Missionary Sister Beatified
Contents

3 Getting to Know Don Bosco
A New Model of Mission and of Missionary

6 Holiness in Don Bosco’s Style
Missionary Sister Beatified

9 Around the Salesian World

14 Family Life Matters
When I Grow Up

18 Putting the Year of Faith into Practice

20 Ten Ways Vatican II Shapes the Church Today

22 Salesian Family News

24 Around the Salesian U.S.A.

30 Recently Deceased Salesians

For free subscriptions and address updates in Eastern U.S., contact Salesian Bulletin, P.O. Box 639, New Rochelle, NY 10802-0639 or salcomm@salesians.org.
In Western U.S., contact Salesian Bulletin, 1100 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109 or salesiandevelopment@gmail.com.

Founded by St. John Bosco in 1877, the Salesian Bulletin is the medium of communication, animation, and formation of the Salesian Family around the world, published in more than 50 editions. Salesian Bulletin U.S.A. is published quarterly by the Salesians of Don Bosco of the New Rochelle and San Francisco provinces.
During a visit to Brazil on March 19-20, 2011, to expand and optimize political and commercial relations between Brazil and the U.S., President Barack Obama recalled Don Bosco’s dream about the city of Brasilia in his address to businessmen.

At the end of his 20-minute address, the President said: “Brasilia is a young city—it will turn 51 next month. But it began as a dream more than a century ago. In 1883, Dom Bosco,”

Brasilia’s patron saint, had a vision that one day, a capital city of a great nation would be built between the 15th and 20th parallels. It would be a model for the future and ensure that opportunity was the birthright of every Brazilian.”

A small, dark map of the world

The most poignant object in Don Bosco’s rooms at Valdocco is a small globe, dark and rather approximate. It’s hard to make out the borders between countries, and the world is strangely fused together in a compact whole.

“Young Michael Rua often heard him exclaim, ‘Oh, how much good I could do if only I had twelve priests at my disposal! I would send them out to preach our holy Faith, not only in the churches, but in the streets as well!’ Whenever he glanced at a world map he would heave a deep sigh at seeing so many regions still lying in the shadow of spiritual death, and he would eagerly long for the day he could carry the light of the Gospel to places unopened by missionaries.” (Biographical Memoirs 3:383)
Young Don Bosco’s apostolic zeal was intensified under the tutelage of St. Joseph Cafasso, leading him to identify as his field of action the world of poor and abandoned youth. That same zeal would gradually be the basis for his decision to open the Salesian Family to the foreign missions. Fr. Rua reported: “It was this need to save souls that made him think the Old World was too narrow and led him to send his sons to the far off missions in [South] America” (Bollettino Salesiano 21 [1897]:4).

Influenced by his reading about the missions during his years of pastoral training at the Ecclesiastical College (1841-1844), Don Bosco had fondly dreamed of joining the Oblates of Mary Immaculate for the missions among the Indians in North America. He was an avid reader of the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith from 1848 on. But the decisive factor in accelerating the development of the missionary vocation of his young congregation came with Vatican Council I (1869-1870). Many bishops from the Americas, Africa, and Asia took advantage of their presence in Rome to enlist clergy and sisters. They made contact also with Don Bosco, visited Valdocco, and proposed foundations. He saw in this a sign of God’s will and was enthusiastic. It’s in this context that his first “missionary dream” (1871-1872) finds its place.

“I seemed to be in a wild region I had never seen before, an immense untitled plain, unbroken by hills or mountains, except at the farthest end, where I could see the outline of jagged mountains. . . . Then I saw a small band of other missionaries, led by a number of young boys, advance cheerfully toward those savages. I feared for them, thinking, They are walking to their death. I went to meet them: they were clerics and priests. When I looked closely at them, I recognized them as our own Salesians. I personally knew only those in front, but I could see that the others too were Salesians.” (Biographical Memoirs 10:46, 47)

Influenced by the spirit of his century, he thought of the missions in a stricter sense, “in the regions of the infidels,” and in a more romantic sense: among “cruel and savage peoples.” His vision of the Church as Catholic, sent to all peoples, also played an important role. So did his perception of the Salesian vocation as a gift from God to the young of the whole world, as well as anti-Protestant concerns. The principles of missiology in those days were of the transforming leaven, of the struggle of conquest, of evangelical witness even unto martyrdom. The command of Christ to “go out into the whole world” (Mark 16:15) was in his ears like a juridical-ecclesial mandate. And that’s why he sent his missionaries to Rome to receive the Pope’s blessing.
The vanguard of a great army

Among the invitations offered to him, practical concerns led him to prefer the proposal from Argentina. Thousands of Italian immigrants were heading there, and his missionaries would not find themselves isolated. There was a civil society ready to support the work. And there, too, were the “savages” of his dreams. The letters and news from Fr. John Cagliero and the others about the real Patagonia would later radically alter the romantic vision of Don Bosco, who was always ready to adapt himself to circumstances and to see the hand of the Lord in them. The strategy changed: to found works like Valdocco (college prep schools, parishes, and youth centers) that would become formation centers for the development of the new nations of Latin America, whence his Salesians could then set out for missionary service among the native peoples.

In this way the traditional model of the missions was updated with elements taken from the charism of the Salesian oratory/youth center, which gave great importance to the education and care of the young. Even the organizational aspects changed: the Salesian missionaries were not only witnesses and apostles who left everything to proclaim the Gospel; like the tip of an iceberg, like the vanguard of a great army, they also considered themselves to be representing the whole Salesian Family, which was supporting them spiritually and materially, and which shared their joys and sorrows, their successes and difficulties.

Fr. Rua reminded the Cooperators: “The Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, like the hosts of an army in the field, will do their part, placing at the service of God and of their neighbor their wills, their health, their lives; the Cooperators on their part will do what good fathers and mothers of families do for their children when they go to war” (Bollettino Salesiano 14 [1890]:4-5).

The letters of the missionaries published in the Bollettino spoke about every particular detail, every project, every achievement, every success, every suffering, every difficulty. Everyone could know about and share in the apostolic labors, enjoy them, be proud of them, suffer with the missionaries and their people, support them with their prayers, and collaborate financially. The missionaries felt themselves part of Don Bosco’s great family, appreciated, supported, encouraged, and loved by that family, and they knew how to plant the Salesian charism in every part of the world in an effective way.

The June 1897 issue of the Italian Salesian Bulletin described the arrival of the first Salesians in the U.S. as missionaries among the Italian immigrants of San Francisco.
Sr. Maria Troncatti, FMA, a missionary in Ecuador for 47 years, was declared “blessed” by the Church on Nov. 24. Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, presided over the ritual of beatification at Macas, Ecuador, in the presence of thousands of enthusiastic religious and laity, bishops and public officials, Shuar Indians, and people from several countries. Honored guests included Mother Yvonne Reungoat, the FMA superior general, and Fr. Adrian Bregolin, vicar of the SDB rector major.

Fr. Pierluigi Cameroni, postulator general for the causes of saints of the Salesian Family, put Sr. Maria’s beatification in context: “Such an event affects all groups and members of the Salesian Family. We’re invited to appreciate the witness of this consecrated missionary in the light of the Year of Faith and of the Salesian Family’s preparation for the bicentennial of Don Bosco’s birth,” he said. “Sr. Troncatti’s story shines as a unique model of a consecrated woman, a missionary, and a mother to all who had the grace to meet her. Above all, it is the testimony of one who has truly lived ‘Give me souls and take away the rest’ with apostolic passion."

Maria Troncatti was born near Brescia, Italy, on Feb. 16, 1883, and made her profession as a Daughter of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian sister) in 1908. During World War I she trained as a nurse and served in a military hospital. This experience was to prove very valuable during her long missionary life.

Mission to Ecuador

In 1922 Sr. Maria was sent to Ecuador, where she spent the rest of her life serving the Shuar Indians at mission stations in Macas, Sevilla Don Bosco, and Sucua, deep in the Amazon forests of eastern Ecuador. She never returned to Italy.

Dedicated and self-sacrificing, Sr. Maria was absorbed in the needs of her mission. She was known for her great charity and for forgiveness without d-
scrimination. With her nursing knowledge and with the help of God and the Virgin Mary, she cleaned and bound wounds, extracted teeth, set bones, and performed surgery. At the same time, she was a catechist and evangelizer. She was also ahead of her times in promoting the dignity of the human person, especially women. The Shuar called Sr. Maria Madrecita Buena (“Good Little Mother”). To them she reflected the face of Christ, whether their need was spiritual or physical.

Salesian missionary Fr. John Vigna noted her compassion: “She never forgets that she’s dealing with weak human beings and sinners. I’ve seen her dealing with human nature in all its forms, including the most miserable; yet she does so with that refinement and kindness which in her are spontaneous and natural.”

What sustained this woman of faith? Sr. Maria rose at 4:00 a.m. and made a private hour of meditation. She remarked, “A look at the crucifix gives me life and the courage to work.” Mary Help of Christians was her other source of strength and courage to meet the day.

When one of the sisters began to reminisce about all the “sufferings, sorrows, pains, and heartbreak” of the mission, Sr. Maria responded that there was no need for any of these to be made known. For her it was enough that her Spouse, Jesus, knew it all.

The Mission of Sucua

Sr. Maria spent her last 22 years working in the mission at Sucua, a village of about 700 inhabitants 20 miles southeast of Macas, centered around the Salesian mission: a boarding school for 120 boys and one for 130 girls, a church, and a hospital under the sisters’ care.

In the late 1960s the relationship between the local Shuar and white settlers was souring. The Shuar were gradually being defrauded of their land; the outsiders offered them low prices for land, then used the land very profitably to raise livestock. When the Salesians obtained a presidential decree prohibiting the sale of Shuar land to whites within a 300-mile zone, the landowners reacted violently. On the night of July 4, 1969, the Salesian residence was set afire and burned to the ground.

The Shuar were incensed and banded together to defend the Salesians, threatening reprisals. On July 5, a hundred or so of the locals were in the school courtyard armed to the teeth, ready to wipe out the whites. One of the Shuar chiefs asked the Salesian director, “When do we begin, Father?” Bro. Cosimo Cossu, who was there, recalls, “What he meant was, when do we begin to exterminate the whites from Sucua. It would have been just a matter of
hours for there to be no white man left in Sucua.”

What did Sr. Maria do? “Unbeknownst to us,” narrates Bro. Cossu, “she had someone drive her to Macas, and there she went to the Marian shrine of the Virgin Most Pure to beg her for peace and to pacify her children at Sucua. She offered her life for the people entrusted to her.” It appears that the Virgin listened.

Although there was no massacre, tensions remained high until Aug. 25. On that day Sr. Maria and two other sisters were to depart for their annual retreat. Their plane had scarcely lifted off, however, when it destabilized and crashed to the ground. Sr. Maria was killed instantly. Everyone else aboard survived.

Fr. Angelo Botta, the Salesian provincial of Ecuador when she died, calls it “the first great miracle” of Sr. Troncatti, “that pardon and peace broke out around her coffin, bathed in tears and prayers, and Sucua was reinstated as a town of Christian brothers and sisters.”

Blessed Maria’s Legacy

Fr. Pascual Chavez defines her legacy: “Maria Troncatti’s life was truly consecrated in truth, beginning with God, in communion with Jesus Christ, and in the love of the Holy Spirit. She was united with and conformed to Jesus Christ by her self-denial and her faithful living out of the commitment she had made in her religious profession. Thanks to her faith and ongoing self-sacrifice, she shines out for her extraordinary ability to know how to combine marvelously proclamation of the Gospel with human development, resulting in spiritual conversion and social liberation.

“This Salesian sister in Ecuador’s Amazonian forests became ‘doctor’ for both bodies and souls: while she assisted people, she also evangelized, proclaiming and testifying to everyone of the Father’s infinite love and the motherly tenderness of the Help of Christians. Whether she was sewing or attending the sick, she always sowed the Word of the Gospel in terms of intimacy between people; the Word came to them as a doctor curing wounds and afflictions of heart and soul.

“Her beatification reminds us that the proclamation of salvation in Jesus’ name is at the heart of mission.”

Cardinal Amato designated Aug. 25 as the date for her liturgical memorial. Resources available for getting to know Bl. Maria Troncatti better may be found at www.cgfmanet.org and www.salesianasecuador.org
Pope Benedict XVI’s message for the 28th World Youth Day, July 23-28, 2013, in Rio de Janeiro, was published on Nov. 16. The WYD theme is “Go and make disciples of all nations!” (Matt 28:19). Fr. Fabio Attard, Salesian general councilor for youth ministry, commented on the message.

One’s relationship with Jesus touches on questions hidden deep in our hearts. The light of faith helps us understand that everyone’s existence is most precious, because it’s the result of God’s love. The question of life’s meaning, the Pope says, opens the way for Jesus’ disciples to put his command into practice through apostolic activity. There’s no such thing as faith that isn’t shared.

The Pope gives two clear guidelines. The first is to be part of the virtual world of the Internet. He invites young people not only to be consumers but also to leave signs of their faith when they use the Net. The Pope is handing over to young people the task of evangelizing the digital continent.

The second guideline concerns mobility. Young people make up a good part of the contemporary phenomenon of migration. The Pope asks them to recognize this as a providential opportunity to spread the Gospel.

Finally, the Pope reminds the young that their evangelizing activity will be empty unless it “is born of prayer and sustained by prayer” and is linked to the Church, since “Jesus sent forth his disciples on mission together.”

The complete text of the Pope’s message is published at the Vatican Web site.

Salesians Host Refugees in Goma Again

Along the border with Rwanda in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, a rebel group called M23 drove off the government army in November and captured the city of Goma, where the SDBs have an important mission, Don Bosco Ngangi Educational Center. Thousands of frightened people from the whole area fled to the SDB mission and other sites in the city. By Nov. 19 the SDBs were looking after 7,000 refugees—5,000 of them children—camped in every available space of the classrooms and playing fields. Feeding and sheltering them and
providing water, medicine, and adequate sanitation soon became a serious problem. The International Red Cross, the World Food Program, and a few other NGOs brought some assistance. Fr. Piero Gavioli, the director, lamented: “In Africa they say that when two elephants fight, it’s the grass that's trampled. Poor people are paying a heavy price in this great struggle.”

Fighting has been going on in Syria for nearly two years between the Assad dictatorship and rebels intent on overthrowing it. As always happens in war, the weak and the young are the main victims. 40,000 civilians have been killed, and 1.5 million persons have become refugees. Teenage boys have been recruited by the rebels. Every kind of public service, including education, has been disrupted, businesses have shut down, and the price of fuel has quintupled. Religious minorities, including Christians, feel threatened by Islamist militias. The whole country feels insecure and fearful.

Pastoral activities have been seriously impeded. Nevertheless, the SDB works are striving to maintain a semblance of normality, according to Fr. Munir El Rai, SDB Middle East provincial: “The Salesians are trying to carry out support activities for displaced families in Damascus, Aleppo, and Kafroun, especially for children and youths. They’re encouraging recreational activities in the schools and in reception centers taking in these displaced people. Salesian communities open their centers every evening, welcoming anyone who wishes to come, exchanging moments of fraternity, mutual support, and heartfelt shared prayer.”

Fr. El Rai also notes that the very young “are becoming accustomed to violence in all its sorrowful, brutal aspects, since they hear the explosions every day. . . . All now speak the language of war, children know the names of weapons, and when there’s an explosion they recognize the weapon used.”

Members of the Salesian Youth Movement in Aleppo, November 2012

Salesians Affected by Syria’s Civil War

Refugees newly arrived at Don Bosco Ngangi in Goma

Salesian Bulletin Early Winter 2012-2013
Return to School in Haiti; Setback at Cap-Haitien

Haiti continues to recover from its 2010 earthquake. In October more than 3,000,000 children returned to school, including more than 20,000 in Salesian institutions. Half of the Salesian students are given one meal a day—which may be their only meal—at the Little Schools of Father Bohnen. The resilient people of the country are ever hopeful of a better life.

The Salesians have worked in Haiti for more than 75 years, always on the side of the most vulnerable: children, women, the sick, etc. “Our dream is a better Haiti where young people are able to take care of themselves,” says Fr. Sylvain Ducange, the SDB provincial.

Torrential rains deluged northern Haiti Nov. 8-9. Floods caused 16 deaths at Cap-Haitien; other Haitian towns also were flooded. The Salesians suffered too—walls and fences of the Cap-Haitien school were swept away, and the agricultural students’ vegetable gardens were destroyed. But the Salesian community gave hospitality to 100 families who’d been flooded out of their homes.

In Pakistan: New Workshop at Lahore, New Homes for Villagers

Three villages in southern Pakistan destroyed by floods in 2010 are habitable again after eight months of intense work. The rebuilding project was the work of a large team that included the SDBs. All the furniture and electrical work for the villages’ 150 houses were produced in the shops of Don Bosco Technical Centre in Lahore; 30 graduates and staff from DBTC worked on the houses in high summer temperatures. DBTC rector Fr. Miguel Ruiz explained that the joint project showed that poor Muslims and Christians could work together for a better Pakistan. The local people, the Army, and civilian authorities were deeply grateful.
At DBTC, staff and students—Christians and Muslims alike—worked together to put up a new 15,000-square-foot building for the school’s metalwork machinery. The small Salesian community sees the new building as proof that both the staff training and the investment in equipment are paying off, with students becoming well-qualified technicians. DBTC also trains carpenters and electricians and has a middle school and a hostel for young students.

Empowering Youth to Change Society

The SDBs and FMAs continue to be active at the United Nations on behalf of the young and the marginalized. A program on Sept. 24 called “Empowering Youth to be Agents of Change in Eradicating Poverty” stressed the importance of listening to the dreams and the struggles of young people.

The principal speakers were Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez, SDB, of Honduras, president of Caritas Internationalis, and Bro. Jean Paul Muller, SDB treasurer general. From a Salesian perspective, they reflected on the empowerment of youth and creating environments that will enable young people to help transform their societies. Cardinal Rodriguez said that the transformation of societies often begins with the enthusiasm and creativity of young people, who often challenge their elders to see things in new ways and who approach life with great passion and dedication. Bro. Muller pointed out specific examples of effective Salesian practices around the world that are helping young people escape poverty and live free from want and fear.

Specific topics of concern included child labor, child soldiering, employment, and access to education, health care, clean water, sanitation, and leisure and cultural activities. Spirituality is a core value for Salesians; openness to God and his presence in individual lives and societies is a key to empowering young people.

The Salesians participated in the first International Day of the Girl, Oct. 11, which promotes equal treatment and opportunities for girls. At the U.N., attention was given to the issue of child marriage as a human rights violation and a serious health risk for young girls whose bodies are not fully developed for motherhood. Early marriage also prevents girls from continuing their education and contributes to many of them remaining in lifelong poverty. Other challenges facing girls include limited educational opportunities, physical and sexual violence, trafficking, lack of role models, forced labor, limited work opportunities, negative media images, and inequality. For more information on issues that girls face: http://dayofthegirl.com
Salesians Offer Ideas, Expertise at Synod of Bishops

The Synod of Bishops met in the Vatican, Oct. 7-28, to discuss “The New Evangelization,” i.e., reviving the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world. Fifteen members of the Salesian Family were participants: two cardinals, six other bishops, and Fr. Pascual Chavez as full members; two SDBs and an FMA as experts; Mother Yvonne Reungoat and an SDB as auditors; and one SDB in the press office. Several SDBs addressed the gathering.

Fr. Chavez appealed to “the urgent need to promote a culture of vocations in the Church” and proposed a practical plan to do so. He said it was important for all “pastors to be true spiritual guides for the young.”

Archbishop Malayappan Chinnappa, SDB, of Madras, India, identified the task of evangelists as helping people discover Jesus for themselves by creating preconditions that will open them up to him, e.g., by working “to improve the lives of the poor, the oppressed, and those discriminated against.”

Cardinal Angelo Amato, SDB, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, described the saints as models of how to live the Gospel and evangelize through virtuous living.

Bishop Enrico dal Covolo, SDB, rector of the Pontifical Lateran University, called for a commitment to closer cooperation between Catholic families and local educational agencies (schools, parishes, youth centers, etc.) and for dialog between faith and culture in teaching.

Bishop Rosario Vella, SDB, of Ambanja, Madagascar, advocated listening to young people and approaching them with strength, humility, joy, a spirit of cooperation, and love for the cross. He said, “The young are asking us for a liturgy that is more joyful, more participatory, more in tune with their lives, a liturgy of singing and dancing. They ask us for a demanding but not negative morality, a morality that frees young people from the slavery of selfishness and relativism, and that fills their hearts. The young are asking us for a faith that isn’t intellectual but vital; a faith that passes through the mind but reaches the heart.”

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe, SDB, of Perth, Australia, promoted the role of the laity and the centrality of Jesus in both theology and the Church’s pastoral practice. “Young people,” he said, “are very easily attracted by Jesus once they begin to understand him and he’s presented to them as he actually is, in the pages of the Gospels, in our tradition of the Church.”

Bp. Rosario Vella, SDB, from Madagascar

Around the Salesian World continued on p. 31
Tom was dressed in somewhat shabby attire, with a couple of small holes in his pants legs, a soiled mark on one shirtsleeve, and shoes whose appearance revealed they had covered considerable mileage. There he was, sitting in a fast-food restaurant at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, relishing each bite of his sandwich and constantly commenting to my daughter, Sheri, and me as to how good the food smelled. When we had finished eating and departed in our separate directions, I inquired of Sheri if we shouldn’t organize some kind of a welfare campaign to help feed and clothe this poor, unfortunate, struggling student.

You can imagine my surprise when she explained to me that this young man was the son of a wealthy furniture manufacturing executive in a town a few hundred miles from the university. This led me to the natural question of why he was projecting such a poverty-stricken image. Was he pretending to be someone he wasn’t? Or maybe he just couldn’t manage all those bundles of green stuff I imagined his parents were sending him each month.

After assuring me that none of my assumptions were correct, Sheri explained that Tom’s father had, at one time, been very supportive of Tom and his vocational goals, while he was attending engineering school and preparing for what his dad felt would be a responsible position in their family-owned company. But during his sophomore year, Tom decided that this line of work wasn’t for him, and he switched into the college of fine arts and became a drawing and painting major. His father, enraged by the decision, which frustrated all of his vocational plans for Tom, immediately stopped sending him financial aid and announced, “If you’re going into that, you’ll have to make it on your own.”
So Tom’s world of wardrobes, sports cars, and ample pocket change had now been replaced by worn-out jeans and a longing hunger at the local burger place. Yet he had a sense of accomplishment. He had made a decision about what he wanted to do with his life and was now following through on it.

Tom’s story illustrates a common family problem: conflict between parents and teenagers on a vocational choice. Or, just as bad, the absence of any help from parents for teenagers who are beginning to make some career choices or at least express some interest in certain fields.

As Catholic parents, we play an important role as models and primary educators in the faith for our children. Just as we guide and nurture them spiritually as they grow, we do the same for their personal development as well. But what happens if your child doesn’t exactly toe the line you’ve laid out for him or her?

Catholic parents should recognize that every legitimate job is a divine calling. Each person in whatever job he or she may choose can be part of God’s work for accomplishing the world’s daily tasks. In making career decisions, teens need help, not control, from their parents.

As Dean Hummel and Carl McDaniels point out in their book *How to Help Your Child Plan a Career* (Acropolis Books), parents are the greatest potential helpers for their children’s career planning if they know how to help.

But *if* can be a very long word. Knowing how to help your teenager isn’t as easy as it may sound. Parents may have to make some changes in their attitudes. They may have to be willing to increase their knowledge of facts about vocations, and they may have to be ready to grow along with their teenagers during this crucial time of life.

Accepting God’s Plan

In my more than 40 years in parish ministry and college teaching, I’ve met many families in this situation. From these meetings, several key lessons emerged for parents who want to help their teenagers in this area.

**Be a sounding board for their dreams and fantasies.** One teenage girl remarked to her mother that she might like to be a brain surgeon. When the mother replied, “That’s ridiculous; you couldn’t pass the courses,” her daughter’s fantasy was dashed to the ground, and with it, her self-esteem. Don’t crush your chil-
children’s dreams, even if at the moment they seem farfetched. Who knows what plans God may have for them?

Accept your teen’s strengths and weaknesses. I think of the father who kept pushing his son to follow in his footsteps as a pharmacist. He could not accept the boy’s reluctance toward this type of work, or his poor performance in high school biology and chemistry. It never occurred to the dad that he should encourage his son’s interest in journalism based on the boy’s demonstrated ability to express himself in writing, particularly in the high school newspaper. Our Heavenly Father doesn’t give us all the same talents. Parents need to be open to their teenager’s strengths and weaknesses.

Help your teens discover a sense of worth by listening to them as they discuss vocational interests. This reinforces that you care about them and that they are important as people. When parents act as though they are too busy, they do real damage to their child’s sense of self-worth. As educational psychologist William Purkey observes, “The ways in which a person views him- or herself is a product of the way others see him or her.” So tell your teenagers they are important by listening to them.

Encourage them to try various work experiences. One of the best ways to do this is to look for jobs that may be at least distantly related to their vocational interest. For example, one young lady I know has hopes of becoming a veterinarian. She is testing her feelings for the vocation by working part-time in a local veterinary office. If your teen has interest in a certain field, you may be able to help him or her get work with someone already established in that type of employment. Many high schools have cooperative-education programs to assist in this.

Help your teen find literature on occupational choices. School guidance offices or the public library can help. Among the guides I’ve found helpful are Handbook of Job Facts (Science Research Associates), Occupational Outlook Quarterly online.

The Occupational Outlook Quarterly is available on-line: http://www.bls.gov/opub/ooq/home.htm

Bureau of Labor Statistics

16 Salesian Bulletin Early Winter 2012-2013

Accept your teenager’s decisions. The college major or job chosen may not meet with your approval. It may even throw a monkey wrench into all the plans you had for your child. But remember, God works in his own way to call people into many different fields of work. “Plans fail when there is no counsel, but they succeed when counselors are many” (Prv 15:22).

If you keep open the lines of communication, then living with your child’s decisions will become easier for both of you. And, in the final analysis, God’s plan for your teenager’s life will ultimately unveil itself.

“When I Grow Up” by Charles Dickson, PhD, from St. Anthony Messenger magazine, is used by permission of Franciscan Media, 800-488-0488. www.FranciscanMedia.org. ©2012. All rights reserved.
Putting the Year of Faith into Practice

Condensed from an article by Bishop David Ricken of Green Bay

Pope Benedict XVI has declared 2012-2013 as a Year of Faith, aimed at strengthening the faith of Catholics, deepening their communion with God, and drawing the world toward our faith.

1. Participate in Mass. The Year of Faith is meant to promote a personal encounter with Jesus. This occurs most immediately in the Eucharist. Regular Mass attendance strengthens one’s faith through the Scriptures, the Creed, other prayers, sacred music, the homily, receiving Communion, and being part of a faith community.

2. Go to confession. Catholics find strength and grow deeper in their faith through participation in the sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation). Confession urges people to turn back to God, express sorrow for falling short, and open their lives to the power of God’s healing grace. It forgives the injuries of the past and provides strength for the future.

3. Learn about the lives of the saints. The saints are timeless examples of how to live a Christian life, and they provide endless hope. Not only were they sinners who kept trying to grow closer to God, but they also exemplify many different ways a person can serve God.

4. Read the Bible daily. Scripture offers firsthand access to the word of God and tells the story of human salvation. Through prayerful reading of Scripture, Catholics can become more attuned to God’s word.

5. Read the documents of Vatican II. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) ushered in a great renewal of the Church (see related article). As the Church celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Council, Catholics reflect on how it influenced the Mass, the role of the laity, how the Church understands itself and its relationship with other Christians and non-Christians. To continue this renewal, Catholics must understand what the Council taught and how it enriches the lives of believers.
6. **Study the Catechism.** The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) covers the beliefs, moral teachings, prayer, and sacraments of the Catholic Church in one volume. It’s a resource for a better understanding of the faith. Another helpful resource is the *U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults*.

7. **Volunteer in the parish.** A solid grounding of the Scriptures, the Council, and the Catechism must translate into action. The parish is a great place to start, and each person’s gifts help build up the community. People are welcome to serve as ministers of hospitality, liturgical musicians, lectors, catechists, and in other roles in parish life.

8. **Help those in need.** The Church urges Catholics to donate to charity and volunteer to help the poor during the Year of Faith. This means to encounter Christ personally in the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable. Helping others brings Catholics face-to-face with Christ and offers an example for the rest of the world.

9. **Invite a friend to Mass.** Real change occurs at the local level. A personal invitation can make all the difference to someone who has drifted from the faith or feels alienated from the Church. Everyone knows people like this, so everyone can extend a loving welcome.

10. **Incorporate the Beatitudes into daily life.** The Beatitudes (Matt 5:3-12) provide a rich blueprint for Christian living. Their wisdom can help all to be more humble, patient, just, transparent, loving, forgiving, and free. It’s precisely the example of lived faith needed to draw people to the Church in the year ahead.
Ten Ways Vatican II Shapes the Church Today

Condensed from an article by Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans

The Year of Faith began on Oct. 11, the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council, which many people consider to have been the most important religious event of the 20th century. All the bishops of the Catholic world—about 2,500 at the time—plus other religious leaders met in the Vatican each fall from 1962 to 1965 to discuss the great concerns of the Catholic Church in mid-20th century.

Here are ten ways in which the Council continues to shape the Catholic Church:

1. It presented a renewed vision of what it means to be the Church, which it called “the light of the world,” “the People of God,” and the source of salvation. It said the Church shares the joys and sufferings of the world and gave a new emphasis to the role of lay people.

2. It called the Eucharist the source and summit of the faith. In the Eucharist, Catholics encounter the person of Christ, who is the true foundation of the Church and the source of divine grace.

3. It reformed the liturgy. The Council promoted “full and active participation” in the Mass and other sacraments and authorized use of vernacular languages in the liturgy.

4. It said that every Catholic is called to be holy and to be a missionary. By their very lives, Catholics are to spread the Gospel.

5. It emphasized the importance of the family, which it called the “domestic Church.” The family is the basic faith-unit of the Church, the foundation on which each believer’s faith is built.

6. It reshaped the Church’s relationship with other Christians and other religions. The Church adopted a spirit of respect and dialog toward other faith traditions, resulting in better understanding and much cooperation between Catholics and others.
7. It promoted collaboration. Bishops, priests, religious, and lay people were encouraged to work together in a collegial style. National and state conferences of bishops were established. The Council encouraged “subsidiarity,” i.e., the making of decisions at the lowest workable level of both Church and society.

8. It updated the Church, encouraging her to respond to “the signs of the times” and become more accessible to the modern world.

9. It returned the Church to its roots, encouraging greater familiarity with the Bible, the Fathers of the Church, and ancient practices such as the permanent diaconate and the adult catechumenate.

10. Many expert theologians assisted the bishops at the Council “behind the scenes,” drafting speeches, shaping the 16 documents the Council issued, and influencing the Council’s general direction. One of the most influential of these experts was Fr. Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, through his work with Cardinal Frings of Cologne.
VIDES General Assembly

From Nov. 1 to 4, nearly 250 members of VIDES (International Volunteers for Development, Education, and Service) from 34 countries, including FMA delegates and VIDES lay members, gathered in Trevi, Italy, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Association in a General Assembly, whose theme was “Recall-Rejoice-Renew.” Srs. Mary Gloria Mar, Phyllis Neves, and Denise Sickinger represented the FMA of the U.S.

VIDES is a lay volunteer association that gives young people the opportunity for volunteer service in their own countries or around the world. It was begun on Nov. 30, 1987, through the inspiration of Sr. Maria Grazia Caputo, FMA, with the encouragement of FMA Mother General Marinella Castagno. VIDES is sustained, supported, and given life by its direct link to the Salesian Sisters worldwide, who provide delegates to each local and international group and assure fidelity to the Salesian charism.

On Oct. 31 the voting members elected the new administrative council, composed of 14 FMA and lay members who serve a four-year term. Sr. Neves was one of those elected. They decided the program for 2013: to follow the guidelines established by the FMA general chapter and the present VIDES Congress. Reports were given on VIDES's participation in the U.N. and on the Council of Human Rights in Geneva, among other topics.

During the next three full days of the Assembly, the participants from each VIDES group presented themselves and their work. There were talks by Sr. Caputo; Sr. Leonor Salazar, FMA, director general of VIDES International; Mother Yvonne Reungoat, FMA superior general; Guido Barbera, president of VIDES International; and Fr. Pascual Chavez, SDB rector major. All the speakers called upon the members to deepen the Salesian identity and charism of the Association and its mission in the world, with emphasis on VIDES participation at the world level through the U.N. and the Office of Human Rights. They urged that VIDES take up the challenge of being a life-changing experience that will foster fraternity and not just solidarity in the world through a life decision by the participants to be evangelizers in all contexts.
The Assembly concluded with a Mass celebrated by Fr. Chavez in the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi.

For more information on VIDES or to volunteer: www.vides.org and www.vides.us

--- Denise Sickinger, FMA

Salesian Cooperators World Congress

The Fourth World Congress of the Association of Salesian Cooperators took place in Rome from Nov. 8 to 11. Over 225 province coordinators, representatives, and SDB and FMA delegates took part. Representing the Salesian Cooperators from the U.S. were Norma Arellano, Elizabeth Gamarra, Diane dela Torre, Sr. Guadalupe Medina, FMA, and Sr. Denise Sickinger, FMA.

The theme of the Congress was “The Project of Apostolic Life as the Path of Fidelity to Don Bosco’s Charism.” Work began with greetings from the outgoing World Coordinator, Dr. Rosario Maiorano, and the Salesian superiors general, Fr. Pascual Chavez and Mother Yvonne Reungoat.

The members of the Congress voted final approval of the Project of Apostolic Life, i.e., the statutes and regulations of the Association, which had been in use ad experimentum for the last six years.

On Nov. 10, Fr. Chavez named Noemi Bertola the new World Coordinator; she is the first woman to hold the position.

All who addressed the Congress, especially Fr. Chavez and Fr. Giuseppe Casti, SDB world delegate, called the Cooperators to commit themselves to a greater visibility at ecclesial, social, and political levels.

--- Denise Sickinger, FMA
On Aug. 5, 1872, the first Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters) made their vows before St. John Bosco in Mornese, Italy. On Aug. 5, 2012, Sr. Mary Jackson, FMA, made her perpetual profession in North Haledon, N.J., in the presence of her religious sisters, her family, and over 200 friends. Bishop Arthur Serratelli of Paterson received the vows. Sr. Jackson, from Corning, N.Y., has served at FMA schools in Tampa and North Haledon and will continue her ministry in North Haledon.

Bros. Michael Eguino, SDB, 27, and Robert Malusa, SDB, 47, made their perpetual profession on Aug. 18 in Haverstraw-Stony Point, N.Y. Fr. Thomas Dunne received their vows, and Bishop Luc Van Looy, SDB, of Ghent, Belgium, presided over the Mass and preached.

Bro. Malusa, a coadjutor brother, entered the Salesians after 15 years as a math teacher and after serving as a Salesian Lay Missioner in Sierra Leone. Since 2008 he has been youth minister at St. Philip Benizi Church in Belle Glade, Fla.

Bro. Eguino entered the formation program following his graduation from Salesian High School in New Rochelle in 2002. He has taught at his alma mater and served at the retreat house in Haverstraw-Stony Point. He is now studying theology in view of priestly ordination.

-- Michael Mendl, SDB

Two FMA First Professions, Three for SDBs

On Aug. 5, Sr. Merissa Loucks from Chicago, Ill., and Sr. JooYun Park from Long Island made their first profession as Salesians. Sr. Karen Dunn, FMA province...
Salesian Sisters

SDBs Commission 20 SLMs, 7 SDVs

The New Rochelle Province commissioned 18 new Salesian Lay Missioners and 4 Salesian Domestic Volunteers in Haverstraw, N.Y., on Aug. 17. The SLMs serve in overseas missions (this year in Bolivia, Cambodia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan) and the SDVs in home missions (this year in Takoma Park, Chicago, North Haledon, and the New Orleans West Bank).

Bishop Luc Van Looy, SDB, of Ghent, Belgium, presided over the commissioning, which was the culmination of three weeks of orientation that included intercultural awareness, introduction to Don Bosco and the Salesian charism, practical experience in a Salesian summer camp, the nitty-gritty details of living...
Salesian Past Pupil Goes to Mars

When NASA’s Curiosity space capsule descended to Mars on Aug. 6 and subsequently began to explore the planet’s surface, Miguel San Martin was one of the engineers rejoicing in the mission’s success. Mr. San Martin, a 1977 alumnus of the Salesians’ Pius IX College in Buenos Aires, is now head engineer for guidance, navigation, and control at NASA’s Mars Science Lab and served as flight engineer for Curiosity’s successful descent to Martian soil. The complex vehicle is looking for signs of life on Mars.

-- ANS

A chapter of the layered geological history of Mars is laid bare in this postcard from NASA’s Curiosity rover. The image shows the base of Mount Sharp, the rover’s eventual science destination.
Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School Expands Again

Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Takoma Park, Md., continues to grow. On Sept. 6, Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, presided at the opening Mass of the school year and blessed the start of another expansion of the school that will accommodate expanding programs and a student population of 500: nine new classrooms and science labs, a counseling and ministry center, and a teacher resource room. Over $7 million dollars in cash and pledges has been raised for this third renovation in five years, to be completed for the fall of 2013.

The six-year-old school has 325 students in grades 9 through 12. They are employed by over 70 major corporations and businesses in the Washington area—banks, accounting firms, hospitals, universities, law firms, and government agencies. 100% of the first two graduating classes, in 2011 and 2012, were accepted for college and were awarded nearly $6 million in merit and need-based scholarships. They are attending some of the most prominent universities and colleges in the country.

-- Claire Wyrsch

New Rochelle Art Association Honors Bro. Andrew LaCombe

Bro. Andrew LaCombe, SDB, was honored by the New Rochelle Art Association at their centennial dinner on Oct. 2. The NRAA was established in 1912 by some of the most distinguished artists and illustrators of the day, many of whom lived in New Rochelle and commuted to work at prestigious magazines and advertising companies in Manhattan.
Archbishop Savio Hon Awarded Honorary Doctorate

The School of Theology of Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J., conferred an honorary doctorate in theology upon Abp. Savio Hon Tai-fai, SDB, on Nov. 8. The Pontifical Mission Societies in the U.S. was also involved in the planning. The ceremony, at which Abp John J. Myers of Newark presided, was attended by Immaculate Conception Seminary’s student body and members of the SDB community of Orange.

Abp. Hon was honored for his dedication to the theological formation of priests, his translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* into Chinese, his service on the International Theological Commission, and his service to the Church as secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Abp. Hon addressed the audience on the wisdom that a missionary should display, featuring four F’s: formation of the people, fostering their religious arts, friendship with all, and faith in God.

-- Michael Mendl, SDB
The SALESIAN LAY MISSIONERS is a Catholic faith-based volunteer program that offers a unique opportunity to serve the children of the world. We sponsor domestic and international placements and require a 1 or 2 year commitment.

If you would like more information about this life changing program, please write to:

SALESIAN LAY MISSIONERS
Attn: Adam Rudin
2 Lefevre Lane, New Rochelle NY 10801

Or visit our website at: www.salesians.org/slm
or e-mail us at: slm@salesianmissions.org
Fr. James B. Curran, SDB (1921-2012)

By Michael Mendl, SDB

Fr. James Curran, a member of the SDB community at St. Petersburg Catholic High School, died on Sept. 3 in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Fr. Curran was born at Annascaul (County Kerry), Ireland. He entered the high school seminary of the Anglo-Irish Province in 1935, professed vows in 1941, and was ordained in 1951. He taught English, Latin, and British and European history in Malta and England for 16 years.

After transferring to the New Rochelle Province in 1963, Fr. Curran taught in Boston and Cedar Lake, Ind., until 1974 and was director of the latter school. From 1975 to 1983 he was the provincial delegate for the Salesian Co-operators, while serving as director of the Haverstraw, N.Y., and Ipswich, Mass., SDB communities. From 1983 until his death, he was mostly a parish priest in Harvey, La.; Miami; Paterson, N.J.; Port Chester, N.Y.; and Belle Glade, Fla. At St. Pete Catholic he was available to students and the diocese as a senior priest.

Fr. Curran’s good nature, sense of humor, and learned homilies were much appreciated. He was, in a nephew’s words, “humanitarian, humble, and helpful in all manner of things.”

Sr. Mary Louise de la Vega, FMA (1926-2012)

By Juanita Chavez, FMA

Sr. Mary Louise de la Vega died on Sept. 2 at the FMA provincial house in San Antonio. She was 86.

Sr. de la Vega was born in Puebla, Mexico. Because of religious persecution in Mexico, she joined the Salesian Sisters in New Jersey in the mid-1940s and made her first profession in 1946. She spent most of her 66 fruitful years of religious life in Laredo and San Antonio but also had short assignments in Arizona, California, Florida, Louisiana, and New Jersey. Prepared with an M.S. in education from Laredo State University, she was a Salesian educator in everything she did, quickly winning the respect of students, faculty, and parents. She made friends easily and attracted the young with her enthusiasm and jovial manner. She had a characteristic twinkle in her eye, and her smile was constant, sincere and welcoming. Besides teaching, at various times she was catechist, treasurer, vicar, and assistant to the aspirants.

Sr. de la Vega was also a talented artist and a masterful storyteller. Her spirituality, based on devotion to Jesus and Mary, was deep and edifying. She valued Salesian community life and enthusiastically lived what she believed.
Fr. Stephen Schenck, pastor of Holy Rosary Church in Port Chester, N.Y., since 2009, died of a heart attack on Nov. 10.

After attending Salesian Junior Seminary at Goshen, N.Y., Fr. Schenck professed first vows in Newton, N.J., in 1971. In both Goshen and his college years at Newton he developed the musical and dramatic skills that would serve young people uncommonly well during his pastoral ministry. He was ordained in Columbus, Ohio, in 1981.

Fr. Schenck taught in the Salesian schools of Cedar Lake, Ind., and Paterson, N.J., did retreat/youth ministry work in Goshen and Haverstraw, did parish ministry in Miami and Washington in addition to Port Chester, and was often called upon for conferences and workshops, which he presented with learning and humor. He served on the provincial council as supervisor of the province’s youth ministry programs (1991-1997) and director of the SDB communities of Paterson (1997-2002) and Washington (2003-2009).

Fr. Schenck’s musical talents were very much appreciated. He composed numerous hymns in a style that appeals to young people. His “Friend of the Young and the Poor” in honor of St. John Bosco is sung throughout Salesian North America and in other countries.

Fr. Schenck was admired for his humility, total dedication to the young and the poor, and commitment to the educational approach of Don Bosco. He gave ample attention also to the needs of his confreres, e.g. by cooking dinner, telling stories, and offering spiritual guidance.

Fr. Pascual Chavez offered this tribute: “Fr. Steve was a model son of Don Bosco who filled others’ lives with joy through his smile, his music, his total dedication. Truly, the more time goes by, the more we are realizing the human greatness, the spiritual wealth, and the charismatic power of Fr. Steve. There’s no doubt that we belong to a family of saints!”

Salesian First Professions in August and September

In August and September 168 SDB novices around the world made their first profession of vows. They included 75 in the Africa Region; 27 in East Asia-Oceania; 23 in Northern Europe; 23 in InterAmerica (see separate story, pp. 24-25); 13 in Italy-Middle East; 5 in Western Europe; and 2 in South Asia. Other professions take place at different times of year.
Share the blessings of the Lord with His poor. When you give to the Salesians, you help poor youngsters and others in need with a Catholic education, a trade, and social programs, and you support seminarians.

The legal title of the Salesians of Don Bosco is Salesian Society, Inc.

For further details contact your nearest Salesian school, parish, youth center, or:

Salesian Provincial Office
148 Main Street
New Rochelle, NY 10801-0639
(914) 636-4225
www.salesians.org

Salesian Provincial Office
1100 Franklin Street
San Francisco, CA 94109-6814
(415) 441-7144
www.donboscowest.org