

Salesian Missions

Trading under the name of
Salesians of Don Bosco

Box 3209 North Riding 2162

66 Nelson Road Booysens

Johannesburg 2091

Tel: 27 (0) 11 476 8315

Cell: 072 299 2809

missionoffice@bucknet.co.za

www.salesianmissions.co.za

SALESIAN SPOTLIGHT E-NEWS JUNE 2022



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SALESIAN MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FOR 33 YEARS



The month of June is traditionally dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the highest human expression of divine love. On the 24th June we celebrate the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: the feast that sets the tone for the whole

with great compassion for her (v. 13).” This “compassion” is the love of God for us, it is mercy, i.e., the attitude of God in contact with human misery, with our poverty, our suffering, our anguish. The biblical term “compassion” recalls the maternal viscera: a mother, in fact, experiences a reaction all her own, to the pain of her children. In this way does God love us, the Scripture says.

And what is the fruit of this love? It is life! Jesus said to the widow of Nain, “Do not weep,” and then called the

month. Popular piety highly prizes symbols, and the Heart of Jesus is the ultimate symbol of God’s mercy – but it is not an imaginary symbol, it is a real symbol, which represents the centre, the source from which salvation for all humanity gushed forth.

In the Gospels we find several references to the Heart of Jesus, for example, in the passage where Christ says, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart. (Mt 11:28-29)”

Then there is the key story of the death of Christ according to John. This evangelist in fact testifies to what he saw on Calvary: that a soldier, when Jesus was already dead, pierced his side with a spear, and from the wound flowed blood and water (cf. Jn 19.33-34). John recognized in that – apparently random – sign, the fulfilment of prophecies: from the heart of Jesus, the Lamb slain on the cross, flow forgiveness and life for all men.

But the mercy of Jesus is not just sentiment: indeed, it is a force that gives life, that raises us up. The evangelist Luke tells us about the woman at Nain, whose son had died: “Seeing her, the Lord was moved



dead boy and awoke him as from a sleep (cf. vv. 13-15). The mercy of God gives life to man, it raises him from the dead. The Lord is always watching us with mercy, [always] awaits us with mercy. Let us be not afraid to approach him! He has a merciful heart! If we show our inner wounds, our sins, He always forgives us. He is pure mercy! Let us never forget this: He is pure mercy! Let us go to Jesus! Let us turn to the Virgin Mary: her immaculate heart – a mother’s

heart – has shared the “compassion” of God to the full, especially at the hour of the passion and death of Jesus. May Mary help us to be meek, humble and

compassionate with our brethren. **Pope Francis**



“Oh most Sacred Heart of Jesus we place all our Trust in Thee”

Mary Help of Christians, "Our Lady of Don Bosco" 24 May 2022

(ANS - Rome) - "Auxilium Christianorum," "Help of Christians," is a title proper to the Litany of Loreto of the Holy Rosary and is a patrimony of the universal Church. At the same time, this title has a very special value for the Salesian Family, given the great devotion that Don Bosco manifested toward Mary invoked under this very title.

The invocation "Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro nobis" appears, for the first time, in the version of the Litany of Loreto (*Litaniae lauretanae*) published in 1576 and approved by Pope Clement VIII in 1601. This invocation was added by Pope Pius V after the Holy League's victory over the Ottomans at Lepanto on October 7, 1571. For this glorious and final victory, the Pope instituted the feast of the Holy Rosary, but the **grateful invocation** to the heavenly Protectress as "Auxilium Christianorum" is not to be **attributed** directly to the Pope, as was later said, but to the **victorious veterans** who, returning from the battle, marched through Loreto to thank Our Lady; the banner of the fleet, instead, was sent to the church dedicated to Mary in Gaeta, where it is still preserved.

The cry of joy of the Christian people was perpetuated in this invocation; the Venetian Senate had it written under the large commemorative painting of the Battle of Lepanto in the Doge's Palace, "Neither power, nor arms, nor leaders have led us to victory, but Mary of the Rosary," and so alongside the ancient titles of "Comforter of the afflicted" and "Refuge of sinners," "Help of Christians" was added for the people and the Church.

The feast day of Mary, Help of Christians, was established by Pope Pius VII on Sept. 15, 1815, and set for May 24 in memory of his triumphant return to Rome (May 24, 1814) after his imprisonment under Napoleon at Fontainebleau. Originally the feast was limited to the Church of Rome, but it was soon adopted by the Tuscan dioceses (1816) and then extended to the universal Church



The cult, while continuing in the following centuries, had its difficulties, until in the 19th century it was **revived by Don Bosco**. From the very beginning, the great educator and innovator from Turin placed his work as priest and founder under the protection and help of Mary Help of Christians, to whom he turned for every need, especially when matters were dragging on, becoming complicated, entangled. The great priest, an apostle of youth, however managed to erect the basilica of Mary Help of Christians in the Salesian citadel of Valdocco – Turin in just three years, in 1868; under Her maternal protection, he placed all his work, by now spread throughout the world. And by now "Mary Help of Christians" has become "Our Lady of Don Bosco," inseparable from the great Salesian Family, which has given the Church a host of saints, blessed, venerable, and servants of God; all children who have entrusted themselves to the help of the sweetest and most powerful of mothers.

Entire Continents and Nations have Mary Help of Christians as their Patroness: Catholic Australia since 1844, China since 1924, Argentina since 1949, Poland since the early decades of the 1800s, widespread and ancient is the devotion in Eastern European countries.

In the beautiful Turin Basilica dedicated to Her, there is the majestic painting, commissioned by the founder himself, representing Mary Help of Christians, with the Child in her arms and surrounded by the Apostles and Evangelists. The meaning of the entire painting is very clear; just as Mary was present with the apostles in Jerusalem at the beginning of the Church's activity, so still She stands to protect and guide the Church through the centuries.

Celebrations of Our Lady's Feast

The faithful around the world pay homage to Mary Help of Christians

After the difficult years of the pandemic, which imposed "virtual" celebrations, the faithful around the world returned to churches, squares and streets everywhere to celebrate Mary Help of Christians. Indeed, Salesian communities paid homage to She Who "did everything" with numerous initiatives, making devotion to Mary Help of Christians, a distinctive feature of the Salesian charism, more alive than ever.



ITALY – An entire people under the mantle of the Mother:

(ANS - Turin) - The Feast Day of Mary Help of Christians in Turin has finally returned to being what it always was: a celebration of the people, even before being a Salesian feast. Yesterday, May 24, the city of Don Bosco once again gathered safely under the mantle of the Help of Christians, to celebrate and honour her. "Mary always precedes us in faith and in the trusting and generous response to God in our lives, and she is a solid support for our faith," said the

Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, in the homily of the Mass he presided over in the afternoon in the Salesian Basilica of Valdocco.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Lubumbashi. A pilgrimage in honour of Mary Help of Christians of the Salesian Family of the Salesian Province of Central Africa (AFC) was held in Lubumbashi. An atmosphere of prayer, devotion, and joy of finding each other as sons and daughters of Mary Help of Christians, two years after the COVID-19 pandemic, characterized the pilgrimage. Young and old walked 6.5 km while praying the Rosary, animating and singing songs dedicated to Mary.



UKRAINE



LEBANON



PORTUGAL



Lisbon, Portugal, Fr Juan Carlos Pérez Godoy, councillor for the Mediterranean Region, presided over the celebrations of the Feast of Mary Help of Christians at the

Salesian house in Lisbon, with the participation of a large number of young people.

ECUADOR

As part of the Extraordinary Visitation to the Salesian Province of Ecuador (ECU), Fr Hugo Orozco, Councillor for the Interamerica Region, presided over the Eucharist for the Feast Day of Mary Help of Christians in which Salesians from the communities of Quito, members of the various groups of the Salesian Family and young students from Salesian school centres participated. The Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in "El Girón" was filled with great joy to celebrate the patroness of the Salesians and pay homage to her through prayer. During his homily, Fr Orozco told those present, "My desire is that you may grow in love for Mary, that you may contemplate her, that you may learn from her as a teacher, and that you may experience her love as a mother."



MONGOLIA

Darkhan, Mongolia - May 2022 - Last May 24, Salesians in Mongolia paid homage to Mary Help of Christians by gathering at the "Mary Help of Christians" parish in Darkhan. This date is especially significant for the Salesians of Mongolia, not only because it marks one of the most important feasts in the Salesian calendar, but also because it recalls the beginnings of the Salesian mission in Darkhan. Seventeen years have passed since the day the Salesians arrived here, called to educate and evangelize, in a mission that had zero Christians. Yet today, after so much work and so many changes, the Salesian charism continues to grow.

KENYA

The "Don Bosco Upper Hill" centre in Nairobi celebrated the feast day of Mary Help of Christians. The main moments of the celebrations were the Eucharist, presided over by Simon Asira Lipuku, Provincial of the East Africa Province, and the subsequent procession with the statue of Mary Help of Christians, during which the different groups of the Salesian Family animated the recitation of the Rosary. During the celebrations, also, the first three members of ADMA issued their promises. Another especially important moment of the celebration was the canonical establishment of the Association of Mary Help of Christians at the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Upper Hill. Fr. Abel Njeru, SDB, former Rector and Parish Priest of the Shrine, was appointed as spiritual animator at the local level.



Celebrations for Our Lady here in South Africa

On the 24 May, the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians, the Bosco Community in Randvaal, celebrated with the Bosco Staff. We celebrated Mass together, played together, then feasted well together. The pictures speak for themselves. **Father Jonathan Daniels**



MESSAGE FROM FATHER JONATHAN DANIELS



Today is known as Good Friday, 15 April, but for us here at Bosco Youth Centre it is Bad Friday. The night that is now gone, which should have been a solemn and holy night turned out to be a traumatic night. For the third time in under three weeks the criminal elements invaded our space. Previously they went off with a fridge, microwave, kettle, crockery and cutlery as well as the food of the Bosco Volunteers. This time five of them forced their way into a cottage where three past volunteers are staying who joined us for the Easter experience. Two of the past volunteers are badly traumatised by the event. The security guard was tied up. Anger is at the heart of everyone. Questions flood our minds and hearts. A sleepless night was had. Prayer escapes my lips, words will not form to be uttered. Perhaps you who read this post will whisper a prayer for us. We are tired. We are angry. We are fed-up.

6 May at 19.59. I am not a fear-monger but only wish to expose the criminal element in our midst. This afternoon at 3pm, three men, very casually, walked into our property at Bosco, followed by three others in a white Mercedes. The ones on foot were spotted carrying firearms. The police were quick to respond, and I thank them, but the criminals managed to escape capture, removing themselves before the police arrived. The frightening thing was that I spoke to all six of them face to face. The Good Lord and Mary Help of Christians must have stepped in between as protection. Kindly whisper a prayer for our continued safety and well-being here at Bosco Youth Centre as we continue to strive to serve the poorest of the young. God bless.



MONTH OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS AT LAURA VICUÑA PRIMARY SCHOOL – ENNERDALE (DON BOSCO PROJECTS)

After being quiet for the past two years due to the Covid19 confinement, most of the school celebrations did not take place. Finally, this year, we were back to celebrate in full, the every year Month of Mary, in May. The special preparation and celebrations marked the final day of a beautiful feast of our dear Mother Mary help of Christians, a day of true joy for all, with many expected blessings.



The day began with sport activities organized by the Salesian Houses Teams (Domenic Savio, Laura Vicuña, Mother Mazzarello and Don Bosco).



On the 6 May the Domenic Savio's club prepared a beautiful surprise for the school morning assembly, with their joyful marching hymn and prayers, on the feast day of their Patron Saint. They motivated everyone to be a Salesian saint as Don Bosco shaped the holiness of the young Domenic Savio.

The 13 May, the Laura Vicuña's club concluded the day with an extraordinarily



beautiful play to honour the "Mornese spirit" based on the "House of the love of God" song. The Laura's girls performed the simplicity of life of the first Salesian



Sisters, work, playground and choir, all in cheerfulness and love.

The 24 May was a remarkable day, with a nice well-prepared Mass celebrated by Father Sebastian, assisted by Father Emmanuel and where all the Educating Community participated



wholeheartedly.

The students of the Science Consumer course, from the

Declan College, surprised us with a huge and beautifully decorated cake that was shared and enjoyed after the picnic meal we had, concluding the fun and joy of the winner houses and the many spiritual messages we all received along the Month. Mary our Mother, as Don Bosco ensured the first Salesian Sisters, is always walking in our school and houses, and taking care of each child, youth and staff who are part of this beautiful Salesian Project.



SISTER LIDIA CASTRO

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE FOUNDING OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS (SALESIAN SISTERS)



ST MARY MAZZARELLO • CO-FOUNDERESS • DAUGHTERS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

FOUNDATION OF THE SALESIAN SISTERS OF SAINT JOHN BOSCO

GAUTENG SALESIAN FAMILY DAY - ENNERDALE

You are invited to celebrate the **FMA 150th Anniversary** with us on Saturday, **May 21st** at **All Saints Parish Hall**. The Salesian Family Day will be starting from **09.00 AM – 13.00 PM**

We hope you can make it to celebrate with us!

PROGRAMME

- 09:00 Arrival and welcoming
- 09:30 Mass
- 10:15 Break – Snacks
- 11:00 Ice breakers
- 11:15 Presentation of the theme
- 12:00 Group work – Feedback
Lunch

Please confirm your attendance before **13 May 2022** to the following WhatsApp numbers:
Charmaine (CCSS) 083 649 8442 or Belinda 081 574 5346.

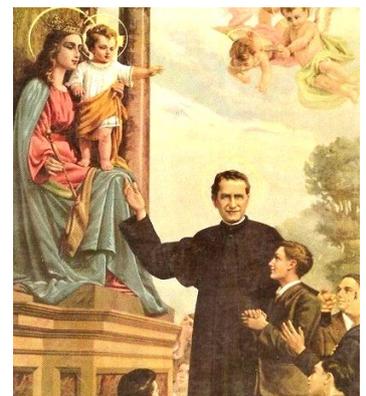
IF YOU ARE A COMMUNITY, KINDLY SEND THE NUMBERS WHO WILL ATTEND.



The FMA Ennerdale community together with Salesian Co-operators organized the Salesian Family Day at All Saints Hall on the 21st of May. It was an occasion to gather Salesian members from all Gauteng Communities, and opportunity to make known the various Salesian vocations as young people were also present for the occasion, and to make known the figure of St. Mary Mazzarello on the 150 years of the jubilee of the Salesian Sisters, since their foundation.

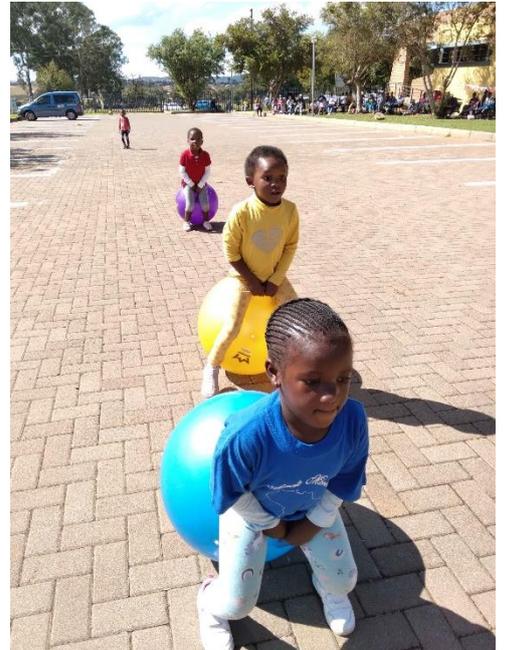


During the month, quiz games, colouring and drawing based on St. Mary Mazzarello's life, were created, as we are marking the 150 years of the foundation of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters). Our Sisters were founded by St Mary Mazzarello and St. John Bosco on the 5th of August 1872. **SR LIDIA CASTRO**



Mary Help of Christians Pray For Us

SPORTS DAY AT FINETOWN ENNERDALE



On Friday 22nd April 2022, we had Sports Day at Multipurpose in Finetown. As Don Bosco said that the children should be given full freedom to jump, run and make as much noise as they please - so, the children of Sancta Maria ECD had different games, activities and music to help them develop their physical, emotional, cognitive and social developments. They also had an Easter egg hunt. **SR MARIA NGUYEN**

MAPUTSOE - LESOTHO

On Friday, 13 May, the students and staff of Mazzarello Skills Centre, Maputsoe, honoured the feast day with Mass celebrated by Fr. Dino. The Mass was followed by performances of poetry, drama and music by the students, followed by a festive lunch.



St Mary Mazzarello Pray for us

MAPUTSOE AND MASERU - LESOTHO

The Salesian community of Lesotho's mission is to evangelise and educate endangered young people and their families. Our work takes place from two cities namely Maputsoe and Maseru which are over a hundred kilometres apart. In Maseru, the capital, we have a parish, Sacred Heart, a high school – Abia High School, primary school – St. Clement Primary School, and an oratory in its embryonic stage. However, in Maputsoe, which is regarded as the second largest town after Maseru we look after a High school – St. Boniface, and two primary schools – St. Luke's Primary and Chaka Primary, a parish –St. Luke's Salesian Mission and its Out station (Maristella), a fully operating Oratory. We also collaborate with the Salesian Sisters who run a pre-school and vocational training centre for girls and young ladies. Moreover, we give morning talks and lead prayers at the



assemblies, facilitate retreats for students and teachers and at times Leadership courses for school prefects. Mass is celebrated and the sacraments are administered. Catechism is held for those preparing to receive the sacraments and we animate and coordinate the formative programmes and activities of the SYM (Salesian Youth Movement).



The daily Oratory accompanies young people and at times parents through spiritual direction, pastoral care, daily afternoon talks and prayer (meditation), retreats, leadership workshops, general festive games, educational games, growth enhancing clubs that tap into the potential of the youth. We are able to achieve this first through the mercy of God and the generosity of the young people who dedicate their lives to the Leaders and minister to their fellow young people. We are indebted to the Oratory Leaders for their tireless availability,

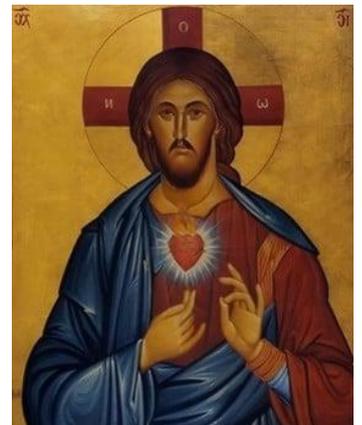


industry, support and tenacity for the purpose of accompanying the young people and helping to distribute food to the less privileged. In order to run the Oratory and the retreats, we have trained young people to minister to other young people (peer ministry). This somehow releases the pressure from our side given that we are few in numbers. We owe a great debt of gratitude to God for the availability of those young people who generously give off themselves for the kingdom.

Brother Mojela Fihlo

THE 12 PROMISES OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

1. I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.
2. I will establish peace in their homes.
3. I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all, in death.
5. I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
6. Sinners will find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
7. Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.
8. Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
9. I will bless every place in which an image of My Heart is exposed and honoured.
10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.
11. Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart.
12. I promise you in the excessive mercy of My Heart that My all powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in My disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments. My divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.



SALESIAN INSTITUTE YOUTH PROJECTS



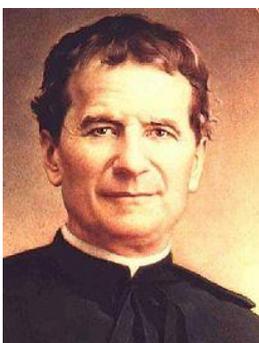
Congratulations to our very first NEETs Youth Employability Programme cohort of 2021 completing their 12 months of training and looking forward to receiving their New Ventures Certificate (Seta NQF4 Accredited). SIYP are immensely proud of this group and their facilitators for their perseverance!



Our NEETs Youth Employability Programme are teaching youth entrepreneurial skills. The students set up an Aquaponic System and have already delivered products to support the kitchen that provides meals to students.



The Waves of Change Programme prepares youth to work in the Maritime Industry. Another successful group completed the Life skills course. Wishing them all the best!
FATHER FRANCOIS DUFOUR



“Without confidence and love, there can be no true education.” St John Bosco

Prayers Please



For the people of Ukraine, and for an end to the pandemic.

For PEACE in our country and the world over.

For all Readers, Donors and Friends of the Spotlight.

For our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

For those who have been retrenched and have no money.

For starving children and families, the world over.

For all women who are used and abused.

For children who suffer at the hands of abusive adults.

For the protection of Our Blessed Mother and Her Son.

For all carers, nurses, doctors and those in religion who help without expecting thanks.

For an end to corruption in our Government.

For all dedicated Priests, Brothers and Religious.

For all those who have gone before us. Eternal rest give unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them, may they rest in peace.

"Almighty, ever-living God, whose love surpasses all that we ask or deserve, open up for us the treasures of your mercy. Forgive us all that weighs on our conscience and grant us more even than we dare to ask. Through Christ our Lord. Amen"



BROTHER MULLER VISITS SOUTH AFRICA



The Bosco Salesian Community, welcomed Brother Jean Paul Muller, the Economer General, to Walkerville. Indeed, a grace-filled moment for us. Together with Brother Muller we have Father Jeffrey Johnson, visiting from Cape Town, and our two students of philosophy, Reece and Thabiso. Brother Muller also paid a visit to our Missionary Sisters of Mary Help Christians.



Dear Lord
You loved me before I was born, and you called me to be holy.
Give me the vision to find ways to share your love.
Help me to be a mouthpiece for your Word in what I do and in what I say,
And when it's hard to do the right thing,
Strengthen the Spirit of love in me. Amen



ASSISTANCE FOR UKRAINE

A story in very few words to save time, though it has been quite a torturously long one in the making. It is, in fact, a coincidental merging of two stories into a single happy ending. Some time ago this coordination circulated a video of Fr. **Josef Nuckowski** SDB appealing for an ambulance for the hospital at **Birbrko**,

Ukraine. A stone was cast into a calm pool. A family foundation in the USA noticed the video, got into contact with this coordinator, then with Fr. **Krzysztof** at Warsaw and then with Fr. Josef himself at Bibrko. After all the facts were checked and were found to be true, several attempts were made to buy an ambulance in Poland. The prices were unacceptable. Finally, after two days of meticulous search in Serbia, **TWO** perfect ambulances were bought at a much lower price. They were filled with medicines specifically asked for from Ukraine. Permissions were sought at the embassy of Ukraine in Serbia and two Serbian drivers drove the ambulances into Ukraine. Despite all the assurances and documentation, the drivers were questioned by the police for hours, but the story did have a happy ending. The ambulances reached their destination. There are photos and the certificate from the mayor of Birbrko to prove it. Thanks to **“Bridge of Life”** Foundation.



The second part of the story is of the three pallets of medicines airlifted by **“Salesian Missions – USA”** to Warsaw. After days of bureaucratic paperwork, the medicines were finally released from the airport and reached the same destinations as the ambulances, and almost at the same time! Despite the work it took to get the medicines released, we have decided to accept a full container of medicines from **“SM-USA”** in the coming days. **The power of sharing a story – a simple short one cast into an unknown sea, that carried its ripples across the ocean to a distance continent and bore abundant fruits.**

Father M C George Menmaprampil sdb. Emergency Response Coordinator



STAFF AND CO-OPERATORS PRAY FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE

On 25 March 2022, on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, the staff of Sancta Maria, Ennerdale, and the Salesian Co-operator Aspirants of Fine Town, Johannesburg, spent a day of retreat in preparation for Easter, on the Black Madonna Hill in Walkerville, praying for peace in Ukraine, in communion with the whole Church.

The day was organised and animated by Sr. Maria Nguyen, AFM. The twelve participants began the retreat by retracing the Way of the Cross along the hill, meditating on the suffering of Jesus, which continues in the lives of people today, especially the Ukrainian population and other peoples of the world who are suffering because of war.



Arriving at the top of the hill, before the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Joseph Nguyen, there was the opportunity to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation, to live a time of Adoration, and to pray the Rosary together. During adoration, the prayer of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for Ukraine and Russia was said.

In his homily, Fr. Joseph invited the participants to do God’s will in their daily lives.

“Mary said ‘yes’ to the Lord for Jesus to become incarnate in her womb. Imitate her.”

The day ended with a conference on Divine Mercy and with the prayer of the Chaplet, led by Sr. Jakuba Wasilewska, Sister of the Merciful Jesus. Thanks also for the care of the places, so that the pilgrims can express their devotion to Mary. The participants were able to experience an intense day of prayer and hope for the gift of peace. **Sr Maria Nguyen**



MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 56th WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS: LISTENING WITH THE EAR OF THE HEART

Dear brothers and sisters,

Last year we reflected on the need to “Come and See” in order to discover reality and be able to recount it beginning with experiencing events and meeting people. Continuing in this vein, I would now like to draw attention to another word, “listen,” which is decisive in the grammar of communication and a condition for genuine dialogue.

In fact, we are losing the ability to listen to those in front of us, both in the normal course of everyday relationships and when debating the most important issues of civil life. At the same time, listening is undergoing an important new development in the field of communication and information through the various podcasts and audio messages available that serve to confirm that listening is still essential in human communication.

A respected doctor, accustomed to treating the wounds of the soul, was once asked what the greatest need of human beings is. He replied: “The boundless desire to be heard.” Listening corresponds to the humble style of God. It is the action that allows God to reveal himself as the One who, by speaking, creates man and woman in his image, and by listening recognizes them as his partners in

dialogue. God loves humanity: that is why he addresses his word to them, and why he “inclines his ear” to listen to them.

Listening with the heart is the experience of a noble, loving, compassionate person. Looking around, we see millions of people who suffer in silence every day. Everyone longs to be heard and listened to. But the raging fire and chaos, noise and humdrums have caused so much of deafness within, and we only listen to some sounds. We have lost the quality to empathize, to listen and to feel.

The call to listen with the ear of one’s heart, is the invitation of Pope Francis in light of the 56th World Communications Day, which is popularly celebrated on the Ascension Sunday every year. Are we really truly listening? Why do we struggle to listen? How can we listen with our heart? These can be some areas of introspection as we ponder on this theme of the World Communications Day – “Listening with the ear of the heart.”



Chaos Without and Within

The lack of listening plagues our world at every level. From the massive international conflicts like the bitter war that has been unfolding in Ukraine to the endless communal, caste, and religious conflicts that infest so many countries, we see it everywhere.

The outbreak of this war in Ukraine is a clear indication that there is no real dialogue and true listening that has happened. Even Pope Francis’ request for a face-to-face dialogue with Putin, was blatantly refused. When there is no intent to listen, there can never be a genuine solution. This refusal to listen has perpetuated innumerable problems to the existence of everyone.

The staggering rise of breakdowns in marriage and family is also evidence that our refusal to listen is costing us at the individual, family, social and international level. In our own way, many of us are deaf to the cries of those around us. We have become numbed by the noise, we have become desensitized to the sobs of anguish; too many to count, and we have become deaf both outside and within. Truly, we live in our own little tombs of silence, and have become so comfortable with the deathly quiet within. I am reminded of the profound words of Simon & Garfunkel’s legendary song “The Sound of Silence”:

And in the naked light I saw

People talking without speaking

People writing songs that voices never share

No one dared

Ten thousand people, maybe more

People hearing without listening

Disturb the sound of silence...

What an interesting analogy of our present day – speaking without listening, talking without speaking and hearing without listening.

This year, in keeping with the theme of listening, Pope Francis is inviting us to listen with the *ear of our hearts*. The origin of this apt plea dates back to the time of St. Benedict, the 6th century mystic and Father of western monasticism. In his *Rules for Monks* in Benedictine communities, he urged, “*Obsculta inclina aurem cordis tui* – Listen by inclining the ear of your heart.”

When two ears are put side by side, they form the shape of the heart. Interestingly, the word ‘ear’ sits right in the middle of the word ‘heart’ (h-ear-t). The ear is the way to the heart so if you want someone’s heart, learn to listen to them. If you want God’s Heart, learn to listen to Him.

Listening with the ear of the heart is not a complacent response, but an empathetic and attentive response. It is a responsible openness of the heart, that allows itself to feel and be troubled, to reach out and heal, to share and care and to help build the lives of others. It is the openness in the innermost depth of ourselves to receive, respect and accept the other. If you are not capable of listening to one another, then you are by default also not capable of listening to God. For listening reflects the Godliness in you and your relationship with God. Listening with the ear of the heart, in the final analysis is an act of true love.”

NEWS FROM LANSDOWNE – CAPE TOWN



Father Christopher Sharpe's 40th Birthday celebrations. Seen above with Fr Jeffrey Johnson



Prayer for Peace

To You, Creator of nature and humanity, of truth and beauty, I pray:

Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.

Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war.

Hear my voice, when I beg you to instill into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship. Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and in every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.

St Pope John Paul II

In The Wisdom Of Solomon

Two women in a bus fighting bitterly over the last available seat.

The conductor had already tried unsuccessfully to intervene when the bus driver shouted to the conductor, "Let the ugly one take the seat"

Both women stood for the rest of the journey

Argument done!



Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends.

St. Alphonsus Ligouri

Dear Friends

As I write, there is a strange smell of Sulphur hanging over Gauteng. Not very healthy, but not many complaints either, as I think that people have come to accept life with all it dishes out to them. 'Life



Is hard,' Life is tough' are constants in the conversations that are current at the moment. And yet, although the grass always looks greener on the other side, it isn't. There is always someone worse off. Always some family who have bigger problems.

So much is happening in the world today, and there is dissension and conflict everywhere, even in sport and at play, when these activities used to be enjoyed and people looked forward to them. Many people are saying that the world is coming to an end and yet there is no effort to prepare for such an event, whenever it might be. I probably sound like a broken record, but I cannot emphasise enough how much we need to pray. Pray the Rosary, as a family, and ask Our Blessed Lady to soften the hearts of those hard people who govern without mercy and act only with greed. Ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten them to act with compassion. And finally ask the Good Lord to help us to keep our sense of humour, because if we don't laugh, especially at ourselves, life will not be worth living.

My very sincere thanks to all of you wonderful people once again, for your prayers, your loyalty and your donations, monthly, now and again and anonymously. We can't do without you, and I would ask that you please make that little extra effort to help us, if you can. There are thousands of children who go to bed hungry every night, because their parents haven't got the money to feed them. Happy Fathers' Day and a blessed month of the Sacred Heart to you all. Pray for me please, as I do for you. Much love and God bless. Denise Hards

FEAST DAYS

- 12 June Trinity Sunday
- 19 June Body and Blood of Christ
- 23 June The Birth of John the Baptist
- 24 June The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
- 25 June Immaculate Heart of Mary
- 29 June Ss Peter and Paul
- 06 July St Maria Goretti
- 16 July Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- 22 July St Mary Magdalene
- 25 July St James
- 26 July Ss Joachim and Anne
- 06 Aug Transfiguration of Our Lord
- 15 Aug Assumption of Our Lady
- 22 Aug Queenship of Mary

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

Perhaps you would like to leave something to **SALESIAN MISSIONS** in your Will.

An enquiry can be made, and the necessary information can be given to you.

Tel: 27 (0) 11 476 8315

We would be extremely grateful.



SALESIAN MISSIONS

PO Box 3209, North Riding 2162 • Tel: 27 (0) 11 476-8315
Cell: 27 072 299 2809

E-mail: missionoffice@bucknet.co.za
www.salesianmissions.co.za

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Please debit my bank account with R.....

Monthly Once only

Type of account: Cheque Transmission

Name of account holder:

Bank:Branch Code:

Branch name:

Account number:

Signature:

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if you do not need it!**