Connections
The Newsletter for Family and Friends of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians
Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco

Serve with Them...
one person at a time
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Dear Family and Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce our Mother General to you, Mother Yvonne Reungoat. She has been our Mother General now for nine years. In April she was elected to be the President of USMI (Union of Major Superiors of Italy). As our Mother General, she is responsible for eighty-one provinces in ninety-five nations. Now, she will not only continue visiting all of us Salesian Sisters around the world, strengthening our bonds of communion and deepening our commitment of fidelity and fostering the development of our works, but she will also lead this union of Religious Institutes in the Church. The USMI Organization was ecstatic when she was elected president because of the wealth of knowledge and experience she will bring to the Italian forum where Superiors General can share and exchange information and mentor one another in their role as leaders in their institutes in today’s world.

Mother Yvonne, born and raised in France, became a missionary at a young age, leading the work of Evangelization in the Church’s initiative called “Project Africa”. As vocations and works were flourishing in Africa, she was elected to be our Mother General in 2009. Our Institute has grown, our works have developed and the charism continues to spread its rich heritage to thousands of youth around the world. We know that the USMI Organization will enjoy the same dialogue, communication and collaboration that our Institute has richly benefitted from these past nine years. Let us offer our prayer and support as Mother Yvonne continues to lead our Salesian Institute and to also build the network of solidarity among the Women Religious of Italy!

Complete confidence and trust in Mary is among Mother Yvonne’s strongest messages today. As she travels the world, Mother Yvonne encourages everyone to spread devotion to the novena of Mary Help of Christians that St. John Bosco propagated far and wide. He would often encourage his Salesians, the Sisters and the boys to pray this novena with miraculous results. This is the novena that saved hundreds from cholera, that made the blind see, the lame walk and the dumb to speak. You will find a copy of this novena on page 9 of this newsletter.

May our Blessed Mother continue to guide your way, defend you from evil, keep you from all harm and open your minds and hearts to know the way God has prepared for your happiness!

Through Jesus and Mary,

Sr. Rosann Ruiz,OSG
With the help of Mary

Maria Romero Meneses was born in Granada of Nicaragua, “land of forty volcanoes,” on January 13, 1902. She herself seemed to be influenced by the intense volcanic energy surrounding her.

Her family was wealthy yet extremely sensitive to the needs of the poor. So, it was from an early age that she embraced the poor. Once the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters) arrived in her country she studied with them and discovered her talent for music and painting. At the age of 12, she became extremely sick and was paralyzed for six months with rheumatic fever. She was cured through the intercession and apparition of Our Lady Help of Christians, and she discovered her vocation to be a Salesian Sister. Under the guidance of the Salesian Sisters, she was captivated by the life and mission of Don Bosco. She shared his same ideals pulsating within her soul. After much prayer, she entered the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and made her final profession in 1929. Two years later, she was transferred to San Jose, Costa Rica.

There was no turning back. With the help of Mary, “her Queen,” she gave herself completely to the apostolic action of selflessly working for the poor, establishing social works. She visited the villages around the capital and befriended many with her lively ecclesial understanding and kindness. She visited homes and gathered the young. She reached out to the abandoned, the disheartened, and suffering families. No one was turned away. She expressed much gratitude for the smallest act of charity and thoughtfulness. She conquered many hearts among the poor and rich. With Mary, she was able to empower many professionals to commit themselves to actively collaborate in many initiatives to provide for the poor.

With boldness, she planned more and more projects for her beloved people. Sr. Maria possessed a great faith and trust in Divine Providence. Many of her dreams became a reality.

Sr. Maria Romero often prayed...

Pon tu mano Madre mia, ponla antes que la mia.

Place your hand, O Mother, place it before mine.

In spite of all the work, she made time to be with her Love, Jesus. Her strength came from Jesus and Mary, her boldness and ideas she believed were the Holy Spirit leading her. United with her beloved King and Queen and energized by them she was able to see how through them this beautiful land of Costa Rica was renewed in peace and faith. It was “lost” and found.

It was July 7, 1977, when Sr. Maria Romero Meneses joined Jesus and Mary in eternal rest. To this day the people of Costa Rica remained convinced of her holiness and continue to maintain and witness the growth of the works she founded.
Where, when and how can spirituality, identity, transformation, and fulfillment come together ... in serving the poor. It has been our happy experience, for us Salesian Sisters, to walk closely with young adults in the ministry of service through VIDES International. The VIDES formation curriculum has evolved with elements that help young adults discover and learn what is God’s plan for their happiness. Jesus is clear with his disciples that his coming among us is, in the first instance for “those who are lost and in need” (Luke 19:10). We are followers of Jesus, and these young people know this almost intuitively as they step forward to serve through VIDES. Study and reflection upon the life of Mary, the first disciple, and of St. Mary Mazzarello and St. John Bosco are key components of this curriculum. Gradually, they understand and experience how to listen, develop the courage that faith generates, and learn the depths of discernment and dedication to service that can help them fulfill God’s plans for their happiness to an unfathomable degree.

This kind of experience is so important that the Bishops of the world are planning to gather for a Synod on this very theme in October of this year. Nothing can be more important and more challenging today than guiding young adults in the FAITH and in VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT.

VIDES is a project about “being” over “doing”. Instead of “doing” spiritual direction, this program is about “being” faith-companions together with young adults on life’s journey, open to the Spirit who leads us all. God is as much at work in the life of the one being led as in the one who is guiding. How can we help them recognize and accept the call to the fullness of life and love? This is done by carefully listening to their aspirations, dreams and vision of the world today as seen through their eyes. How does one lead young people to make choices that will transform them and the world around them in the light of faith? Involving them in VIDES International is one way.

Since 1997, 312 beautiful young men and women have journeyed this program together with the Sisters and key, lay collaborators. Sisters all over the world have witnessed their ability to rejoice at the beginning of difficult undertakings, giving of themselves totally in persevering service and leadership with and for the poor. They return home having received far more than they gave. What has helped these young people to rise above the culture’s technocratic standards and the frantic search for short-term profits in a “throw-away” culture which excludes and/or exploits millions? SERVICE. They want nothing more than to learn in an informal manner, about their faith, relationships and their identity. SERVICE is the best way for young adults to discover and experience the beauty of discernment, the tenderness of intimacy and the courage of witness and mission.
Refugees are people just like you and me who studied, had a job and a family, and had to leave everything behind to save themselves. In Azraq, near the border of Syria and Saudi Arabia, I visited a camp with Syrian refugees. The trip was organized by Fatima, who herself is a refugee from Iraq. She raised funds from friends to buy a playground, and new clothes to bring to the children so they could celebrate Eid al-Fitria, which is like Christmas for Muslims. It is important for the kids to wear new clothes on that day.

When we arrived at the camp, kids were playing on the playground bought by Fatima. We were so happy to see them having fun! For now, I am still offering my time and love to touch the lives of the young people – one child at a time, and living out Salesian loving-kindness and joy. I am just happy to be of service!

- Natalie Liviero (Holy Land)

My 2nd and 3rd graders are my biggest joy, and being their religion teacher is truly what gives me the strength to endure anything. I have this motto that no matter what space I enter, I should always leave it better than when I entered it – like fixing a torn poster, picking up trash, leaving my classroom clean for the next person.

I recently went to some of the poorest communities with one of the priests from our parish here in Carcha. The community he went to celebrate Mass in had no electricity, shortage of water, and the people spoke only their native language – no Spanish. I did not say much. I smiled and nodded a lot, but somehow I felt like I was preaching the Word of God louder than if I was speaking. Going to witness Fr. Victor baptize 13 people and welcome a whole family to the faith was the most beautiful thing I have witnessed so far. - Sarahi Perez (Guatemala)

Learn more about VIDES at www.vides.us
Last summer the Salesian Sisters, counselors, and campers had a very blessed camp season at Camp Auxilium in Corralitos, CA! The theme of camp was “High Seas Expedition” and we embarked on many adventures across the high seas, including looking for lost treasure, escaping from pirates, and dressing up as under the sea creatures. In addition to our traditional activities of archery, arts and crafts, sewing and swimming, we had two new activities this summer – cooking and dancing. Many of the campers who only signed up for one week of camp ended up staying for two weeks or longer! The biggest blessing we received this summer was a visit from the Pilgrimage Statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Every camper, counselor, and Sister had her own personal prayer time under the mantle of Mary. Thank you for all of your prayers for a successful camp season and we are already looking forward to this summer!

THE BIGGEST Blessing

By Sr. Sydney Moss, FMA
Run, jump and play, but do not sin!
Following in the words of St. John Bosco, we, Salesian Sisters, provide youth with a fun and safe summer environment where they have the opportunity for human, cultural and religious formation. The individual attention given to each camper helps nurture Christian values in love and friendship, thus forming good Christians and honest citizens. Will you be part of this mission?

**St. John Bosco Summer Day Camp** (June 25 – July 21) is located at St. John Bosco School on the west side of San Antonio, TX. This four-week camp operates Monday through Friday, from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Young adults and high school students volunteer with us to serve 40-60 boys and girls ages 5 to 14. The camp offers daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament, weekly Mass, arts and crafts, spirit time, outdoor/indoor games, swimming and weekly field trips. **For more information:** www.stjohnbosco-satx.org

**Camp Auxilium** (June 24 – July 21) is located at Salesian Sisters School in Corralitos, CA at the foot of the Santa Cruz Mountains. This four-week camp operates 24 hours a day from Sunday to Saturday with an opportunity for day campers to attend Monday to Friday. Young adults and high school students volunteer with us to serve 60-80 girls ages 6-14. At Camp Auxilium, the campers nourish their spiritual life by attending daily Mass and praying the Rosary. The camp offers various activities: archery, weekly campfires, arts and crafts, outdoor games, evening activities, swimming and more. **For more information:** www.salesianschool.org

**VBS Colorado** (June 18 – July 20) is summer camp on the prairie. The Salesian Sisters pack up their vehicle and drive to parishes on the prairie to provide summer fun for the children who otherwise would not have an opportunity to gather and engage in outdoor and indoor activities. The Sisters stay one week in each parish and travel from Colorado Springs to near the Kansas state line spreading the Good News to families and parishioners. Activities are very much like our other day camps. Young adults and high school students volunteer with us to serve girls and boys ages 6-14. **For more information:** www.salesiansisterswest.org

**Give youth the gift of a fun and safe summer environment!**

Dear Sisters, I want to help needy youth attend summer camp. I understand that 100% of my donation will go towards the “Campership Fund”, which offers camp tuition assistance. Please accept my donation of...

- [ ] $50  
- [ ] $75  
- [ ] $100  
- [ ] Other $ ________

Name ____________________________
Street Address ____________________________  APT/BLDG # ______
City ____________________________ State ____________ Zip Code ______

Make check payable to: Salesian Sisters

Use the enclosed remittance envelope for your donation. THANK YOU!

Or donate online: www.salesiansisterswest.org  Support Our Mission > Campership Fund

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During Catholic Schools Week 2018, the middle school students from St. James the Apostle and St. John Bosco located in San Antonio, traveled to Mary Help of Christians School in Laredo, Texas for a day of fun and fellowship to celebrate being Salesian. There was time for singing, games, a keynote speaker and even Adoration. Read about how the day impacted some of the teens.

Carlos, St. James the Apostle 8th Grader I am glad we had the opportunity to go to Mary Help of Christians School in Laredo during Catholic Schools Week. My favorite part of the day was Adoration. Seeing all the kids from different schools praise God was a wonderful feeling. I enjoyed singing many different songs and answering questions about Jesus. I really liked how everything was organized by different groups because it allowed me to meet and get to know people from the different schools. One thing that stuck with me from the whole day is the discussion about true friendship. That got me thinking about whether I want to have a future with the people that are currently in my life right now. The recess break was a great part of the day also. It felt good to play and have fun, but it felt even better when we got to play with kids from St. John Bosco and Mary Help. It was amazing that even the teachers were willing to meet new kids and play with us. Overall, it was a very fun experience. I was a bit saddened that it was my last year attending, but I know that every year will be awesome for the kids that follow.

Romina, Mary Help of Christians 7th Grader The 2018 Salesian Youth Day was definitely a day I will never forget. I made some new friends, I enjoyed the songs we sang, and also all the games we played. It was nice to meet people from other Salesian schools who share the same beliefs we do. We all joined together as one and praised God. It was great to see the friends we made last year, and see how we all changed into the people we are now. As next year will be my last year at Mary Help of Christians School, I am very thankful that we get to have Salesian Youth Day and make friends with the other students from our wonderful Salesian schools.

Stephanie, St. John Bosco 7th Grader On our trip to Laredo for our Salesian experience, I felt very welcome and blessed. When praying I felt that the Holy Spirit was there with me and listening to my prayers. I made new friends from the schools of St. James and Mary Help of Christians, and I experienced a stronger closeness to my friends at SJB. My relationship with God became stronger and bigger.

Give the gift of a SALESIAN EDUCATION support the Friends of Don Bosco Education Fund
St. John Bosco’s Novena to Mary Help of Christians

*Recited every month 15th–23rd*

Our Father…
Hail Mary…
Glory be…

Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.

Hail, Holy Queen…
Mary Help of Christians, pray for us
(Repeat all prayers 3 times)

Novena de San Juan Bosco a María Auxiliadora

Se reza del 15 al 23 de cada mes

Padre nuestro…
Dios te salve, María…
Gloria…

Bendito y alabado sea en cada momento el Santísimo y divínísimo Sacramento.

Dios te salve, Reina…
María Auxiliadora, ruega por nosotros
(Se repiten las oraciones 3 veces)

Tuần 9 Ngày Kính Đức Mẹ Phú Hồ Các Giáo Hữu
Do Cha Bosco Khởi Xướng

Đọc từ ngày 15-23 mọi tháng

Lạy Cha…
Kính Mừng…
Sáng Dânh…

Chúng con kính lạy và ngợi khen phép Bí Tích rát trọng là phép Minh Thạnh, Mẫu Thánh Đức Chúa Giêsuurgical tưởng trên bàn thờ.

Lạy Nữ Vương…
Đức Mẹ Phú Hồ Các Giáo Hữu, Cầu cho chúng con
(Đọc 3 lần tất cả các kinh trên)

St. John Bosco’s
Blessed Mother

By Sr. Juanita Chavez, FMA

St. John Bosco prophetically dreamt of many battles the Church would have to face, but through the intercession of our Lady they would be won.

In 1571, the Battle of Lepanto could have turned Europe to succumb to Islam. All of Europe prayed the Rosary for Mary to help the Christians against the Turkish Empire. The Christians won the battle. In gratitude to Mary, Pope Pius V established the feast of the Holy Rosary on October 7th in 1573.

In the time of Napoleon his men arrested, exiled, and imprisoned Pius VII. The Holy Father vowed to institute a special feast in Honor of Mary if he would be restored to the Roman See. After five years Napoleon released the Pope and on May 24, 1814, Pius VII returned to Rome and kept his promise. He decreed the Feast of Mary Help of Christians be kept on the 24th of May.

Recalling these historical events, St. John Bosco desired to instill in his boys great devotion to Mary and encouraged them to pray to her in all their needs. He urged the praying of this novena to Mary to be recited every month from the 15th to the 23rd and to trust in the power of Mary.

To this day, the Salesian world commemorates Mary Help of Christians on the 24th of each month. We invite you to cut out the attached novena card, keep it in a visible place and join us in praying this monthly novena to Mary Help of Christians.
The XX conference for CIMAC/NAC - MESOAMERICA took place January 8-9, 2018 in Leon XIII, a Salesian school in Bogota, Colombia. Sr. Cecilia Henry, Mrs. Anita Averill, and Ms. Rosario Davila represented Mary Immaculate Province. There were 23 participants representing the education ministry in 14 provinces from 13 countries in Central America, Mexico, Antilles, and North America.

The conference invited the participants to continue nurturing the importance of the Salesian School Network where religious and laity share a charism and a style of administration. Projects, processes, and programs of the CIMAC/NAC-MESOAMERICA region are based on the goals from ESA IV for the next four years.

The prayer and welcome were given by Fr. Jaime Morales, SDB, Provincial of Bogota. He was joined by the delegates of ESA, Fr. Rene Antonio Santos, SDB (representative of the Dicastery for the Salesian Schools of America in the Youth Ministry Department) and Sr. Ivonne Goulart, FMA (representative from the Sector for Youth Ministry - Rome), who coordinated the formative sessions. A presentation summarizing the ESA IV evaluation and the major accomplishments since Cumbaya I until ESA IV in May of 2017 was shared. The richness that resulted from the exchange of experiences and good practices in ESA IV guided the Action Plans for the region in response to the main educative needs of the Americas.

Sr. Arellys Paulino, FMA, and Fr. Hector Ugarte, SDB, delegates for the regions of CIMAC/NAC-MESOAMERICA, led the assembly to work on the goals and challenges in every province and ways of resolving the challenges. The sharing and discussion became the foundation for developing a plan at the regional level that will serve to develop processes in the educational environment of each province.

The 25th CIEC Congress was held three days later from January 10-12 at Colegio Agustiniano, a large Catholic elementary school in the business district of the city. There were over 1,300 participants. The objective of the Congress was to accompany the pedagogical, theological, and pastoral formation of faculty and administrators from Catholic schools. Speakers from around the Americas participated in presenting workshops. Sr. Ana Julia Suriel, FMA, Assistant Dean of Education at the Instituto Superior de Formación Docente Salomé Urena in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic gave an inspiring session.

The President of NCEA, Dr. Thomas Burnford, Ph.D. and the Superintendent of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Dr. Kevin Baxter, Ph. D. also presented. In addition, Mr. Oscar A. Perez Sayago, President of CIEC, greeted us in a very welcoming way. Our presence was a fruitful experience, and our contributions made our Province proud!
SALESIAN SISTERS GALA 2018
DAUGHTERS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

“An Evening of Gratitude”

November 10, 2018
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☐ Table Sponsor ($600)
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  • Table of 10

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MAIL TO: Sr. Patricia King, FMA St. Dominic Savio Convent 9758 Foster Road Bellflower, CA 90706

EVENT LOCATION:
RIO HONDO COUNTRY CLUB
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CONTACT: Jim Box at (714) 329 - 3290
Logo must be camera ready and can be electronically sent to: daboxes@aol.com
Run, jump and play,

but do not sin!

St John Bosco