Past and Present Meet: Salesian Educators at the Provincial House

The Salesian Elementary Education Seminar took place at the Provincial House in San Antonio, Texas between June 29 and July 3, 2014. As one participant so aptly described it, “being here in San Antonio, in the presence of the elderly sisters, made this conference so special”. Truly the conference gained so much from the prayerful and interested presence of Salesian women religious who have spent their lives living what we were all seeking to find words to describe. The older Sisters created a climate, a kind of “wisdom presence”, as they went about their daily routine somehow allowing us to savor and delight in the riches of the past as we focused on our present calling to be, today, with and for the young in the spirit of Don Bosco himself.

Twenty four Salesian lay educators from four Salesian schools took part in this seminar. Four days of sharing, listening, reflecting and challenging oneself and one another to live the spirit that we have in common, the spirit to which we give the name “Salesian”. Conscious that we are at the threshold of the opening of the bi-centenary celebrations of the birth of Don Bosco the 19th century Italian saint, whom the Church affectionately refers to as “the father and teacher of youth”, the Seminar attempted to enable all those taking part to be both inspired and affirmed.

The source of the inspiration took the form of two days spent looking at how each of us is made in the image and likeness of a loving God. Being created in such an image and likeness comes with a call and a challenge: namely to shape and live our lives (the call) that we become the loving God (the challenge) who has taken up residence within our humanity, as we go about the daily work of bringing our children and young people through Jesus, to the Father.

From this fundamental truth each of the participants were then led through a reflection of the way the writer of the Lucan gospel presents Jesus as the image of God. In the sharing and discussion, participants were asked a key question: how does your...
Salesian school image God today? It came as no surprise to discover that the ways in which this imaging is done in the various places have a great deal of similarity about them. We saw clearly that the adjective ‘Salesian’ brings us together in specific ways of living the gospel of Jesus on a day to day basis. To underline this fact we looked briefly at some spiritualities in the Church and came away with the realization that under the influence of St. Francis de Sales it is clear as Don Bosco said that, “Salesian education is both a matter and a spirituality of the heart”.

The following session homed in on the spirit of Don Bosco. Participants were largely grateful for this section. One educator, new to all things Salesian wrote, “I now know the beliefs and views that St. John Bosco had and I have a clear view of how I can do my best to be a good Salesian role model to others”.

The second half of SEES 2014 attempted to affirm these Salesian educators in how they live the spirituality of Don Bosco on a day to day basis with and for their young people. Almost all the participants expressed real gratitude for the reflections on accompanying the young, on living the preventive system (Reason, Religion and Loving Kindness) as an experience of God’s love and of creating communities with the young that are ‘family-schools’ where all belong, learn, celebrate life and live Jesus in all they do (Oratory model). “Being a Salesian educator” one participant remarked, “is more than just

that, for you cannot think of yourself just as an educator, you must be a mentor, a friend, a helper, one who teaches through God”. All were struck as we looked at Don Bosco’s own words on punishment in a Salesian setting. The very idea that all interventions made on behalf of the young person must have the possibility of transformation imbedded in them, what Don Bosco himself refers to as being “character healing”.

Finally as we looked to the devotion Don Bosco manifested especially to Mary under the two titles of “Immaculate” and “Help of Christians”, all were challenged yet again to have the interior disposition exemplified by Mary Immaculate and the exterior zeal to do more than simply bring God to the young, but rather to become God’s love for all young people. In Mary, so many of the unifying aspects of Don Bosco’s spirituality are exemplified. She as the first disciple of Jesus, has her own Salesian way of showing us how to become Jesus for the young today.

The coming bi-centenary year of the celebration of the birth of Don Bosco (August 16, 1815) is to all of us an invitation. The SEES 2014 participants left the Provincial House enthused and energized to return to their places of Salesian ministry and live their vocation as Salesian educators more intentionally and passionately. The community had sustained our brief stay among them through their prayer and serene gospel witness. The Sisters of the Provincial House are a treasury of past experiences and rich Salesian wisdom. Our present educators continue the work they have so lovingly begun. How wonderful to have discovered in this place where past and present met, a new impetus to be as we are called to be: “Like Don Bosco, with and for the young”.

Written by Sr. Mary Greenan, F.M.A.
On May 3, 2014, the Provincial House was magically transformed into a charming retreat. Doors were open to welcome mothers, daughters, grandmothers and sisters.

Many long-time friends of the Sisters showed up, many reunited after years of...life happening. Old school mates seeing one another again, the place was enchanted! The morning started with lots of hustle and bustle with tables and chairs being set out on the lawn and breezeway. Table cloths, overlays, chair covers and bows, tea cups, tea pots, itty bitty silverware, decorative napkins and lots and lots of canopies and smiles. Pink and blue, the colors that Mary Help of Christians wears, adorned the entire venue. The food started to arrive, trays were being set, desserts being prepped, and ladies began arriving by the dozens.

This year’s Tea was named in honor of Our Blessed Mother and Ladies and Mothers alike in celebration of Mother’s Day. Tickets were announced via Save the Date cards sent to longtime donors, Salesian Family and Friends, ADMA members, and through our Western Province Facebook page. This alone generated ticket sales on the very first day of the announcement! By the end of the second week of sales, we were close to being sold out. We ended up with a total of 23 tables. The response was truly phenomenal! Like all new things we try, we learn how to improve it and we look forward to this being an annual fundraiser. This was a trial event used to generate funds for the Retired Sisters’ Technology Needs Fund. With profits, the Sisters were presented with a 55” Sony Smart LED TV, a new TV stand, along with a Wii game console and two controllers with a few dance and exercise games. They were elated to receive such updated technology that will be used to enhance their exercise program.

‘The Tea’ was the talk of the month, and actually still comes up in current conversations. The Sisters and all who attended thoroughly enjoyed the event, loved seeing familiar faces, the fancy lace dresses and hats, and all the delicate tea sandwiches and exquisite desserts that were offered. We extend a huge thank you to our committee, family members, and countless supporters for their help in putting this event together and for making it a huge success! We look forward to begin planning next year’s event very soon. **Written by: Teri Grimaldo,**

**Development Assistant– Provincial House**
Vacation Bible School “Kingdom Rock” in Colorado Springs was a big success. Sr. Mary Link, F.M.A., introduced the theme of the day and helped the children explore some experiments leading to the theme. Sr. Margaret Natal did the Bible presentations and prayer moments with the kids. Sr. Phuong Nguyen played games with the children that helped them understand the theme for each day.

They explored “Kingdom Rock” in 5 different locations this summer. One week took place in Holy Martyrs in Colorado Springs, another at St. Michael’s in Calhan, one at Our Lady of Visitation in Kiowa, one at Sacred Heart in Cheyenne Wells and finally at Our Lady of the Woods in Woodland Park. Kingdom Rock helped us realize that we are all God’s Kings, Queens, Princes, and Princesses in His Kingdom.

Written by Sr. Mary Link, F.M.A.

Camp Auxilium - Corralitos, CA
As our scholastic year came to an end at Mary Help of Christians School our community strengthened our school identity as dedicated entirely to Mary and to spreading devotion and love of Her among many families and young people. Through different events and at each gathering the students were especially aware of the maternal presence of Mary.

The Sisters were able to participate in two young adult events. MHCS hosted the Diocesan Vocations Night and welcomed young men and women who are discerning the call to religious life. Various religious orders participated to answer questions and join in the night of fellowship, discussion and prayer. The Sisters also joined the TAMIU college ACTS retreat group during their weekend and concluding Mass. It was a joyous event during which the enthusiasm and zeal for Christ among the young people was felt.

On campus, the students not only readied for finals, but found time for moments of prayer and received the rewards of their year long labors. Families joined the students to pray the Rosary together and unite our prayers for peace and the family. As they prayed for certain virtues to be bestowed on the families, they linked them to form a Rosary at the feet of Mary.

The Kindergarten students were promoted to the first grade as parents, grandparents and siblings cheered them on. They felt honored to receive their certificate of promotion from their Principal, Sr. Cecilia Henry.

To finish our year, the students were recognized both for their academic and athletic achievements. Many students left proudly wearing their medals and honors. The joy of each student radiated throughout our campus and everyone gave thanks to Mary for gracing us with so many blessings during the past year.

Written By: Sr. Alaina Zachmann, F.M.A.
Jubilees are special occasions which commemorate events of joy and unity in the journey of Salesian Family life.

Sisters, friends, past pupils and hundreds of well wishes gathered at Our Lady of the Lake University Chapel in San Antonio, Texas, to celebrate the anniversary of nine Salesian Sisters. At the entrance procession the Jubilarians proceeded down the center aisle with hearts filled with joy and gratitude.

The commemoration and renewal of vows in this ornate and beautiful chapel served as a reminder of the unique gift of a Salesian vocation, given to the service of God and to the young in the spirit of St. John Bosco and St. Mary Mazzarello.

The Jubilarians renewed their vows at the altar and before the entire congregation. Everyone present applauded the Jubilarians in joyful celebration for their many years of service to God and young people. Their combined years of service totaled nearly 500 years given to the Lord in dedication to Him who gave His life for our salvation.

Fr. Michael Gergen, SDB, was the main celebrant together with six other priests. During his homily, Fr. Gergen asked the Jubilarians to name a Sister that most influenced their lives. Many mentioned our dear Novice Directress, Sr. Adelina Gastaldo, F.M.A. She was born in Mornese. The spirit of St. Mary Mazzarello lived on in her. Sr. Phyllis Neves from New Jersey joined the Jubilarians with her family for this memorable day.
Silee Celebration, July 26, 2014

Carmen Santiago, who is very near and dear to the Sisters, photographed many events of this wonderful day. On behalf of our entire community, we thank her for her time, efforts, and beautiful memories she so graciously captures for all to enjoy.

A bus driven by Sr. Cynthia Salas, F.M.A., transported Jubilarians and Sisters to the Laura Vicuña Center at St. John Bosco School. A table was reserved for each Jubilarian, their family and friends. A delicious lunch was provided for everyone.

Photos of decorated cakes were taken with the Jubilarians standing guard. A group of youth from Austin harmonized a special song in three voices which highlighted this memorable occasion. The day closed as each Jubilarian placed her beautiful corsage near the tabernacle. Jesus alone, her one and only love...

Written by Sr. Rita Bailey, F.M.A.
August 4, 2014
Congratulations to our four Sisters who renewed their vows, Sr. Linda Gonzales, Sr. Jaden Tran, Sr. Alaina Zachmann, and Sr. Sydney Moss.

Please consider supporting this very important ministry, which prepares young women learn how to dedicate their lives to God and become Brides of Christ. In a real world, there are many expenses involved with this ministry including formation program costs, recruitments costs, general expenses, insurance, education, debt relief and facility management. Your support will help foster a vocation to the Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco. Donations for our Vocations /Formation Fund can be made by sending payment to our Development Office at 6019 Buena Vista St., San Antonio, TX, 78237, or by calling (210) 431-4999.

August 5, 2015
Congratulations to our newly professed, Sr. Lindsay Durham and Sr. Theresa Khong.
Sr. Teresita Delgado, FMA  
September 12, 1931- June 22, 2014

"Celebrating a Joyful Witness of Love"

Sr. Teresita Delgado, FMA, age 82, a native San Antonian, died peacefully June 22, 2014 at the Regent Care Center in San Antonio, TX. Sr. Teresita served the Lord with great joy and enthusiasm in various ways: Animator of the Community, School Principal, and classroom teacher. Her love was to be a catechist and to teach young children preparing for First Holy Communion. In her 59 years of religious life, she served in the following schools: San Fernando, St. John Bosco and St. James in San Antonio, TX; Mater Dolorosa in Philadelphia, PA; Mary Help of Christians in Laredo, TX; St. Mary’s in Los Angeles, CA; and St. John Vianney in Avondale, AZ. When she could no longer teach in the classroom, she focused her attention on helping adults learn the basic English skills needed to succeed in the USA.

She also helped adults to not only discover their Catholic faith, but also to understand and deepen their commitment as good Catholic Christians and honest citizens. She maintained contact with her many past students and friends. She had a zest for life and a winning smile that was characteristically hers. Even when illness weighed heavily upon her, she never refused a visit or a phone call from one of her countless friends or former students who always went away hopeful. She enthusiastically took part in community prayer and get-togethers. Her great devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary, Help of Christians was contagious. Her deep faith and joyful, loving attitude will long be remembered by the many people whose lives she touched.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Juan Delgado and Dolores Castillo Delgado; her brothers Carlos Steinman, Jesus Delgado, Enrique Delgado, Arturo Delgado, Ramiro Delgado, and Luis Delgado. She is survived by a sister, Ernestina Navarro and husband, Frank; a brother, Armando Delgado; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and her religious community, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters) and many other friends.

You will be missed, but will remain in our hearts forever...
Our 11th annual Children’s Education Golf Tournament, which took place on September 2, 2014, was our most successful ever! I am more than proud of my golf committee, volunteers, donors, and community of Sisters, for making this the best year ever.

The generosity of our donors and committee was tremendous! Over $21,000 was raised for our Friends of Don Bosco Education Fund. All funds will go towards awarding scholarships and/or tuition assistance to each of our 8 Salesian Sisters’ schools in our Western Province.

Special thanks to the Golf Committee: Esmeralda Castillo- Golf Chairperson/Development Director Teresa Grimaldo- Silent Auction Coordinator/Development Assistant Larry Kennedy, Jesse Leyva & Debbie Gomez, Lidia Morales, Pedro Vallejo, Joe Martinez, Ramiro & Marissa Fernandez, Victor Jimenez, Sr. Mary Mullaly, F.M.A., and Jesse Gonzalez

I would also like to recognize some very special donors and individuals who contributed in a unique way, and helped make this a successful year. (shown in alphabetical order)

Committee members: L-R Joe Martinez, Debbie Gomez, and Marissa Fernandez with The SPURS Coyote)

Thank you Sr. Celine Lomeli for all your efforts in raising funds for this event!

Congratulations to Mr. Fred Meyer for being the grand prize winner of our Helicopter Golf Ball Drop! He went away with (2) $500 VISA gift cards and a few other surprises that evening.
Announcements

Nov. 1, 2014  **Rummage Sale**– Come support your Western Province Development Office! Hours will be from 8 a.m.—3 p.m. Come find some bargains and treat yourself to a sausage wrap, which we will be grilling on site, and an ice cold beverage. If you are interested in donating new, or used items for the sale that are clean and in good condition, call us at (210) 431-4999 or email sswdevelopment@sbcglobal.net.

Nov. 27, 2014  **2015 Salesian Sisters’ Calendar**– Order your official Salesian Sisters’ Calendar, which will be appropriately themed to honor and celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Don Bosco! Only $5 each (shipping extra, if applicable). Pictures of all our Western Province Communities and a directory of each community will be included. Don’t miss out and place your order now, call the Development Office at (210) 431-4999 or email sswdevelopment@sbcglobal.net.

Dec. 13–15, 2014  **Salesian Sisters Christmas Boutique**– Come support our Retired Sisters by shopping at their Annual Christmas Boutique. Many unique gifts to be found, including handmade items and accessories, homemade pies and cookies, home décor, Christmas trees and poinsettias, raffle items, and so much more. Hours: Sat. 9 a.m. -5 p.m., Sun. 1 p.m. -5 p.m., Mon. 10 a.m. -5 p.m. Call Sr. Guadalupe Medina if you would like to make a donation (210) 432-1919.

May 2, 2015  **2nd Annual Ladies’ Tea Party**– We will once again be honoring the month of Mary and celebrating Mothers, Daughters, Grandmothers and all of the special women in our lives with our Annual Ladies’ Tea Party. The event will be held on the beautiful grounds of the Provincial House on May 2, 2015, from 11 a.m. -1:30 p.m. More details coming soon from the Development Office (210) 431-4999.

October 12, 2015  **12th Annual Children’s Education Golf Tournament**– Join us in raising funds for our Friends of Don Bosco Education Fund! All proceeds go towards scholarships and tuition assistance to 1st—8th grade students attending our 8 Salesian Schools throughout our Western Province. Next year’s event will be at the Dominion Country Club with a 1 p.m. shotgun start. Cost will be $150 per player, or $600 per foursome. Jr. Teams (ages 10—16) are $100 per player and $400 per foursome. Call today to reserve your spot! (210) 431-4999 or email sswdevelopment@sbcglobal.net.
Have you moved recently?

We would like to keep in touch with you so that you may continue to receive our Connections newsletter and any other important updates or information about upcoming endeavors the Sisters have planned. Please provide us with your current information below and kindly mail it to our office.

Name

Correct Address

Email

Phone

Thank you to Mr. Dave Rios of the KONO 101.1 FM radio show, for being our Emcee for the 2014 Children’s Education Golf Tournament! He did a “first class” job! Thank you also to The SPURS Coyote for making a special appearance and to North Park Lexus of San Antonio for sponsoring our 1st ever Helicopter Golf Ball Drop!

Follow us on Facebook!

Facebook.com/WesternProvince