



# BOSCO NEWS

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VOLUME 5, ISSUE 5

MAY 2014

**Salesians of Don Bosco**  
**Province of St. Philip the Apostle**  
**Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry**  
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**Would you be interested in writing or submitting a photo for a future issue of Bosco News? Please send your contact information to:**  
**[bosconews@salesianym.com](mailto:bosconews@salesianym.com)**

# SALESIAN FAMILY DAY AT SIX FLAGS

Every year, Salesians from all over the East Coast join together to play on one of Don Bosco's many playgrounds.

## **Kristen Hansen**

St. Thomas More Youth Group  
Hauppauge, Long Island



This year, close to 400 teenagers were ecstatic to explore Six Flags in New Jersey. The day began with a Mass celebrated by Father Abe. As always, he related his homely to Superman. Shortly after Mass, we were challenged to a selfie competition.

Each team was given a list of places to go and objects to take selfies with to score points. The photos had to be uploaded to Instagram with the hashtag #SDBSelfie in order to be considered. The team with the most points took home the trophy and title of "Champions."



After Mass, everybody was able to catch up with each other during lunch - it's not every day you get the opportunity to see friends from other states! It was a wonderful opportunity that allowed participants from retreats to see each other and spend quality Salesian time together. The sun was out...but not for long. Rain began to pour right after lunch. Everybody kept their spirits high and prayed that the rain would stop and we would be able to ride the roller coasters.

Many of us pray together, and God answered our prayers! The rain stopped and the sun shone again. Eventually it rained again, but our Salesian spirit drove the rain away and the park was clear for the rest of the day.



Salesian Family Day at Six Flags has always been a favorite day of mine simply because it is a day to have fun, spend time with friends, and it really gives you a modern-day Salesian feeling.

I feel that if Don Bosco was alive in this day and age, he would run his own amusement park and call it Bosco World. Being with everyone, it was clear that Don Bosco's spirit was alive in everyone.





# THE YOUNG ADULT RETREAT: YAR 2014

Just being able to attend the Salesian Young Adult Retreat must indicate that I was truly meant to be there.

## **Adolfo Barnech**

*Alumnus:*

Don Bosco Cristo Rey  
High School  
Washington, DC



As an alumnus from a Salesian school, I can say that an experience like this grows into a flower which eventually blooms for the garden of our Lord – in being able to be just that much closer to him. Feeling Christ's presence is one thing, but seeing Him is a whole different story.



Each and every smile from the participants on YAR showed me exactly that. You could see Christ in the many faces I saw on the retreat, and I can't thank Him enough. Because of that, it helps me realize that much more that this world isn't as cruel as people say it is. There was a moment where Eucharistic Adoration took place in the Shrine Chapel; several other people were there and you could just feel the Salesian spirit flow through the walls of the room.



To see Christ during adoration was so powerful, and because of that, I experienced an immense impact of such gratitude and love, that I felt it was all I could bear to receive all at once. Experiencing that changed my entire view of belief, and made it that much stronger.

I had never felt so close to Christ as I did at that very moment, listening to the remarkable sound of music and singing along with the lyrics. It is something that I will never be able to forget...ever. Like retreats I have attended in the past, I feel as if my fire has been rekindled with the new friends I've made, and the time I had to go deeper into my beliefs. It seems that during college and work, I don't usually get to focus on these things, but the Young Adult Retreat has helped me realized that there is time for God, no matter where I am or who I am with. Leaving the retreat this time will be different; I am making a commitment to better recognize God's presence. He is always there, with a bright smile and open arms.

# DON'T EVEN BOTHER CALLING IT A COINCIDENCE



**Meaghan Pereiras**  
Sts. Joseph and Michael  
Youth Group  
Union City, NJ

God has a funny way of shoving the truth in our faces. Sometimes I sit in the chapel in my school's Newman Center and yell at God (literally), telling Him that I'm not ready to be whatever it is He expects me to become in this life, or that the encouraging words He tells me through prayer and through the love of my close friends -- are all lies.

It's always been difficult for me to accept that I'm not some worthless individual who is only an obstacle for others on their path to salvation; I've always felt more like an annoyance to people than someone who could spark interest or joy in others. Needless to say, my self-esteem has never been the greatest. Last weekend on the Salesian Young Adult Retreat, however, I had one of those right-place, right-time experiences. I was finally able to believe the words Fr. Abe always says at the beginning of each program, "It is no coincidence that you are here." And it really wasn't.

I began the weekend without an ounce of desire to make that trudge up to Stony Point. It had been a bad week for me, and I was not emotionally prepared to deal with a bunch of Jesus-crazed college kids. But I figured I'd already paid for the retreat, so I was stuck going. The moment I stepped into the retreat center, the ice around my heart began to defrost. Slowly, I was warming up to the lovely people around me, and my spirits were rising.

With every activity, every minute in small group, every moment of just letting it all out, I felt the love of God kindle in my heart. As the weekend was coming to a close and Reconciliation was nigh, I found myself settled in a confessional across from Fr. Abraham. Laying down everything that was weighing on my heart, he inspired in me new-found faith and hope. I heard God speak to me through him, calming me and reminding me that I need to stop looking at my own faults and start looking at His endless love. Despite my inability to see it for myself, I know I am a marvel that God has made perfectly and, regardless of my weak faith, God is making sure that I get every wonderful thing that I deserve in my life



# DON'T EVEN BOTHER CALLING IT A COINCIDENCE



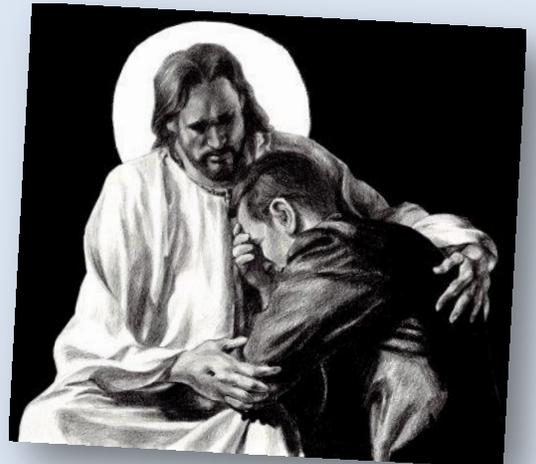
**Meaghan Pereiras**  
Sts. Joseph and Michael  
Youth Group  
Union City, NJ

After confession that night as I knelt before the Blessed Sacrament, I cried all the tears I was holding and released the pain of feeling worthless, unlovable, and simply not enough.

The wounds in my heart were beginning to close, but I still had the undercurrents of fear and doubt. Those nagging emotions subsided, however, as one of the participants shared a personal witness that my younger self could really relate to.

She spoke exactly what I needed to hear: “You *are* enough.” And I knew right then that I could get through this. I am enough to be victorious against my demons. I am enough to accept God’s immeasurable love. I am enough to be a beacon of light in this world. I am enough to shine God’s love through my life. I am simply and wonderfully enough.

I thank the Salesians and everyone involved with the Young Adult Retreat for showing me that God has great plans for me in this life. I’m grateful to have embarked on this seemingly serendipitous encounter with God that could not have been more divinely designed.



# DOMINIC- MY FRIEND, INSPIRATION, AND SAINT



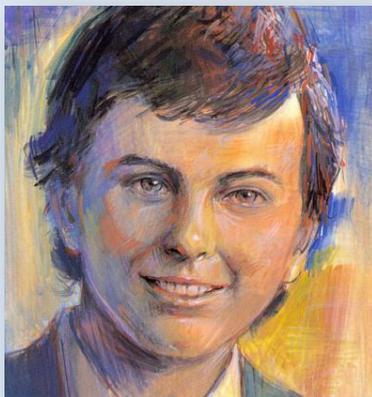
**Francis Mijares**  
*Class of 2014*  
Immaculata-La Salle  
High School  
Miami, Florida

Dominic Savio has been my example since I first entered Immaculata-La Salle on August 23<sup>rd</sup> of 2010. Now, when asked to write about this intangible relationship, it is certainly tough to find the words.

Dominic came from such a normal family and home, yet he achieved what very few have managed-- canonization.

Never in a million years would I have thought that this little Italian boy from 19<sup>th</sup> century Chieri would have such a profound impact on my life!

I have prayed for Dominic's help and intercession for years now, asking for his guidance and perseverance, and he has come to be a very close friend of mine. (Although, I admit I am a bit envious that he was able to interact with Don Bosco in the flesh, and I have only been fortunate enough to meet a wax-version!) From his First Communion, young Dominic's motto was "Death, but not sin." This saying, and his determination to remain as close to the Lord as possible, have deeply affected me- the life Dominic lived has inspired me to follow his example



Despite being so young, Dominic understood the deeper meaning of this life-that it is a preparation for Heaven. And, he understood how to best live out and achieve this mission. Unlike so many others, Dominic was willing to say "No" to temptation and sin, and "Yes" to the Lord. He enthusiastically embraced goodness and the teachings of our Lord. For this reason, Dominic is an example of someone I strive to emulate and model my life after.

The road to holiness is not an easy one, and it can be arduous to live a life of servitude to our Lord.

No matter who you are -- someone in Donny B's Oratory or someone representing that same model across the Atlantic in Miami, Florida -- to live the life the Lord is asking of us is demanding and challenging. To follow the examples of Dominic and Don Bosco, and choose death over sin is difficult. Yet, I know that by doing so, I will be united with the Lord when it is my time.

The Lord has blessed me with so much and I am deeply thankful for all his gifts-especially His abundant love and the holy examples of Dominic and Don Bosco, who have inspired me to model my life after their own. I understand where I want to go when the time comes. I also know I am not alone on this journey. I am accompanied by my good friend Dominic Savio and the rest of the Salesian family.

# TIME TO LOVE THE LORD

When we look at all that is around us, there always seems to be a need for time – more time to work on a project, more time to call someone back, more time to get ahead, more time to spend with those we love, etc.

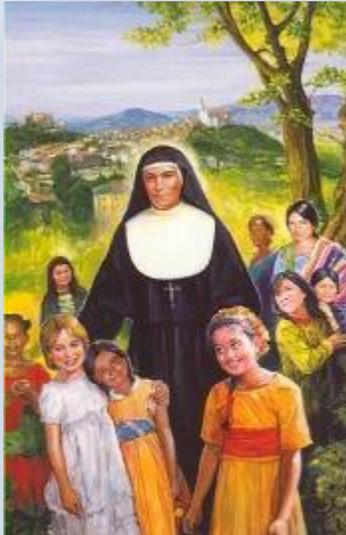
Unfortunately there may never be enough time to do all of that.

Every day God gives us the beautiful gift of being able to accomplish all that we wish. But how much of that time is given back to Him?

## **Katie Nocosia**

*Aspirant*

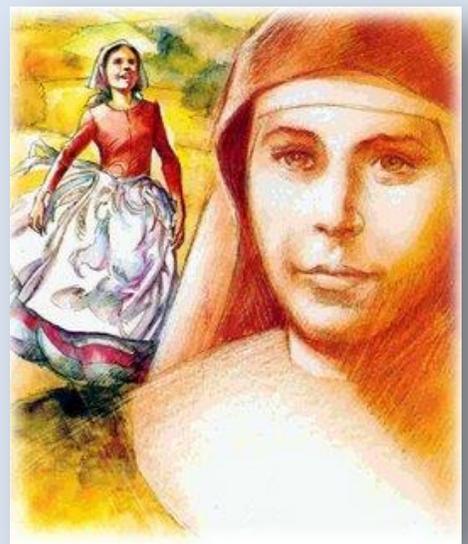
Daughters of  
Mary Help of Christians  
North Haledon, NJ.



St. Mary Domenica Mazzarello was born in Mornese, Italy, in 1837. She grew up in a typical household; she had a mom and dad, and siblings. Mary was like any other kid too. Although she never actually attended school, she did go to catechism classes. Between there and at home, she received all of the love and knowledge that she needed. Mary's father worked in a vineyard; as she got older, she began to help her father. The days were long, and the work was hard.

Her break times were precious. For most, a break meant relaxing under a tree and trying to stay cool; but for Mary, a break meant spending time with the Lord

She would often pray during her breaks, always giving back to God the time that He had given to her. At night, she would sit at her bedroom window where she could see the steeple of the parish church. She would talk to Jesus and be with Him – even if only from a distance. All of her free time was spent with the Lord. At the end of the day, Mary had to have been tired! Between working all day in the vineyards and then helping her mother at home with her siblings, Mary could've spent her time relaxing. But she chose otherwise.



## TIME TO LOVE THE LORD

When Mary was 22, she became very sick. She has contracted typhoid and spent **fifty-two** days in bed! At the point, Mary was well enough to go out, she began to attend Mass again; something that she had done every morning before she became sick.

**Katie Nocosia**  
*Aspirant*  
Daughters of  
Mary Help of Christians  
North Haledon, NJ.



When she was 24 years old, Mary opened a sewing room in the hopes of keeping the girls of Mornese safe from the temptations of the world. Its purpose was a safe place where young girls could come to learn a skill, and more importantly, learn about their faith. One of the ways that Mary used to teach the girls was through the use of small phrases that they could remember as they went about their days. One way that Mary would help to remind the girls of God's presence was that if someone asked her the time she would respond with *"It's time to love the Lord."* She wanted to stress the importance of always remembering God throughout the day, and always giving back to Him the moments that He gave to us.

About a year ago, I read a book called *The Time Keeper*, by Mitch Albom. In the book there is a line that reads: *"There was always a quest for more minutes, more hours, faster progress to accomplish more in each day. The simple joy of living between summers was gone."* Day in and day out, people are constantly striving to have more time to accomplish more things. How often are we a part of that crowd? How often do we want to get ahead?



## TIME TO LOVE THE LORD

How can *you* make time to love the Lord? I know that our days can become filled with different jobs and activities, and that it can become easy to lose sight of God in our lives.

### **Katie Nocosia**

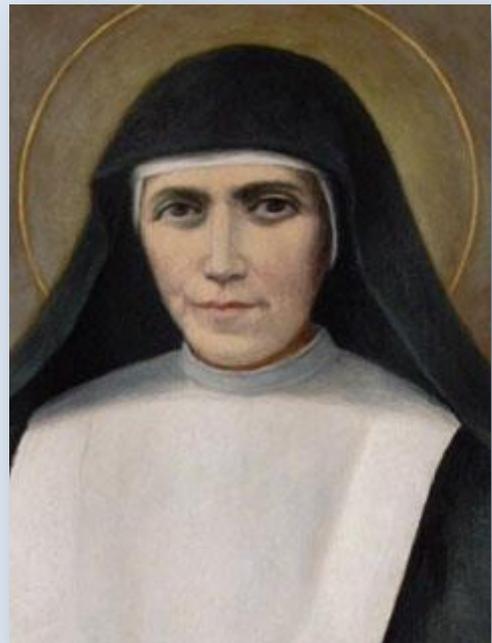
*Aspirant*

Daughters of  
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However, I think that if you look at Mother Mazzarello, you will find a concrete example of how it is possible to find time for God even in the midst of so much chaos. During her life, Mother Mazzarello touched countless people and did so much good. No matter what was going on, she always kept her gaze on Christ and *always* gave Him all that she could – even if it was just a few minutes of peace.

I think we can all learn a valuable lesson from St. Mary Mazzarello. Always remember to keep our hearts and minds on God, even when life gets crazy. Give God the time that He deserves. Even though it may seem like there isn't time for Him, there is; all you have to do is find it and then give it back to Him. God gave us all so much, in this new year let us make an effort to give Him everything that we can – even if it is only our time.

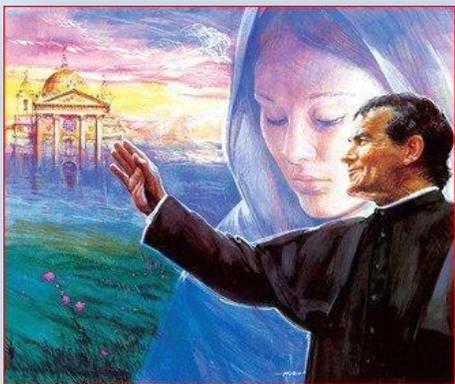


## MARY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS (PRAY FOR US!)

The Salesian Family has the particular gift of looking to Mary, the mother of Jesus, as its foundress.

Don Bosco attributed his call to work with young people to a dream in which Mary directed him to prepare for ministry by making himself, "... humble, strong and robust."

Mother Mazzarello recounted feeling pulled to work with young girls when Mary showed her the future Sisters at play with the children, declaring, "I entrust them to you." Each of our founders pointed to Our Lady as the true foundress of the Salesian Family, presenting her as a Mother primarily concerned with helping the young on the way to salvation.



**Sr. Brittany Harrison, FMA**  
Saint John Neumann High School  
Naples, FL



We Salesians call Our Lady the "Help of Christians," for her role as servant and friend of all those in need is meant to be mirrored in our own lives and vocation. It is both a privilege and a challenge that we should be reminded of every time we invoke, "Mary Help of Christians, pray for us". Often, our prayer for help or assistance is answered through our fellow Salesians, acting as agents of Our Lady. Our Salesian spiritual traditions were never meant to be burdensome or complicated, for whatever we did, Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello wanted it to be accessible to the young

We have as one of our traditions the prayer of the three Hail Marys before going to bed. By this simple prayer, joined with the invocation, "Dear Mother Mary, ever Virgin, help me to save my soul," Don Bosco reminded the boys that they had a soul worth saving, a soul in which Mary was interested in helping them save. Our young people are often introduced to this practice on the Salesian Leadership Retreats and during moments before the traditional goodnight.

The prayers and devotions that we Salesians have to Mary are meant to lead us to collaborate with her in reaching out to the young. We are called to be her "helpers," just as she is our "Help." Our devotions are not complicated, but they are marked with a great confidence in her intercession and love, for she is the one who inspired the foundation of our Salesian Family, and whose prayer and direction keeps us faithful to our charism. Our Lady forms in us the spirit of servants, ready to sacrifice everything for young people, in order help her bring them to Jesus. Let us often turn to her in trust as we invoke, "Mary Help of Christians, pray for us!"

# A TRIBUTE TO MOM

I will never forget opening the letter my mother had sent me when I was a participant at the March Leadership Retreat in 2013.

The first line read, "Even before I held you in my arms, I held you in my heart." My mom has always told me that she has loved me from the moment she heard my heart beat and that her love for me and my siblings has only grown since the day we were born. As I prepare to move away from home for the first time, I often reflect on how much my mother has done for me.

She was influencing my faith journey years before I was even born. She was determined to raise her three kids in the Catholic Church, even though my father was not yet Catholic at the time. Mom brought us to church on Sundays and had us attend CCD classes throughout the week. As a child, going to an hour long mass or class felt like an eternity, but looking back on the experience it began to shape my Catholic identity. As I got older and approached high school, my mom decided that it was time to enroll me in Catholic Education. I, on the other hand, was strongly opposed to this decision.

I wanted to go to public school with my friends, join the dance team and flag line, and I definitely did not want to wear an ugly uniform! I was completely devastated when my parents chose Saint John Neumann Catholic High School and ended up pathetically crying for days in protest. I remember Mom pulling me aside one day and explaining that she felt that Neumann was the perfect fit for me. She had a good feeling about the school and instructed that I pray about my insecurities of freshman year. I told her I would try, but I wasn't making any promises.

**Makenna Henell**  
Class of 2014  
Saint John Neumann  
Naples, FL



# A TRIBUTE TO MOM

**Makenna Henell**  
Class of 2014  
Saint John Neumann  
Naples, FL

As a recent graduate of Saint John Neumann, I now understand that my mother couldn't have been more right about her decision. Neumann unlocked a world of opportunity for me. I was introduced to the Salesians, attended both MLR and OLR, discovered my vocation while doing mission world in Nicaragua, and was even crowned Prom Queen. None of this would have been possible without my mother's unending guidance, love, and support over the years.



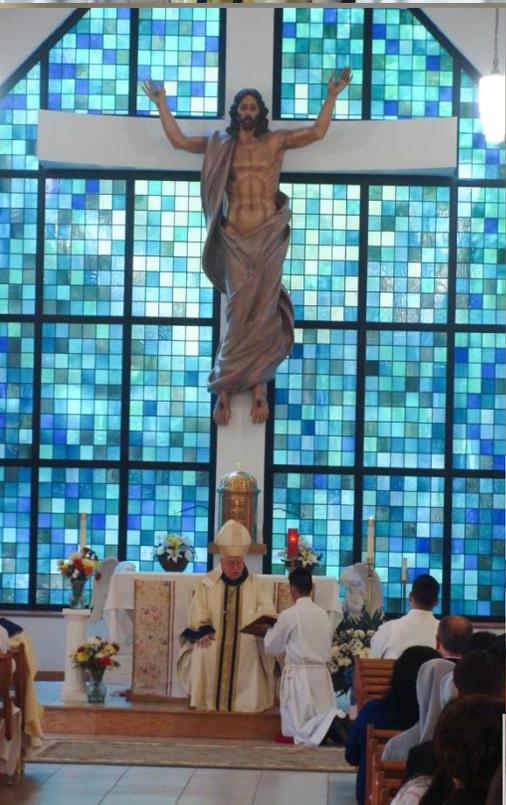
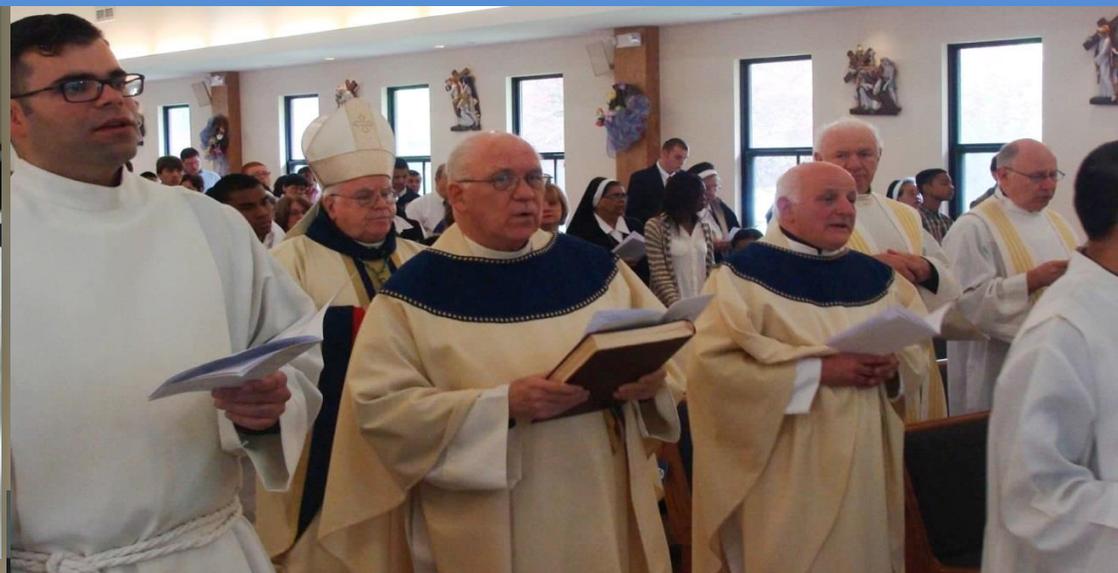
I see so much of Jesus and Mary in my mother because of the love she has for her family; I only hope that I can be half as loving and self-less as she is. She is truly an inspiration to me. All year, my mom has been secretly making a scrapbook of all my senior year accomplishments, which she gave to me as a late graduation gift. Although I am moving far away to chase my dream at Saint Mary's College in Indiana, distance will be the only thing that separates us. She has given me wings, and now it is time to fly! I love you Mama!



# CONGRATS DEACON MIKE!



# INTRODUCING DEACON MIKE EGUINO: A COLLAGE



# THE GOOD NIGHT: MARY, OUR HELP IN THE FACE OF EVIL



**Fr. Abraham Feliciano, SDB**  
Province Delegate for  
Youth Ministry  
St. Philip the Apostle Province

Evil exists. This is a fact of life. We often hear in the news of tragedies such as the University of California Santa Barbara shootings, and often are left to wonder if those who perpetrate such horrific events are truly evil or somehow are disturbed or sick.

In the case of Elliot Rodger (the alleged gunman who killed six people, wounded thirteen and then apparently took his own life), it has been revealed that he was undergoing psychotherapy. And, while much of this type of behavior can legitimately be linked to some sort of mental illness, we would be wise to not be lulled into thinking that evil is merely explained away by psychology or other behavioral sciences.

We were all reminded earlier this month that evil, evil that is sought for its own sake, does really exist when a “black mass” (or satanic mass) was almost celebrated on the campus of Harvard University on Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. Sponsored by the Harvard Extension Cultural Studies Club, this “educational event” was to be conducted by the New York Satanic Temple within the very hallowed halls of our nation’s oldest and most revered university. Despite the repeated pleas of the Catholic Church, other Christian and non-Christian religious groups, and even some non-believers, Harvard president Drew Faust gave permission for the event stating that although she found the club’s decision “abhorrent”, “the most powerful response to offensive speech is not censorship, but reasoned discourse and robust dissent.” Faust herself would attend the Holy Hour at St. Paul’s Church scheduled at the time of the proposed “black mass.” In the end, the “black mass” was canceled. Why was this diabolical event canceled? Was it merely due to the overwhelming public outcry? Or was there something else at work here?

The members of the Harvard Extension Cultural Studies Club might be among the brightest scholars in our country, but they were pretty foolish in attempting such a wicked event during the month of Mary.

***The most powerful response to evil is faith, faith in Jesus Christ and devotion to his mother, Mary.***

As Church, May is the month that we join with the Church in celebrating the mother of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But, as Salesian Family, it is also the month that we celebrate the most important Salesian feast day of the year, the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians.



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# THE GOOD NIGHT: MARY, OUR HELP IN THE FACE OF EVIL

**Fr. Abraham Feliciano, SDB**  
Province Delegate for  
Youth Ministry  
St. Philip the Apostle Province



Mary is our mother, our help, our protector, and our defense in times of trouble or danger. She shields us from the assaults of the devil and directs us toward her son, Jesus. . In a 'Good Night' at the Oratory of St. Francis De Sales, St. John Bosco would say to the boys:

*"Having all power in heaven, she instantly receives what she asks of her Divine Son. . . . At Mary's name, the demons take speedy flight. Hence she is called 'Help of Christians' again our enemies both internal and external."*



Mary is Jesus' gift to us. A human being like us in all things except sin, she has a special place in all creation as the Mother of God. By God's grace and will, she enjoys a status of not only being protected from all evil, but also being more powerful than any evil:

*"A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars . . . Then, another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon, . . . Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven . . . Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have salvation and power come, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed . . . They conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; love for life did not deter them from death. Therefore, rejoice, you heavens, and you who dwell in them' . . . Then the dragon became angry with the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus," (Rev. 12:1, 3a, 7-8, 10-12, 17).*



When we find ourselves in dire need or under attack, spiritual or temporal, Jesus and His Mother are the ones for us to turn to. Upon learning of the disgusting effort to hold a 'black mass' at Harvard, the Church and many people of goodwill began to unite in prayer both public and private: Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, and, of course, the Rosary.

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# THE GOOD NIGHT: MARY, OUR HELP IN THE FACE OF EVIL

**Fr. Abraham Feliciano, SDB**  
Province Delegate for  
Youth Ministry  
St. Philip the Apostle Province



They turned directly to Mary and her son, knowing that against them, evil doesn't stand a chance no matter how powerful or unstoppable it may appear to be. Don Bosco used to frequently remind the boys:

*"Entrust everything to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Help of Christians and you will see what miracles are."*

Evil may exist for now, but the source of all that is good has **ALWAYS** existed. God and His Love are eternal and infinite, and therefore, can **NEVER** be defeated. Evil and those who embrace it, try as they may, are futilely attempting to delay their downfall without realizing or accepting that they have already lost. It is true that God's people have in the past, currently do, and will continue to suffer during this life. But it is equally true that God already has a victory party prepared for all those who accept and are embraced by His Love and Mercy, because Jesus Christ conquered sin, death, and all evil once and for all. Together with Mary, we will one day join the heavenly chorus:

*"A voice coming from the throne said: 'Praise our God, all you his servants, [and] you who revere him, small and great.' . . . 'Alleluia! The Lord has established his reign, [our] God, the almighty. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory.'" (Rev. 19:5-7).*

**God wins. Mary wins. We win. This is the fact of Eternal Life.**



COMING SOON

**Pray for the Young Adult Retreat,  
happening now in the South!**

## **Gospel Roads 2014**

### **Gospel Roads I: High School Groups**

**New Orleans, LA:** June 14-21

**Washington, DC:** July 5-12

**Long Island, NY:** July 12-19

**Toronto, Canada:** August 2-9

### **ESL: The Empowering Salesian Leaders Retreat**

Young adults involved in the Salesian Youth Movement will be attending the

ESL: Empowering Salesian Leadership Retreats

**Stony Point, NY (July 20th-25th)**

**Miami, FL (July 27th-Aug. 1st)**

**OLR 2014:** Stony Point, NY (October 6-9)



Salesian Youth Ministry



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