At last, the longed-for day of the visit of our beloved Archbishop Gustavo arrived! Our two local communities, and two Sisters of Mary Help of Christians in Laredo, all gathered with our Provincial community and some lay collaborators, to have breakfast and celebrate the Eucharist with Archbishop Gustavo.

In his homily, our Archbishop expressed his appreciation for the religious vocation in general and for our Salesian religious life in particular, inciting us to fidelity to the charism of Don Bosco. We were encouraged to follow the Lord’s example of humility and gratitude for all the benefits our Heavenly Father has bestowed upon us. He surprised us with the amazing story of the miracle wrought by St. John Bosco on the future founder of Archbishop’s religious family, then aspiring to the priesthood. We were happy to discover this affinity between our Salesian Family and our friendly Archbishop Gustavo.

After the Eucharistic Liturgy, we greeted him with the “Mañanitas” and treated him to a true Mexican breakfast of “tamales, menudo, beans, barbacoa, and pan dulce”, all of which delighted our Archbishop! Sr. Patricia King, our Provincial, addressed our Special Guest with words of thanks, invitation for more visits, a basket of homemade cookies, and a copy of our Centennial Anniversary book.

The community was grateful to God for this unique visit of our Shepherd and He also enjoyed his stay with us! Deo gratias et Maria!!

-witten by Sr. Mary Tamayo
Dear Friends,

Welcome to the New Year! May it be one of opportunities accepted, challenges met, and blessings received.

As I write this letter I am thinking about those of you who are joining us for the very first time and those who have accompanied us on our journey until now, some for many years.

*Connections* are our special way of meeting with you each quarter, sharing who we are and how we reach out to the young people. You will find in the pages of *Connections* articles that showcase how the Salesian Family—Sisters, collaborators, and friends like yourselves, give that spark of enthusiasm to the mission of the Salesian Sisters.

Through *Connections* you are invited to meet the Sisters of Mary Immaculate Province, from the young people in formation to our elder Sisters. You are invited to follow the events that take place throughout the Province, in schools, youth centers, summer camps, and outreach programs. You are invited to share in and celebrate the accomplishments achieved through the combined efforts of all those who care for the young, yourself included!

The mission of the Salesian Sisters is to provide Christian education and formation for young people, to joyfully proclaim the Good News to all, and to help to promote a more just and human society. Thank you for being an integral part of realizing this mission.

God bless you and your loved ones. Know that the Salesian Sisters remember you in prayer every day.

*Sr. Patricia King, FMA*

Happy Holidays from our Salesian Family to yours!

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**New 2012 Calendars are HERE! Get yours while they last!**

The new Salesian Sisters Western Province calendars have arrived, and just in time for the holidays! The calendars feature all 14 communities in the Western Province! What better way to start off the new year than with a brand new Salesian calendar!

The 12-month calendars contain Salesian holidays and major Catholic observances. Place your order soon because these calendars are going fast! They make great stocking stuffers for loved ones.

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$10.00 donation

Please make checks payable to:

Attn: Calendar Fund

The Salesian Sisters

6019 Buena Vista Street

San Antonio, Texas  78237

*Please specify number of calendars requesting All proceeds benefit our Salesian Sisters*
The Salesian Sisters’ annual Christmas Boutique will kick off on December 10th at the Provincial House in San Antonio, Texas. The three day event is open to family and friends of the Sisters, as well as the community. Tables stocked with Christmas goodies line the walls of the first floor of the Convent. Featured items include: lighted Nativity charger, three Afghans made by the Salesian Sisters, snowman climbing ladder, Cannon ‘all in one’ printer/copier/scanner, wreaths, assorted pies and cookies made by the Sisters, and MUCH more! Raffle tickets are on sale for $1.00, and offer buyers the chance to win several festive prizes. Even Santa Claus will be making an appearance this year! Children can pose for holiday pictures with Santa- photos make great presents for loved ones! For more information please contact the Sisters:

(210) 432-1919 or visit our webpage: [www.salesiansisterswest.org](http://www.salesiansisterswest.org).

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**Did you know?**

- This is the 11th year the Sisters have been holding the Christmas Boutique.
- The Sisters begin working on items and preparing for the boutique a YEAR in advance.
- The Boutique is the #1 fundraiser for the Retired Sisters.
- Fruitcakes, assorted cookies, pies, pumpkin bread and other baked goods are all handmade by the Sisters.
- The most popular flavor of pie sold is pecan pie.
- The Boutique brings people from all over Texas.

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**Christmas Boutique Schedule:**

- **Saturday, Dec. 10** 10 am-5 pm
- **Sunday, Dec. 11** 1 pm-5 pm
- **Monday, Dec. 12** 10 am-5 pm

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Tidbits about the Boutique

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2011 Golf Tournament a Success!
Student Scholarships available thanks to The Sonny Melendrez Charity
Golf Classic, presented by the Salesian Sisters

**Visionary Sponsor**
John G. and Marie Stella Kenedy Memorial Foundation

**Team Ambassadors**
AETNA
Carneiro, Chumney & Co., L.C.
Diocese of Colorado Springs
Dr. Robert G. Lewis
Eagle Print San Antonio
Golf Logistics- Dean Allen
Larry & Frances Kennedy
Parents & Students of Mary Help of Christians School
Plains Capital Bank

**St. John Bosco School**
Sts. Peter & Paul School
The Angelus Funeral Home
Walthall, Sachse & Pipes, Inc.

**Beverage Station Partners**
Carol Ann Eula
School Shoes Unlimited

**Event Sponsors**
Anita Branch
Falcon International Bank
Dr. Boyce Elliott III
Mr. & Mrs. Philip J. Brittain
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony P. Morabito

Carrie Roudebush
Dental Trend
Mr. & Mrs. René H. Lomeli
Ms. Rhonda Hammons
Ms. Elaine Barbieri
Fred & Carol Meyer
Mrs. Melida E. Jimenez
Martin & Irma Bijarro
Eagle Print
JSP Entertainment

**First Place Team**
A round of applause goes to Sonny Melendrez’s team for playing an A+ game!

**Second Place Team**
Congratulations guys! Thank you for playing an awesome game!

**Third Place Team**
The Angelus Funeral Home team made it in the top 3 – good job!

A HUGE Thank You to our wonderful players and sponsors!

Longest Drive Women’s- Holly Zapata
Longest Drive Men’s- Jeff Higgins
Closest to the Pin- Richard Clark
"We support the Salesian Sisters because they make a difference in the lives of young people."

-Michael Sachse; Walthall, Sachse, & Pipes Inc.
Because of our Baptism, we are all missionaries no matter where we are or what we do. Our mission is to bring the compassionate and life-giving love of Jesus into the lives of those we encounter each and every day—at home, at school, at work and in our ministries! This was the heart of the USCMA (United States Catholic Mission Association) Annual Conference held this year in Miami, Florida, from October 28-30, 2011 with the overall theme: “Push Out into the Deep”—Communion and Missionary Discipleship. Though the weather was damp and rainy, the spirit was upbeat and enthusiastic with over 200 participants from a variety of religious communities and organizations from the US and abroad. The presentations, group work and dialogue sessions were well worth attending but for me, the most life-giving and enriching part of the entire conference was the opportunity to meet with missionaries who had served for many years all over the world. Each person I met, and there were many, was affable and pleasantly humble at the same time. It was evident that the love of Jesus was not only alive in them but was flowing through them into the lives of everyone they met. They had “pushed out into the deep” for an abundant catch for Christ. Not forgotten during the conference were those who journey with us who are our partners in mission through prayer, personal sacrifice and financial assistance. All of us are “in mission!”

Each day began with a prayer ritual followed by the key-note address. On the first day, Fr. Steve Bevans, SVD, a professor at the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago and a renowned international Missionologist, gave his presentation, “Blessings & Challenges of Communion and Missionary Discipleship.” He stressed that every disciple is a missionary and every missionary is a disciple. He also explained that the challenges of missionary discipleship are also its blessings and the blessings of missionary discipleship are challenges to be faced. He further mentioned that God is radical relationship and communion in mission, a presence that “disturbs” but that leads to joy. By opening ourselves to God’s “disturbing” presence we, in turn become “disturbing” presences to others but presences that are life-giving.

On the second day we went to Notre Dame d’Haiti Mission, the largest Haitian parish in Miami, where we attended Mass celebrated by Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami. After Mass we enjoyed a variety of ethnic dishes while young people demonstrated their Haitian, Cuban or Filipino culture in dance. Definitely much more could be said about the other key-notes as well as about the other small community meetings and dialogue sessions but I will end this brief report by stating that we are blessed to belong to such a dynamic missionary organization that involves us in analyzing world developments and seeing their implication on the mission of Jesus in today’s world. This dynamic missionary organization fosters networking, dialogue and resource sharing among many missionary congregations and organizations in the U.S. During the business meeting on the final day of the conference the membership agreed on several resolutions that reflected our Catholic-Christian views on current national and world-wide problems.

The Conference was instructive, reflective, prayerful, enjoyable and enriching. It was relational, timely and all-encompassingly MISSIONARY! ~Sr. Rachel Crotti, FMA
The Salesian Family (priests, sisters, brothers, young men and women in initial formation, cooperators and young adults) was present in a big way at the NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference) in Indiana. This year over 23,000 Catholic teens and young people took part in the unforgettable experience of prayer, reception of the Sacraments, community-building and faith-sharing. It was also recorded that over 23,000 more people watched the live stream broadcast of events on the internet! The weekend was grace-filled and empowering—a powerful blessing!

We are now challenged to share the gift of being “called to Glory”!

Some Thoughts on the NCYC Experience

“This type of conference allows for people of all ages and walks of life to journey together and recommit to the Faith that was planted within them as a tiny seed at Baptism.”
—Marianne Giovenga, Postulant

“A fantastic experience for the young Church to deepen its relationship with Christ through music, guest speakers, the presence of over 30 bishops, priests and religious and the reception of the Sacraments.” —Megan Zeugner, Postulant

“Young people were ‘Called to Glory!’ and sent out to be dynamic witnesses of the Gospel.”
—Lindsay Durham, Postulant

“I especially liked this year’s theme. We are surrounded with so many negative realities that seem to narrow our vision and possibilities. “Called to Glory” is hope-filled and life-giving! It challenges us all to dream big and to embrace all that God has planned for us!” —Stephanie Danham, Postulant

“Witnessing over 23,000 young people gather together to profess and to strengthen their Faith was awesome and inspiring!” —Theresa Khong, Postulant
Have you ever watched the construction of a building? I am having such an experience watching the building of the extension of our Provincial House. It is so awesome! God is so good!

The purpose of this expansion is to provide for the needs of the Sisters now and in the future. This is first phase of the expansion. How loving and kind our Institute and, in particular, our Province is in providing for this need with the help of God.

When I think of the kindness of the superiors of the Province providing for our future, I realize that each and every one of us is very important to them. Although our works could stand some help too, the Sisters are valued first for who they are and for what has been done in our apostolates. Without these pillars of the Province, where would we be today?

Yes, God is so good and a very Providential Father! Like Don Bosco, we trust in the loving God who provides for us through the intercession of our loving Mother, Mary. Don Bosco began the building of the church of Mary Help of Christians with six cents in his pocket. He had such great faith and confidence in Mary that the magnificent Basilica of Mary Help of Christians was built with very little money when he started.

We too have that trust and confidence that God will provide us with the funds necessary to bring this project to completion. It will be due to the prayers and many sacrifices of all our Sisters working throughout the regions of Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Louisiana, and Texas, as well as all of our friends and relatives who have also joined us in prayer and sacrifice, and financial aid. All are God’s instruments in whatever way they can help.

Thanks to your gracious support the building expansion is under way... But we still need your help in order to complete the project!

We remember our dear friend, Mr. Jack L. Duffin, architect of our existing Provincial House and our current building expansion project.

We pray for his eternal repose and offer our condolences to Carolyn, his wife, and to the rest of the Duffin family.
This Season, Give a gift that lasts through the years!

Naming Opportunities available for the new expansion

There are many naming opportunities available through the building expansion. If you would like to give a tribute gift in memory or in honor of a loved one, deceased or living, please consider a gift to help us complete our project. What a special and unique way to remember that special someone for years to come but to name a Sister’s bedroom, a kneeler in our adoration chapel, or a beautiful stained glass window, in their memory or honor? There is an item available for naming that will accommodate anyone’s budget, so please don’t hesitate to contact the Development Office to discuss your gift soon. We will be happy to provide you a complete list of naming opportunities upon request. So please contact us to discuss these opportunities with you before they disappear.

This holiday season, give the gift that will continue giving and remember your family, friends and loved ones in this very admirable way. You might also consider naming an item after your favorite Salesian Sister, living or deceased. This would make a wonderfully thoughtful gift for a Sister this Christmas or New Year.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year,

[Signature]

Director of Development

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Room Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room Type</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedroom (24)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchenette (3)</td>
<td>$36,506 each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Room</td>
<td>$45,858</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sewing Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parlor</td>
<td>$20,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoration Chapel</td>
<td>$46,474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“These prices are estimated budgetary figures to ‘finish out’ each room, based on the preliminary drawings.”

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Unique gift giving opportunity! Consider sending a gift this holiday season in memory or in honor of a special loved one.

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Photo above: Sr. Barbara places relics, such as the one pictured above, in the wet concrete walls of the future Adoration Chapel. Photo right: In October, Father Gerry Weber blessed the site of the building expansion with Holy Water. Photos far right: construction on the expansion progresses.
On October 7th, 2011 six young women—two from the western and four from the eastern provinces—were joyfully received into the Postulancy (the first official commitment before the Novitiate) and they, in return, graciously received their medals of Don Bosco and Mary Help of Christians.

This day marked the next step in their journey towards religious life and their open willingness to seek God in every aspect of their lives by becoming a Daughter of Mary Help of Christians. In doing so, they have committed to follow the Salesian charism in the footsteps of St. John Bosco and St. Mary Domenica Mazzarello on a path so clearly marked and guided by the gentle hand of Our Lady, Immaculate Help of Christians.

Ana Ramos (east), Ashley Kleist (east), Lindsay Durham (west), Megan Zeugner (east), Marianne Giovingo (east), and Theresa Khong (west) joined by Stephanie Donham, already a Postulant of the east, entrusted this year of their lives to Mary, to their Provincials (Sr. Karen Dunn-east and Sr. Patricia King-west), and to the Salesian Family with big hearts and open arms. The ceremony was marked by the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary and took place during evening prayer at St. Dominic Savio Parish Church in Bellflower, CA. Beautiful hymns were sung to Our Lady as various members of the Salesian Family gathered to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

Present among parents, family, friends, benefactors, communities (both FMA and SDB), and many others were both the eastern and western provinces past provincials—Sr. Sandra Neaves, now formator of the Postulants, and Sr. Phyllis Neves, now formator of the Aspirants—and Fr. Tim Plock the SDB provincial of the west. The evening ended with an exquisite meal catered by the Arban family, members of St. Dominic Savio, and a good-humored game of the Salesian Formation Game of Life designed by none other than the Postulants themselves. Everyone immensely enjoyed the evening of celebration and prayer as the new Salesian Postulants ventured more deeply into seeking Christ and following His divine will for their lives.

“It was a blessing to see families, friends, and the Salesian Family coming together as one.”
-Theresa Khong

Ceremony Marks Entrance into Postulancy
By Megan Zeugner

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The Salesian Sisters ask you to please join them for the 25th Anniversary Celebration Gala & Dinner, to be held in the stunning Omni Colonnade ballroom, on February 11, 2012 in San Antonio, TX.

Schedule of events for 02-11-2012:
4 p.m.- Mass of Thanksgiving at Our Lady of the Lake University
5:30 p.m.- Gala & Dinner at the Omni Colonnade

Individual Tickets: $125
Table for 10 guests: $1250
Various Sponsorships & Advertising opportunities available

Please contact the Development Office for more information:
6019 Buena Vista Street
San Antonio, Texas  78237
(210) 431-4999 or sswdevelopment@sbcglobal.net
Has your address changed?

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: ____________________________
________________________________________

Phone #: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

We welcome our new Illinois ministry

ST. JOHN’S CATHOLIC Newman Center
At the University of Illinois
The Newman Center
Champaign, IL

We’re now on Facebook!
Please follow us for updated info. on events & photos!