his tight budget, but what he values most is the camaraderie and fellowship of his hard-working volunteers. He does what he can to show his appreciation—most recently treating the team to an outing at the Oakland Zoo. The camaraderie is infectious beyond the core volunteer cadre; the Crab Fest draws 300 people, however hard it may be to find parking.

With the emerging Hispanic constituency and youth having been served, Fr. George is quick to emphasize that it is still the elderly parishioners who remain the backbone of Saint Ambrose. “They were the ones that built this beautiful church in the first place.” Father notes that they have been in the parish since they were young and had little to spare for the collection plate. Now that they are more financially secure, it was the older parishioners who made it possible to successfully finish the capital campaign, called “Restoring a Berkeley Jewel.” Father George’s next steps are all intended to repay them. Every month he hosts a “Young at Heart” luncheon, complete with wine and fancy table settings for

his parish seniors. In a recent bulletin, Father George wrote, “I believe that one of the priorities for St. Ambrose should be reaching out to our seniors, the homebound and those living alone. I would like to invite you to join a group that will be the helping hand of God to care for the elderly, ill, disabled, and widowed people who are living alone.” More hard work and another good program—Father’s recipe for success.

When you imagine a parish celebrating the completion of a capital campaign, there is usually a shiny new building in the picture. The capital campaign of Saint Ambrose had less visible results. The 52-year-old roof had to be repaired. Seismic retrofit was overdue. A sewer problem rendered the downstairs plumbing inoperable. The Diocese made a low-interest loan to Saint Ambrose, and their faithful parishioners raised enough in the ensuing campaign to completely retire the loan.

Father George’s vision and energy have turned a seemingly declining parish back into a vibrant community of Christian fellowship and service. The number of registered parishioners has doubled, Mass attendance has more than doubled, and for the first time in a long time, Saint Ambrose finished in the black. Subsidy and support from the Diocese helped Saint Ambrose through its leanest years. “People of the Chancery office were very understanding from the Bishop on down. We’ve gone through tough times and they know it.” Most recently, the main use of subsidy funding from the Diocese provides for a second priest who is certainly needed in what has become a very busy and active parish.

(From the Oakland Diocesan Digest, August, 2006.)



Parishioners of St. Ambrose with Fr. George Alengadan and Fr. Emmanuel at an outing event.

Da Mihi Animas, Cetera Tolle and the Salesian Coat of Arms

By Fr. Arthur Lenti, SDB.

“*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*” (*Give me souls, you take everything else*) is the Biblical sentence chosen as the theme and leit motif for the up-coming twenty-sixth General Chapter of the Salesian Society. It is also the motto or device that Don Bosco wished to adopt for the Salesian coat of arms. The brief paragraphs that in place of follow are intended to highlight the significance of this event.

Up to the year 1884 the Salesian Congregation, unlike other religious families, had no official *coat of arms* of its own. However, a small round *seal* was used on official documents and letters. This seal bore the figure of St. Francis de Sales at its center (bust in frontal view), framed round by two laurel branches. Above the figure around the rim one could read the title in Latin, *Salesian Society*. Beneath the figure, around the rim, one could read Jesus’ words, “*Discite a me quia mitis sum*” [Learn of me, for I am meek” (Mt 11:29)]—a reference to St. Francis de Sales’ spirit of gentleness.

1. The Coat of Arms—First Design

In 1884 the Salesian Society’s financial administrator, Father Anthony Sala, who was at the time supervising the building of the church of the Sacred Heart and connected boarding school in Rome, acting on a suggestion by Church authorities there, had an artist drawn up a preliminary sketch for a coat of arms. It was thought appropriate and important that the Salesian coat of arms should appear between those of Popes Pius IX and Leo XIII in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

The original sketch showed a shield on which the escutcheon or field was divided vertically by a large anchor. At the anchor’s right (the viewer’s left) stood the bust of St. Francis de Sales, lit by rays from above, and at its left stood a flaming heart. Below the anchor was a wood with snow-capped mountains visible in the background. Two branches of palm and laurel framed the oval shield, which was surmounted by a star. At the very bottom a waving streamer bore the legend, *Sinite parvulos venire ad me* [Allow little children to come to me (Mt 19:14; Mk 10:14; Lk 18:16)].

This was the sketch that Father Sala submitted to the General Council on September 12, 1884.



2. The Coat of Arms—Don Bosco’s Modifications

(1) When the matter was taken up for discussion by the General Council, the motto, *Let little children come to me*, was quickly set aside as already in use by others. Various other suggestions were discussed and also set aside. Don Bosco quickly ended the debate and said, “A motto was already adopted in the very early days of my work, when, while attending the Pastoral Institute, I began to visit the prisons: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle* [Give me souls; you take everything else].” Everybody agreed and applauded, and the historic motto was adopted.

(2) Don Bosco introduced other modifications as well. He did not like having a star above the shield because he saw in it a resemblance to the emblem of freemasonry. He therefore had it replaced by a radiant cross that rose from a wreath of roses surmounting the shield. The star was then inserted into the field on the left of the anchor and above the flaming heart, and given a comet’s tail. The symbols of the three theological virtues (star, anchor and heart) were thus linked together.

By circular letter of December 8, 1885, Don Bosco notified the Salesians of Fr. Michael Rua’s appointment as his vicar with right of succession. For this he used stationery that **for the first time bore the Salesian coat of arms with its device, *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*** [Give me souls; you take everything else].

With Don Bosco’s modifications the coat of arms of the Salesian Society was permanently established. Later modifications were mostly in the nature of esthetic embellishments.

3. The Modifications of 1934

In the context of Don Bosco's canonization the Salesian coat of arms was "retouched" but not significantly changed.

The motto, *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*, on its fluttering sash at the base of the shield and the *symbolic figures* within the field remained unchanged.

But slight modifications were introduced with respect to the shield's ornamentation—the *shield's molded-parchment* received some ornamental development; the original *oval form* was given a rounder shape; the *color* of the field was changed from azure-blue with horizontal etchings to solid sky-blue; the *wreath of roses* crowning the shield beneath the radiant cross was substituted by two large sprays of roses intertwined with oak leaves in the same position; the *cross* was made trifoliate and doubled in size; and the *rim* of the shield received additional baroque frills.

The Salesian coat of arms, so modified, has remained unchanged to this day.

4. The Spiritual, Pastoral and Ascetical Significance of the Salesian Coat of Arms

Nearly 122 years since its first drafting, the coat of arms still merits our attention, not so much for its heraldic character (in which respect it has but little to offer) but for the spirituality that it embodies through its motto and its symbols.

The images on the field—St. Francis de Sales, the anchor, the flaming heart and the star, taken together—symbolize the Christian Salesian spirituality that should inspire and sustain the Salesian apostolate.

But it is the motto in particular that expresses the primary objective or spirit of Don Bosco's incessant activity and the pastoral and ascetical program that he wished to hand down to his Salesians: "*Da mihi animas; cetera tolle*"

The *original source* of this sentence is biblical (Gen 14:25). Chapter 14 of the Book of Genesis relates that a coalition of four "kings" mounted a punitive expedition against Sodom and four other cities by the Dead Sea. They took booty and prisoners, including Lot, Abram's nephew, who lived in Sodom. But Bera, king of Sodom, escaped with some

of his people, and fled into the hills. When Abram heard about the raid, he mustered his men, pursued and beat the invaders, and recovered the booty and the people that had been taken, Lot among them. On his return, Abram was first met by King Melchisedek of Salem. Then King Bera of Sodom also came out of the hills to meet Abram, and asked that the prisoners be given back to him: "Give me the people; take everything else for yourself" (in the Vulgate's Latin, *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle tibi*). Abram gave both the people and the goods back to Bera.

Obviously the literal sense of the biblical text does not possess a higher significance, though it stresses the value that King Bera placed on his people. In Christian tradition, however, the text acquired a *spiritual sense*. The spiritual sense transcends the literal sense, though it is suggested by the text. This is the traditional understanding.

The motto reached Don Bosco also in an *accommodated sense*, that is, the *pastoral* and *ascetical* sense it had acquired in more recent writings to which he had access. This usage has been attributed to St. Francis de Sales by Bishop Jean-Pierre Camus in *The Spirit of St. Francis de Sales*, though the words do not occur in any of the known writings of that saint. The text is quoted by Father Joseph Cafasso, Don Bosco's mentor and spiritual director, and by other ascetical writers. It is also found in the *Forma Cleri* [Formation of the Clergy] and in the *Regula Cleri* [Rule of the Clergy] of 1752—two books that Don Bosco often used for his daily meditation. The following prayer occurs in the *Regula Cleri*: "O Lord, lover of souls, give me a part of that love, so that I may say with all sincerity and fervor, "*Da mihi animas, coetera tolle.*"

For Don Bosco the motto expresses the spirituality of his and his Salesians' apostolic activity. In the first place it expresses the priority and motivation of this activity (people's salvation, "Give me souls!") In the second place it expresses the detachment and disinterested love with which this activity, the work of charity, is undertaken ("You may take everything else!").

It is with this understanding and hope that our Rector Major, Father Pascual Chávez Villanueva, has chosen this historic motto (*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*) as the main theme of the up-coming Twenty-sixth General Chapter.



Fr. Arthur Lenti, SDB

Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco Damaged by Fire

By Bob Merjano

On Monday evening, August 14, 2006, Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco suffered a damaging fire as a result of arson. The church normally would have been locked at the time of the fire, but a handful of parishioners stayed late to pray in honor of the Feast of the Assumption.

Sometime after the parishioners left, a man set fire to the church. The man suffered from depression and drug abuse, and he picked Corpus Christi Church at random for this act of vandalism and destruction.

Fr. Al Pestun, who has been a priest at Corpus Christi for 11 years, saw the fire develop. When he realized the church was on fire, he tried to enter through a door near the altar, but the door was too hot and the church was filled with so much smoke that he could not get in.

“My first instinct was to try to run and get the Blessed Sacrament,” noted Fr. Pestun.

On Tuesday afternoon, black soot covered the interior of the church. The large crucifix hanging over the altar was dark from smoke, white linens covering the altar were also blackened, and a layer of gray ash and soot covered the wooden pews.

The rear of the church suffered structural damage as a result of the blaze, and pews were destroyed. The heat of the fire

broke windows, and flames gutted a room that was used for baptisms and by brides before their weddings.

Early estimates were that the damage would take many weeks to repair. Fr. Pestun sadly notes that it will be months before the church is reopened. “Maybe before Christmas, I’m hoping,” he said.

The Church has to be completely emptied—including the removal of all the pews—in order to clean the smoke and fire residue. Mass will be celebrated in the Parish Hall until the damage to the Church is repaired. Fr. Ramon Zarate, the pastor, says that “the parishioners are adjusting to this new reality the best they can.” He adds that they are “trying to forgive the person who did this.” “Something good can come of this mean act. We want to try to make some improvements in the church, but the amount of time we have for that is very small.”

The Salesians at the parish are working with the archdiocesan insurance carrier to repair the damage caused by the fire and smoke. A recent estimate of the repair cost is over one million dollars. In addition, there will be other costs that insurance will not cover. The parish will be called on to meet these expenses.

The Salesian Society is coordinating donations from generous individuals who want to help. Contributions to help restore Corpus Christi Church may be made payable to the “Salesian Society” and can be sent to:

The Salesian Society
1100 Franklin Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

Please attach a note indicating that the donation is for Corpus Christi Parish. We will collect and send these funds and the names of donors to the parish.



Fr. David Purdy, Provincial, with Corpus Christi Music Director Robert Grant, and Fr. Ramon Zarate, Pastor, in front of the smoke damaged entrance to Corpus Christi Church.



Construction workers repairing the damage caused by the fire and smoke.

Fr. Esteban Ortiz Carries Out the 2006 Extraordinary Visitation

By Fr. David Purdy, SDB

In the Salesian world, just as a Director is in charge of a Salesian work, and a Provincial is in charge of a Salesian Province, a Regional oversees and works with the Salesian Family in a region.

The Regional for the InterAmerica Region, encompassing the Salesian Provinces of the Antilles, Haiti, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central America and Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela of South America, is Fr. Esteban Ortiz.

Born at Guayaquil, Ecuador, on April 6, 1946, Fr. Esteban is the eldest of five children. He began his primary education at the Collegio Cristobal Colon in Guayaquil, and from then on remained with the Salesians taking his first vows at Cayambe on August 16, 1964. Ordained deacon at Quito on December 22, 1974, the following year on June, 1975, in the same city, he became a priest.

During the first year of his priesthood he worked in the mission of Zambhua which cares for the indigenous *quichua*. Director of the community that founded the house of Machala in 1976, he did pastoral work there among the people in the suburbs. From 1987 until 2002 he also was National Delegate for Young Catholic Students, was a member of the Latin-American Team of Delegates of the International Movement of Catholic Students and of the International Young Catholic Students. He was the Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry and, from 1990 to 1995, was Director of the *Salesian*

Bulletin of Ecuador. For five years he was Director and Pastor of St. Dominic Savio Parish in Guayaquil and in 1997 he was appointed Provincial of Ecuador. He has taken part in three General Chapters. (GC#22, GC#24, and GC#25). During General Chapter #25 he was elected Regional for the InterAmerica Region and is a member of the General Council in Rome and has been ministering in this capacity these past four years.

Once every year a Salesian Provincial officially visits all the Salesian works in his Province and every six years the Rector Major, Fr. Pascual Chávez, mandates that the Regional visits all the Salesian works of all the Salesian Provinces in his region. The last Extraordinary Visitation for the Province of San Francisco was carried out by the current Rector Major, Fr. Pascual Chávez, in October and November of 2000. The current Extraordinary Visitation is the tenth that Fr. Esteban has conducted and is visiting the Province of San Francisco from September to November of 2006. During this time Fr. Esteban will see every Salesian, meet with Salesian Cooperators and collaborators and co-workers in our Salesian

schools, parishes, and youth centers. He will evaluate the Salesian communities and their mission and at the end of the three month visitation he will share his report and offer guidelines to help one and all carry out the mission to the young.

The Province is grateful to Fr. Esteban as the Holy Spirit works through him and through so many others during this 2006 Extraordinary Visitation in achieving the goal every Extraordinary Visitation wishes to experience carrying out these three objectives: [1] To intensify our communion between

the Rector Major and our Province, [2] To animate the religious life of our communities, and [3] To evaluate our pastoral works in the realization of our mission with youth. God-willing the Province of St. Andrew, the Western Province of the United States, with the intercession of Mary Help of Christians and of Saint John Bosco will feel the positive effects of the 2006 Extraordinary Visitation.



Very Rev. Esteban Ortiz began the Extraordinary Visit to the San Francisco Province meeting with Fr. David Purdy and the Provincial Council. (left to right) Frs. David Purdy, John Itzaina, Br. Michael Touchstone, Very Rev. Esteban Ortiz, Frs. Thomas Prendiville, Ted Montemayor, Mel Trinidad. Sept. 6, 2006.



BR. GEORGE MELVIN GHISELLI, SDB

News from Rome, May 17, 2006, informed us that Br. George Ghiselli, Salesian brother of the San Francisco Province, died at the age of 78 of heart failure at Pope Pius XI Hospital, Rome, Italy. Br. George is preceded in death by his parents Velia (Tabucchi) and Charles Ghiselli, his brother John Ghiselli and his sister Dora (Ghiselli) Lucchesi. Br. George is survived by his brother Charles Ghiselli, by his nephew Bruce Ghiselli, by his nieces Evelyn (Lucchesi) Kelley, and Barbara (Lucchesi) Rowe, by his sister-in-law Rose Ghiselli, and by several great nieces and nephews.

A native of San Francisco, Br. George was born May 5, 1928 and took his vows as a Salesian of Don Bosco September 8, 1947, at Don Bosco College, Newton, New Jersey. Br. George worked at the Salesian Press, Richmond, for five years and then from 1955 to 1989 taught and managed the Offset Printing Department at Don Bosco Technical Institute, Rosemead, California. He was an active member in many printing clubs and a recipient of many awards for dedication and service. He was Community Treasurer at the Provincial Residence and later at Saint Joseph's Community from 1992 to 2001.

For the last five years he was stationed at Salesian World Headquarters in Rome. Rosary and Mass of Christian Burial took place Wednesday, October 4, 2006, at SS. Peter & Paul Church, San Francisco where he was baptized and grew up. Christian Burial followed at the Salesian Cemetery, Richmond, California. Don Bosco promised those who would follow him in working with youth bread, work and paradise. Br. George enjoyed many a good meal and he certainly worked hard during his Salesian life. May Br. George now reap the rewards of eternal life.



SR. JOSEPHINE CARINI, FMA

Sr. Josephine Carini passed away on August 11, 2006 at St. Joseph's Provincial Center in Haledon, N.J. She was born in Piacenza, Italy on November 13, 1923. She was the sixth and youngest child of Benvenuto and Virginia Carini and came to the United States while still very young. Sr. Josephine grew up in New York City where she met the Salesian Sisters and found her life's calling. She entered the Congregation in 1941 and professed as a Salesian Sister on August 5, 1943. Hers was a life dedicated to her Sisters and to young people. Sr. Josephine served as teacher, principal, community supervisor for schools, formator, superior, provincial vicar and provincial of the Salesian Sisters.

She held a B.S. degree in Secondary Education from Fordham University, an M.A. in English and Philology from Catholic University in Washington, D.C. and a PhD in English and Philosophy of Education from the Catholic University in Washington. Sr. Josephine was also the recipient of the Rotary International Humanitarian Award. She taught in various schools of the Province: Mary Help of Christians, New York City, Corpus Christi, Port Chester, St. Anthony, Paterson and was principal at Mary Help of Christians Academy, North Haledon; St. John Bosco, San Antonio, and Mater Dolorosa, Philadelphia. Sr. Josephine was a gifted writer and a regular contributor to the Salesian Sisters' Magazine, Partners in Giving. As provincial of the Salesian Sisters of the United States and Canada Province from 1975-81, she demonstrated great vision and a capacity to understand the needs of the times. She gave priority to education in every area, from that of the professional preparation of the Sisters to that of the youngest child in schools operated and administered by the FMA. During her lifetime she stayed close to many of her students who remembered her as being a motivating force in their life. Knowing that Sr. Josephine's time on earth was coming to an end, many past pupils and friends came to see her regularly. An educator to the end, Sr. Josephine donated her body to science.



Br. Alphonse Vu, SDB, professes his perpetual vows: I pledge myself to devote all my strength to those to whom you will send me, especially to young people.

Salesians Celebrate Their Religious Profession

Bellflower, California. On Wednesday, August 16, 2006, family members and friends gathered in St. Dominic Savio Church in Bellflower to witness Br. Alphonse Vu pronounce his permanent commitment to live as a Salesian. Br. Ricardo Ramos, having just finished his novitiate at Mary Help of Christians Church in New York City, made temporary profession. The church held some 700 people prayed along with the Brothers. Afterwards a reception was held at the nearby St. John Bosco High School. Many of Br. Al's students from Bosco were present for both activities, as well as at the prayer vigil held on August 15 to beg God's blessing on the newly professed.



Br. Ricardo Ramos enters Salesian life with his first profession as a Salesian. Br. Phil Mandile is the official witness.



Salesians who celebrated significant anniversaries in 2006 gather with Very Rev. Esteban Ortiz at SS. Peter & Paul Church, San Francisco. Next to Fr. E. Ortiz is Br. Abel Zanella who celebrates 70 years of consecrated life as a Salesian. For 59 years Br. Abel Zanella has faithfully served the Salesian apostolates in Watsonville including St. Francis High School and the parish of Our Lady Help of Christians. Oct. 1, 2006.



By Fr. Ralph Murphy, SDB



86 Young People begin their voluntary service experience.

Cuenca, Ecuador. After taking a training course in August, 86 young people from Ecuador have begun their voluntary service experience. The volunteers, who recently completed their pre-university or university studies, come from the Sierra and the Amazonian regions. For a year they will be collaborating in the educational and pastoral activities of some of the works of the Salesians, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the Good Shepherd community. Many young former volunteers and the families of the new volunteers were present for the send off.

Assembly of Salesian Brothers.

Phnom Penh, Cambodia. From August 21 to 25 some 70 Salesians gathered in Cambodia's capital city in a country which for the first time since the infamous "Killing Fields," has begun to show signs of economic boom and a more stable society. Serving the 11 million population are three Salesian communities (since 1991) and 12 confreres involved mainly in social and technical education of Khmer youth. The venue of the Assembly is at the first of the three schools opened since 1991, which is near the most important Buddhist pagoda in the city. The melodic chanting of the Buddhist monks at 4:30 am offered the visitors a real taste of local culture and religion. Participants from 13 countries of the East Asia and Oceania region attended the event. Each day of the Assembly followed a similar dynamic: challenges, identity, formation, vocation promotion tackled through life experience and reflection.

Fr. Costantino Vendrame, 91st Servant of God from the Salesian Family.

Shillong, India. The formal opening of the Diocesan Investigation into the heroic life and virtue and reputation for sanc-

tity of Fr. Costantino Vendrame, the great apostle of the Khasi tribe, was held on August 19th, 2006 in the Great Hall of the Shillong Theology College. The Archbishop of Shillong, Dominic Jala, SDB, presided and set in motion the steps necessary to further the cause. Fr. Vendrame was born in San Martino, Italy on August 27, 1893. After his ordination on March 15, 1924, he left on the following December 2 for the new Salesian mission in Assam in North East India, where he spent most of his life. He died on January 30, 1957.

Award of First Diplomas at the Assabil Center.

Tangiers, Morocco. On July 20, 2006 the first awards ceremony was held at the Assabil Center which is part of a project in international cooperation supported by the Development NGO "Solidaridad Don Bosco," based in the Province of Seville, Spain. Assabil is a center for training and certification in the world of work attended by young people between the ages of 16 and 25. There about 160 students. They have the opportunity to obtain vocational certification and to take part in social and education activities and work experience in the area thanks to the cooperation of local firms. With this first ceremony of the award of diplomas, about 100 young people have concluded their studies in the program.

Closing of "Asia Youth Day."

Hong Kong, China. The fourth Asia Youth Day (AYD) ended on August 4, 2006. 800 young people, 100 priests, 150 religious and 7 bishops involved in youth ministry from 26 Asian countries took part in the event. In the closing ceremony Cardinal Joseph Zen, Salesian and Bishop of Hong Kong, invited the young participants to share the experience they had lived during their days together with their local churches. The following day there was a Salesian day for the AYD delegates belonging to the Salesian Family. About 80 stayed on for this.

Champaqui climbed in the name of Zeffirino Namuncur á.

Funes, Argentina. A group of 40 parents and pupils at the Mary Help of Christians Institute climbed the summit of the “Champaqui,” 3,052 ft high. The mountain is considered a real challenge for hikers. They reached this the highest peak in the Province of Cordoba, Argentina, under the guidance and intercession of Zeffirino Namuncurá. Before setting out each one received a medal with the image of the Venerable Servant of God. The parents saw this experience as a way of growing in their role as educators of their own children, a life experience that often provides challenges to overcome.



Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, SDB

Summer School in Don Bosco style.

Havana, Cuba. Hundreds of children, adolescents and young people took part in the “Summer School with Don Bosco” organized by the five Salesian works in Cuba. The program consisted in catechism meetings, manual work, organized games and excursions. The activities are held in the premises of the various parishes and in their attached churches. About 150 young people worked with the Salesians in offering the program to the young people of their areas.

Salesian Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone appointed Secretary of State.

Vatican. The second most influential post in the Vatican is getting a new occupant. Seventy-one year-old Italian Archbishop of Genoa, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, SDB, has been named Secretary of State, succeeding 78 year-old Angelo

Sodano who was named to the post by Pope John Paul II in 1990. The new Secretary is a native of Romano Canavese, near Turin. He joined the Salesians in 1950 and was ordained in 1960. He holds a JCD, and was the former Rector of the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome. He was also canon law faculty dean, and taught moral theology. He was appointed Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict, from 1995 until he moved to Genoa. Named Cardinal in 2003, he edited the Italian translation of the new Code of Canon Law. In his new post he will be the Pope’s closest collaborator in running the Church: coordinating the entire Roman Curia, overseeing the Vatican press office and newspaper, coordinating the preparation and publication of papal documents, and supervising the work of Vatican nuncios’ relations with Catholic communities and governments in individual countries.



Very Rev. Esteban Ortiz had a meeting with Directors and Pastors of the San Francisco Province during his Extraordinary Visitation. Berkeley - Oct. 02, 2006.

SALESIANS of DON BOSCO

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