

Salesian Beacon



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NEA's Read Across America
celebrated at
Saints Peter and Paul School
March 7, 2008

Story on Page 7

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FROM THE DESK OF DR. LISA A. HARRIS, ED. D.

PRINCIPAL

Welcome to the fourth edition of our Salesian Beacon. We wish to thank the many readers who have contacted us to compliment the publication. The publication is a labor of love. Faculty, staff, and parent support assists us in the creative process of putting this project together. It is our hope that the newsletter keeps you up to date on the exciting events occurring here at Saints Peter and Paul School. We value your interest and your support. As you all know, *Once a Salesian Always a Salesian*. We have enjoyed hearing from you!

The theme for the 2007-2008 academic school year is *Catholic Schools Light the Way*. It is our hope and desire that our educational program will light the way for our students to achieve their goals. We create an environment that provides a strong academic foundation for our students and a rich spiritual formation as well. Our students graduate from Saints Peter and Paul School and they go off to high school and become successful young adults. We consider this a job well done.

In order for us to continue to provide the well-balanced program we have created, we rely on the generosity of our Salesian supporters to keep our school

strong. We are fortunate to have had a very successful Kindergarten recruiting year and we now have a waiting list for the 2008-2009 school year. Interest in Saints Peter and Paul School is high and we feel fortunate to have families eager to provide a Salesian education for their children. Our next goal is to keep the Salesian education available to all who are interested. This means we need to grow a scholarship program. We need your help to do this.

Please consider a donation to our scholarship fund so that no child gets turned away from our school due to lack of funds. Our goal for 2008 is to have the means to support the families who want to be at Saints Peter and Paul School but are not able to fully meet the financial obligations of our program. Many of you have made donations in the past and we are very grateful for your generosity. Please keep Saints Peter and Paul Scholarship Program

in your thoughts. You can be the light that guides our youth to a bright tomorrow.

With gratitude and prayers,

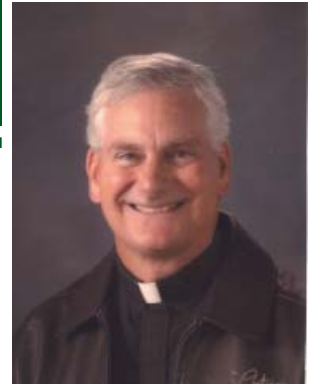
Dr. Lisa Harris

Principal

"We create an environment that provides a strong academic foundation for our students and a rich spiritual formation as well."

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

REV. JOHN ITZAINA, SDB



Dear Friends,

Recently, Dr. Harris, our school principal, wanted me to say something at the school assembly on the feast of St. John Bosco. After addressing both the students and parents in attendance, I was surprised and heartened by the students' recitation of the *Peacemaker Prayer*. The students recite it every day at the assembly that begins school, so they knew it by heart. They begin fittingly with the Salute to the Flag; pray for peace in the world and in their families; invoke our Salesian saints, Mary Help of Christians, St. John Bosco, and St. Mary Mazzarello; then recite this prayer,

Making Peace Must Start With Me

I promise to be a peacemaker wherever I go.

I can make a difference with my actions.

Together, we can make the world a better place,

One person at a time.

While parents and benefactors of Saints Peter and Paul Salesian School are supposed to be good models for the young, especially as *honest citizens and good Christians*, something that Don Bosco repeated again and again, perhaps the young students of our school are beacons of light for all the grown-ups in their concerted effort to be peacemakers in word and deed.

We congratulate parents, friends, supporters, faculty and staff, and students of Saints Peter and Paul Salesian School in supporting this most important Christian goal of peace in our families and in the world.

Fr. John Itzaina, SDB

Pastor



FROM THE DESK OF SR. PHUONG NGUYEN, FMA

VICE PRINCIPAL

Dear Salesian Family,

It is indeed a wonderful blessing to be back at Sts. Peter & Paul Salesian School

and Community. I can't believe it has been seven years since I have been gone. Of course, all my past pupils are in high schools and colleges already. I am very proud of them!

Now, I enjoy working and helping the new generation. They are open to learning and are very friendly. It has been great getting to know them and their fami-

lies. St. John Bosco believed that nobody comes to our Salesian Family by chance; rather it is the Blessed Mother who brings them. May Mary continue to be our mother, teacher, and guide. I thank you for who you are and be assured of prayers for you and your loved ones.

Gratefully in the Lord,

Sr. Phuong, FMA

Vice Principal

THE PRE-K COUNTS TO 20!

LAURA KICUÑA PRE-K STAFF

On December 8, 2007, the Laura Vicuña Pre-K celebrated its twentieth anniversary in style. In an evening just for the grown-ups, over 175 supporters



came to the Pre-K for a fund-raising cocktail reception. Director Barbara Simons founded the Pre-K two decades ago in order to help our Kindergarten students be as

ready as possible for the start of a wonderful career at Saints Peter and Paul School. The evening raised funds that will go to improvements and new equipment in the Pre-K room.

Everyone at school helped with the event. Parents collected contributions for a silent auction; older Pre-K graduates decorated with collages of the number 20; parents and staff volunteered on set up; some of our older school students played the piano; and the delicious catering was provided by a parent of a SSPP graduate.

The evening was a testament to the loving and nurturing family spirit that is fostered by the Pre-K and Saints Peter and Paul School. Mrs. Simons adds, "Thanks to everyone who gave time, money and materials to this joyous event. Our students will benefit for years to come."



LIGHTING UP THE STAGE

BY SANDY WAYNE

Once again Sts. Peter and Paul Salesian School was blessed with three very special performances this year.



In November of 2007, several of our eighth graders had the opportunity to perform with members of the San Francisco Opera right here in our own

auditorium. This year's feature was Mozart's *The Magic Flute* Brice Lockard, Ania Boryslawska, Christian Mata, Jessamine Jaochico, Maria McDonald, O'Kori Dixon, Audrey Yu, Sabrina Montano, Michael Dong, and D.J. Harvey did a magnifi-



cent job! This is the second year the San Francisco Opera Guild has chosen Sts. Peter and Paul as one of the schools invited to perform with the opera company. As the eighth grade literature teacher, I enjoyed preparing these students for their performance. A big thanks to Ellen Ruperto, choir director, for her hard work.

Sts. Peter and Paul Salesian School kicked off the holiday season on December 11, 2007, with a performance by the visiting Sacred Heart Cathedral High School Choir who sang traditional Christmas carols along with several favorite standards. The Sacred Heart Cathedral High School Choir certainly inspired our students who were rehearsing for the Sts Peter and Paul Salesian Christmas Show produced and directed by former faculty member, Mr. Ken Kelley. On December 20th parents, school families, and parishioners were treated to an outstanding performance which included all students from Pre-K through Grade 8. If you're in the neighborhood next Christmas, please join us.



Salesian Spotlight

BY SR. PHUONG NGUYEN, FMA

90 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE AND 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY FOR THE SALESIAN SISTERS IN THE USA!

Yes, it was incredible to celebrate Sr. Jean Erickson (40 years) and Sr. Kathleen Gibson (50 years) jubilees on October 28, 2007, with

the Salesian School Family at Sts. Peter and Paul! The celebration began with a beautiful Mass planned by the students. After Mass, everybody was invited to go downstairs for an awesome banquet hosted by the PTO. The gym was decorated in gold for 50 years of religious life and rose for 40 years of religious life. The presence of the teachers, families, and friends demonstrated the beautiful family spirit that is alive here at Sts. Peter and Paul Salesian School.

Both sisters have served in many of our Salesian schools in various states. At the present, Sr. Kathleen teaches seventh and eighth grade religion while Sr. Jean teaches second grade. Sr. Kathleen's serene presence

brings God's peace to all she encounters. Sr. Jean's dedication to the education of the young is to be admired because she gives more than 100% everyday. When asked about what they would like to share about their jubilee celebration, both expressed an infinite gratitude to God for the gift of being Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, to their religious communities, to the parents and students, and to their families and friends.

Thank you Sr. Kathleen and Sr. Jean for saying "yes" to God 50 and 40 years ago. We are grateful for their fidelity and dedication to the Young. May God bless them with good health to serve for many more years!



JUBILEE: A TIME TO REJOICE, REMEMBER AND GIVE THANKS

BY SR. CELINE LOMELI, FMA

The Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco celebrate 100 years of ministry to the youth of the United States. The Salesian Sisters, also known as Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, began their educational mission in Paterson, New Jersey, on July 16, 1908. Msgr. Felix Cianci invited the Sisters to minister to the numerous Italian immigrants in need of both spiritual and material assistance. The immigrants desired to have the Mass and sacraments in their native tongue and an excellent education for their children. Over the years the Sisters extended their educational charism to New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, California, Arizona, Colorado and Canada.

The Salesian Sisters were founded by St. John Bosco and St. Mary Mazzarello in Mornese, Italy. The first fifteen Sisters professed their vows on August 5th, 1872. They soon opened schools and youth centers in northern Italy. Such was the incredible growth in the number of Sisters that by 1877, St. Mary Mazzarello and Don Bosco could send the first of many missionary expeditions to South America. The Salesian Sisters are now the largest number of perpetually professed Sisters in the Church serving in every continent. The educational principles of reason, religion and loving kindness are the hallmarks of the Salesian system of education. The Sisters give great importance to Catechesis and educational formation at all levels. By more than a century of association, the word "Salesian" has become synonymous with children, adolescents, schools, youth centers,

camp, retreats, leadership workshops, sports, drama, clubs, community service and a spiritual life that serves the Lord with joy.

The first Sisters to arrive in North Beach, San Francisco on August 19, 1950, were: Sr. Letizia Sampo, Sr. Anita Ferrari, Sr. Florence Bona, Sr. Elvira Lombardini, Sr. Veronica Milyo, Sr. Wilma Sanchez, and Sr. Irene Zaccagnino. Presently, the Sisters serve at the parishes of Sts. Peter and Paul and Corpus Christi in San Francisco, Salesian High School in Richmond and conduct Salesian Sisters School and Camp Auxilium for resident campers in Corralitos. The Sisters are also associated with the Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club located in San Francisco's North Beach. Salesian Sisters in southern California conduct St. Dominic Savio Parish School, in Bellflower and St. Mary Parish School in East Los Angeles.



The Salesian Sisters will celebrate this centennial throughout the year 2008 – 2009. They will conclude the celebration in Northern California with a solemn Mass at Sts. Peter and Paul Church on January 31, 2009 with a Grand Gala Gathering at St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco on February 28, 2009. For additional information concerning the Mass and Gala please contact: Sr. Celine Lomeli at (415) 307-0235. For vocational information and Salesian literature contact Sr. Carmen Botello at (831) 728-4700.

SALESIAN SERVICE-LEARNING

BY HARRIET SCHATZ

Salesian Service-Learning was formed four years ago when Sr. Rachel Crotti, FMA, Annie Konstin and I sat down to build a service learning program at Saints Peter and Paul School. It was truly a baby step by baby-step endeavor as we each shared our personal strengths and hopes for how we could support students to engage in, enjoy and learn from serving others in some way.

Over the years, most of what we do has been about organizing, promoting and delivering used items to people in need of what we could gather. When we ask for used Halloween costumes, warm worn coats, baby clothes, eye glasses, books etc., we can truly see how lucky we all are to have so much to give away.

This is our first year without Sr. Rachel and we miss her input and influence very much. She was great at teaching us the value of *reflection* after we completed each project.

The reflection process will always be an integral part of what we do. After each project, all of the members of *SSL* sit down and talk about what we accomplished, what we learned, what each of us valued most from the experience, what worked, what didn't work and we decide if it is a project worth repeating in the future. This is one of my favorite aspects of what we do as well as the moments of seeing our tables overflowing with items collected. I love the feeling of all of us being together in our meeting room amazed and appreciative of the abundance of generosity in our SSPP community.

In the past few months many of us in *SSL* have had the opportunity to join other Salesian families in doing a work shift at the San Francisco Food Bank. We started out by sending out our first invitation and the response was slight. When we sent out the second request for more participants, we were overwhelmed with more than 80 people who wanted to roll up their sleeves. Since only 40 of us could



work on any one shift, the SF Food Bank scheduled us for a second trip and so it went that more than 80 students with family and friends worked for three hours on Sunday, November 11, 2007 and again on Sunday, December 2, 2007. We sorted, packaged, weighed, and boxed 1000s of pounds of rice and beans so that families in the Bay Area would be able to get their portions of some basic food that a nutritious diet would require. The kids worked hard washing and relabeling cans. The warm soapy water was an added attraction as they laughed and talked and worked. The adults had a real bonding experience working on the assembly line, talking, laughing, and getting to know each other better.

I was happy and proud to participate and to witness community service at its best. Once you visit the San Francisco Food Bank you are forever a supporter. The facility and the staff win you over with their incredible operation and their earnest commitment to feeding the hungry of the Bay Area.

We will be making our work at the SF Food Bank an integral part of our commitment to service in the community. Our next shift will be in April.

Well, that's it for now. I'll keep you posted about how we grow. If there is an organization that could use our team in some way, shape or form, let me know.

Harriet Schatz is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who has been the Child and Family Counselor at Sts. Peter and Paul School since 1990. She loves watching our kids grow up to be the future caretakers of our planet.



GRANDPARENTS' DAY

BY SANDY WAYNE



On Friday February 1, 2008, Sts. Peter and Paul Salesian School held its fifth annual *Grandparents' Day*. The day began with a variety show

featuring dancing, singing, piano playing, and stand-up comedy performed by our very own students. After the show the grandparents visited their grandchildren's classrooms to observe learning in progress. Lunch was then served in the school gymnasium for the children and their visiting grandparents, several of whom who were graduates of Sts. Peter and Paul Salesian School. A grand time was had by all!

FINE ARTS NIGHT

BY DANA WAYNE AND ANGELA WALKER



Dance promotes a positive self image and discipline, which carries over to a child's academic success. On Friday, May 16th our annual Dance and Choral Night will take place. Our program has grown from thirteen 8th grade girls to almost ONE HUNDRED dancers, twenty of which are boys, ranging in age from four to fourteen. If you have not attended one of our extravaganzas, please join us. It will surely be a night to remember!

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NEA's READ ACROSS AMERICA

BY BETTY GARTHWAITE

The National Education Association's (NEA's) Read Across America, now in its eleventh year, focuses the country's attention on how important it is to motivate children to read in addition to helping them master basic skills. The nationwide reading celebration takes place each year on or near March 2, the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss, who epitomizes a love of learning.

SSPP reader volunteers converged on the morning of March 7, 2008, to celebrate the joy of reading and Dr. Seuss's 104th birthday in all classrooms, from the littlest to the oldest. Special guests (see Readers List) included SSPP Principal Dr. Lisa Harris, Sisters of Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Salesian priest Fr. Harold Danielson, President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors the Honorable Aaron Peskin, eight officers from the San Francisco Police Department's Central Station, Russ Gumina, Executive Director of the Salesian Boys and Girls Club, parents, grandparents, teachers and very special guest reader, Dr. Kevin Starr, University of Southern California Professor of History, California State Librarian Emeritus, and recipient of the 2006 National Humanities Medal.



Dr. Starr, grandparent of two of our current students, shared some history of the NEA's Read Across America celebration with the *Salesian Beacon*.

"A number of years ago the California State Library funded several community reading programs in Southern California. I know the Los Angeles Public Library was involved from the beginning. Several other cities in Los Angeles County were involved as well.

Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, nationally respected poet, literary critic, and anthologist took this program to a national level. By this time, other states were doing this as well, so the idea of a community-wide read-in was fairly common.

I have never read before in a classroom, such as I did at Sts. Peter and Paul. I am delighted that it seems to have gone well. The author I read, Jaime de Angulo, author of *Indian Tales*, was a pioneering student of Native American languages and folklore in California. He lectured on and off in the Department of Anthropology at UC Berkeley and read many of these stories on the Berkeley radio station KPFA-FM."

The celebration would not be complete without a parade by the Laura Vicuna Pre-K, and birthday cake for readers and students alike sponsored by



the SSPP dedicated PTO under the guidance of Ms. Gayle Montano and her crew. We look forward to our continued promotion of reading for all as we join in this national celebration again next year.

Readers at SSPP on NEA's Read Across America Day March 7, 2008

Diane Anderson, Terri Appiano, Lourice Biondi, Elaine Claros, Officer Fred Crisp, SFPD and seven fellow officers from Central Station SFPD, Fr. Harold Danielson, SDB, Sarah Davis, Analisa Del Prete, Jennifer Dette-Robb, Liz



Diaz, Kathleen DiGrande, Sr. Kathleen Gibson, FMA, Jill Gumina, Russ Gumina - Executive Director Salesian Boys and Girls Club, Maria Gunter, Dr. Lisa Harris - Principal, Barbara Figone Hogan, Katherine Kemiji-McDonald, Anne

Kimmel, Scott Lewis, Julie Mercer, Sr. Margaret Natal, FMA, Sr. Phuong Nguyen, FMA, Supervisor Aaron Peskin - President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Dr. Alan Robb, DDS,



Craig Rowe, Valerie Salvetti, Dr. Kevin Starr - California State Librarian Emeritus, Alida Truant, Lupe Vozar, Jim White, Elaine Yee

ACADEMIC JUNIOR HIGH DECATHLON BY MARIA GUNTER

SSPP participated in the Academic Junior High Decathlon along with 12 other schools in the San Francisco Archdiocese.

The Academic Junior High Decathlon is a competition for students in grades 6-8. Decathletes complete in ten events. Two are collaborative team efforts – a logic quiz with 20 rigorous thinking problems and a super quiz with 50 multiple choice questions on five broad academic themes. This year, our team has become experts on The Beatles, Abraham Lincoln, the Narnia series by CS Lewis, Volcanoes, and the Acts of the Apostles. The remaining eight events test individual knowledge of the Roman Catholic doctrine, English, Literature, Science, Mathematics, Current Events, Social Studies, and Fine Arts (Art and Music). Awards are given for individual and team performance, and the winning school team from each geographic diocese competes in a state championship the first Saturday of May.



In each of the past two years, our decathletes placed second and third in the individual math, religion, and current events categories. This year's competition was held at St. Pius School in Redwood City on Saturday, March 8, 2008.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We are continually updating our database. Please send us your updated contact information if it is incorrect on the mailing label.

We also want to know all about our SSPP Salesian graduates. Please send us any news that you would like to share and your story could be in our next issue: lharris@stspeterpaul.san-francisco.ca.us

In order to continue to provide an excellent learning environment for our SSPP children for many years to come, we need your support. Please take the time and make your tax deductible donation today.

“We believe in the uniqueness of each individual child and strive to provide an environment that allows each child to utilize his or her talents to the fullest.”

Dr. Lisa A. Harris, Ed.D.
Principal



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