

LEGEND:

Century Schoolbook, black: MIDWEST

Helvetica, red: Haledon 1

Goudy Old Style, green: Haledon 2

Arial, orange: Goshen, Newton, DBP

Agency FB: Tampa

AR CENA, purple: Miami

Andy, light orange: Chicago-Washington

BERMUDA SOLID, LIGHT BLUE: NY

WHAT IS THIS CALLING US TO DO TO BE A PEOPLE OF HOPE?

MIDWEST:

Find ways in our daily lives to be present with others and pick up and reflect the light of Christ to others. We do this by spreading the word about fun and formation type events through announcements in our church bulletins, talk about Don Bosco at church youth faith formation groups, have a statue of Don Bosco/ Mary help of Christians on our desk or wearing some type of religious medals to help start conversations.

We also talked about taking time to pray more each day and learn more about our Salesian family.

- This is calling us to reflect on the meaning of HOPE and its impact on all aspects of our lives, including our reactions to challenges and our interactions with others.
- It encourages us to deepen our Salesian charism in spirit and in composure, as we attempt to lighten and lift the spirits of those who need accompaniment and encouragement.
- Our whole presence and behavior in all circumstances needs to be a shining beacon of hope.
- In our families, communities, neighborhoods, workplaces, just everywhere, our hopeful demeanor should be evident and attractive to others as a refuge and a source of strength. All
- agreed that during these months of pandemic that the key is for us to continue to accompany those most in need.
- This is calling us to reflect on the meaning of HOPE and its impact on all aspects of our lives, including our reactions to challenges HALEDON 1
 - Doing what we do best - be present. Called to be faithful to be present regardless of the medium and challenging divides: Reaching out more to our local community members, deepening our caring relationships (don't wait till the next meeting). Common mission - hope is created and happens in caring friendships with youth and Salesian Family members. HALEDON 2
- ✓ GOSHEN, ET AL.: One "orientation to hope" which emerged from our discussion was the awareness that joy can be found even in unhappy times. It derives from our faith, the awareness of who we are, and the certainty that we are called. Reference was made to the day's readings in which Samuel and Andrew said "yes" to the Lord's call. They relied on hope which was grounded in faith learned through the prophecies of Isaiah or John the Baptist. In these uncertain times we must absolutely be certain in our Lord but we can embrace that uncertainty as an opportunity for gratitude and for hope. We can grow in this desert time.

- ◆ Discussion was made about keeping the schools and families safe by accommodating everyone and making them feel hopeful and cheerful. Also by showing them a joyful spirit and letting them know they are loved. Chris Yarnold mentioned that he revisited his personal plan of life and had been getting involved with different ministries in order to live out his promise. Pat Sobel mentioned the pandemic has given more time to focus on our families and our spiritual lives and less on the things of the world.
- ◆ Even though the pandemic has been overwhelming at times it has also called us to do things different. More on line communication, more time to do the things we sometimes have put off i.e....writing letters and communicating more words of encouragement to others. Contacting kids and their families to see how they are doing. Some people have lost close ones in their midst. We have given rays of hope amidst all the adversities.
- ◆ Fr. Dennis mentioned the increased attendance due to the virtual meeting as opposed to physically being there. More are able to partake of the spirituality days. Being a beacon of hope and keeping the faith was mentioned. Salesian accompaniment and encounter along with solidarity amongst the Salesian Family. Helping others and ourselves to avoid loneliness that comes from hopelessness. Reliance on each other and checking on others needs knowing that we are in this together. Making sure that we use our time well and how we fill it.
- ◆ Trust in God that gives us Certainty in Serenity. Mother Mary guide us on our way!
 - ✦ Sr. Teresa reminded the group that we must ponder on the Rector Mayor's words about hope. The Rector Mayor reminds us that we are a charismatic group with deep faith. Our prayer lives should remain strong and especially pray to remain hopeful.
 - ✦ Ana adds that, like our Lady during the wedding at Cana, we must walk around paying attention to the needs of others. Sometimes it takes an "inconvenience" or going out of our way to help someone in need but that is what a missionary spirit is about. MIAMI
- **Intensify our prayer, personal and in the faith community, in our families and Salesian centers. Take the time to grow in friendship with Jesus.**
- **Join in special events of the Salesian Family in the province and region. For example, the new Cooperators of El Salvador took their promises; Cooperators in the USA were able to feel part of this celebration.**

WHAT IS THIS CALLING US TO DO TO BE A PEOPLE OF HOPE AS SALESIAN FAMILY?

2.) We had a long discussion about working within the wider Salesian Family, however we need to be informed and educated as to who these individuals in the specific groups of the Salesian Family are, what their missions and strengths are, especially those within our geographic areas, so that we can begin to collaborate effectively and productively. We discussed that this Strenna encourages a long- term plan and will require us to take baby-steps, each step in prayer and with hope. HALEDON 1

Figuring out a way to set up penpals/ sister/brother groups/centers so we can connect better and know more about what others are doing and be able to pray with them MIDWEST

- Develop a strong formation plan based on the Strenna and continue to be strong, committed disciples. Wherever we are present, we begin to work on Salesian Family encounters to bring us together to reflect on and say -how do we move into action together. Examples: Congress, Spirituality Days - commit to being there.
- EPC - meets once a month and we will share the Strenna Video. The faculty and staff are living in fear. We will be showing the video to inspire them to break through the fear.
- Cooperators - Congress in July 2021 - an opportunity to share Strenna and take concrete actions

HALEDON 2


Another “orientation to hope” was the group’s acknowledgment of the good which has or could come from the challenges and separations imposed by the pandemic. Many of our ministries have been closed or altered but we can take advantage of the time we have been given “being away” to plan how to go forward. We have learned to be creative and must continue! This was especially noted in terms of religious education and formation. Effective use of social media allows us to teach, to serve, and to create community. We spoke of creating encounters in addition to webinars; places were the young can “gather” . They are comfortable and readily willing to share in this forum which is an advantage, except for those who lack the resources. One of the challenges will be how to transmit our hope, our faith to the youth who are coming of age in a time of illness, unrest, and environmental crisis. The young adults might be encouraged that “we are in the same boat” and that we will be rowing with them. GOSHEN, ET AL.

When the pandemic is over and people are ready to come back out we should have a plan of action. We should reach out to those who have become complacent. We should be more intentional in our prayers and surrender ourselves through prayer. Many await our smile, our word our presence. We must bring it to them. Showing kids that they can shine. Taking the Strenna and making it our living document for the year.

Everyone enjoyed our time together. It was suggested that we do this more frequently in helping to keep our vocation and mission together.

TAMPA

 Deborah responds that regular meetings help feed our faith and hope to live and follow Christ. It’s our call to work to be saints.

 Margarita mentioned the numbers of members in each of the different Salesian groups and reminds us that we must make a greater effort to attend meetings and become more active and to motivate each other to remain active. The biggest obstacle is “time”, but we must make it a personal goal to remain active members of the community. Our specific goals should focus on reigniting interest and participation in other members.

- Organize study days on the strenna or connect with other groups that are organizing study days. Include the voice of the young people in the study days.
- Revive the experience of the Oratory in all our presences. We would all benefit from this.
- We can organize the day of recollection on the strenna

FURTHER FEEDBACK IN THE REPORTS – QUESTION 1

- We have to initiate communication
 - To not only *be* with youth in their walk and struggle, but to also make a connection with people by sharing our own experiences.
 - We can empathize with them, we understand (esp. During this time when there are many event cancellations, the lack of touch...)
 - Don’t wait for them, we have to seek and reach out.
 - Be intentional
- To use technology to connect us with people
 - In Salesian Family Days, we have a picture of what others are doing (general global scale)...
 - Where is there a place to directly find contact information of Salesians globally, nationally, and regionally?
 - Pen Pal, someone there.
 - An idea of news being shared not just FMA with FMA, or SDB with SDB, but... entire Salesian Family with each other
 - News, prayer requests, etc.
 - *affirming the need for communication

- ✚ Margarita shared one of the bishop's words: Prayer and hope go hand in hand.
- ✚ Ana Carolina adds that she believes it's important to express joy and to see the good during the pandemic like being able to partake in this year's Salesian World event.
- ✚ Sister adds that it's truly a blessing that we were able to join other Salesians around the world.
- ✚ Kirsy adds that hope leads to joy. It is trusting that in the end we will reach salvation.
- ✚ Brother Rafael shares that he truly was inspired by the video shared by the Salesian family in Ecuador followed by a testimonial given by young people and their experience during the pandemic— "Jornadas de Espiritualidad"
- ✚ Sister Teresa says that videos are not available through the portal because of maintenance but will eventually be available.
- ✚ Brother adds that videos are also available through the Salesianos Ecuador YouTube channel and on Facebook live. Brother Rafael says he will share the links with the group and sent an email with all links to attendees.
- ✚ Kirsy reviewed the testimonial about hope—She read the document to the rest of the group, emphasizing the steps to follow (See document below).
- ✚ Helga adds that all videos are available through the YouTube channel mentioned above and Facebook by region. Helga also mentioned that this message of hope comes at a great time when we are feeling down. We are encouraged to see thousands of people around the world coming together. Definitely, prayer leads to hope and when we come together and join in prayer "feeds" our spirit to keep going and to remain strong. The youth must be encouraged to find new ways to express their talents and discover what they can do in these trying times. Too many youth are experiencing suicidal thoughts and as adults we must help them even if it's through prayer. We are people of faith and hope. We need to help one another remain strong.
- ✚ Ronald adds that Helga also indirectly mentions the third and most important virtue of love. He also adds that these trying times have made many people stronger in faith and hope. We must go beyond being good people—we must be good Christians. Being attentive to others' needs is our call—How May we help these youth? Our other mission is to remain joyful and to reach out to our neighbors. Ronald shared a testimonial about his brother who was sick with Covid and became closer to God, leaving behind bad habits like watching violent movies. Ronald believes we will be judged by our level of charity. To be Salesian means to be missionaries wherever we go and especially with the youth.
- ✚ Kirsy shared that sometimes connecting with others and practicing love or charity means a simple call. Now that we cannot visit others, a simple call can go a long way.

- Locked in with a community of 12, having a campus to get out and walk around, continued teaching. Challenges to keep things going. Share the hope we have with others, how we can be open, walk forward and move into the future
- We as a community are called to be people of hope and pray for our young people. Example: Mary Help students – part of the Joy Club visited with the sisters. The sisters mean a lot to the young people.
- Being a people of hope –means SHARE optimism and joy with others.
- Finding new ways to be open when new opportunities present themselves.
- Never forget lessons learned during pandemic times, use technologies to stay close and be there for others. Take this year to reflect, share and ask –How are we called to be different, and what is God calling us to do?
- Challenging past 12 months, despondency, not alone and have hope to share with the young.
- Despite the difficult time – have hope, virtual experience over this weekend, in Strenna video –mirror and rays of hope with the Eucharist. Importance of the Eucharist, despite how bad things get –what can I do to bring hope to others
- Connectedness, falling in love with Christ –being consumed with Christ and sharing this happiness and joy with others regardless of the encounter and medium.
- Similar to the Year of Mercy –the word was everywhere, now the word of "hope" jumps out now. Look for and find all the beautiful actions, and treasurers of our faith and share them with others. Be present with hope and pass it on.
- Hope, Faith and Charity all go together. See the situation with the eyes of faith. We are in this together. Reach out to lonely people, bring Jesus to others.
- Grow in hope –a call to trust in God more attentively. Share hope with family members (e.g. brother). Some people are still searching for what hope really is. Being witnesses of hope to others
- Strenna-"make all things new" – What was normal –will never be normal again. Place hope and trust in God.

- Young people realized that being connected digitally was not enough.
 - Young people are noticing the virtual events/encounters are not enough. Social Media – how we use it, what is the future? Good to be present virtually but does not take the place of Face-to-Face. Embrace opportunities of face-to-face. Take advantage of new technologies to create presence and caring relationships. Our video platforms are better than telephone/mobile encounters that don't have video.
 - Develop a deeper value of our relationships with the young. God is calling us to be with and among the young. Cherishing those relationships and encounters with the young.
 - Being attentive to the poor is bringing hope to others.
- Intensify our prayer, personal and in the faith community, in our families and Salesian centers. Take the time to grow in friendship with Jesus. For example, could we have Mass with the groups of the Salesian Family in our area every three months? Pray for the sick and deceased members of the Salesian Family, especially those sick from Covid. Use modern technology to join in prayer, maybe vespers together once a week. Prayer is a school of hope.
 - In Lent we usually have a day of recollection. We can organize the day of recollection on the strenna. Let's not lose this opportunity, even it has to be virtual because of the pandemic. Although we would prefer gathering in person.
 - Break through the isolation caused by the pandemic and connect with each other through digital media. Join in special events of the Salesian Family in the province and region. For example, the new Cooperators of El Salvador took their promises; Cooperators in the USA were able to feel part of this celebration. We can join in moments of formation and prayer. Another example, the series of conferences given by Fr. Pascual Chavez for the MEG province.
 - Organize study days on the strenna or connect with other groups that are organizing study days.
 - Revive the experience of the Oratory in all our presences. We would all benefit from this.
 - Don't let the limitations of the pandemic or society stop the mission. We have to persevere with creativity and initiative, especially looking for opportunities to support in-person human contact. The young people need this after so much time alone.
 - Social media can be used to create the virtual Oratory. We can meet the young where they are.
 - We feel the importance of gatherings with the groups of the Salesian Family at the local level, gatherings in which the young people would be included.
 - Include the voice of the young people in the study days. Their presence at pastoral activities, social events, formation, etc. Keep us real. Emphasize the simpler things in life, where the young can feel welcome and be integrated into the faith community.
 - Christ renews all things. We can do things with renewed energy, in new ways, reinvent the way we do things, revive the passion of Don Bosco and the Da Mihi Animas.
 - Pray for vocations to the Salesian Family. Promote vocations.
 - In the face of so much chaos, anxiety and depressions, we can give encouragement to parents, and help them find renewed hope. The parents need our help in creating healthier environments at home. Faith builds resilience. We realize we are not alone.

FURTHER FEEDBACK IN THE REPORTS: QUESTION 2

(silence)

Kesley: (loves theme of hope) Strenna bringing hope to others, helping them not be isolated- bringing them out of isolation.

Roman: We're called to be initiators of communication. Being with the youth in their walk and struggles, and sharing our own. **We can't wait.** We are called to be initiators, reaching out and going where God calls us.

Kelsey Section 2 of (?) (...) Blood- hope is like blood, we do not see it, but we need it to be there.

Stephanie: (...) Participating in mass and able to be present. It was awesome to know there was Salesians around the world praying at the same time, celebrating the same Eucharist.

Fr.'s message: this is the beginning

(?): This is where we need to go and to grow. Like Roman said, don't let this be a good thing for the last couple of days

Lisa: How do we move forward into the world and be the light of Christ in the world during this time of things being cancelled in darkness. It's a challenge but knowing there is a connection around the world. Let's keep using the technology, we have to gather together.

?: Learning about diff. groups around the world and what they're doing. In India (I think) females are promoting education, helping orphan children... we know it's there, we kinda forget about it, but just that presence in being with. I really want to and feel that desire to keep that connection. Maybe it is someone writing down a family tree of Salesians so we know who's out there.

Kelsey: 8,000 groups, idk which I belong to! Wow there's a lot –

Lisa: after seeing all the people, it would almost be kinda fun, like at Christmas, secret santa, but it would be fun to do a penpal... with someone around the world. It would be fun to have a "special friend" to encourage from another culture, a whole different part of the world, but the same mission.

Kelsey: and some of the struggles too, this pandemic, this is something we're all dealing with

Stephanie: So many people globally said people have made that desire to be with, to touch in some way to touch and be with other people, and it speaks to Salesians too, we have internal hope and joy from being with others, and animating around... we know hope this (COVID, separation) is not a good feeling.

Joyce: (Previously had miscarriage) people have desperation, is there hope for anything? When my mom got cancer, first thing I looked up was the possibilities, the information on cancer, the possibilities of dying... and I got depressed. My one hope, does God answer my prayers? And He did.

St. Mary Community: ...Rector major picking hope, there couldn't have been a better topic. If you don't have hope, life is terrible. Hope we're all going to go get out of this. We have vaccine.... We can get back together again. I miss being with people. Being with family, esp. at Christmas it killed me bc. That's such an impt day with our family, being together... because I was going to watch baby, it was hard. A lot of them didn't wear masks as I suspected... I missed it. And touching people. Not touching people is so hard.. .and that's so hard. We're going to get back into the semblance of normalcy.

Kelsey: this is not to come up with answers... but ideas to move us into hope. To help spark and moving forward.

Stephanie: maybe it is finding common audio and language... or add another language.

Stephanie: Missing that connection- intentionally reaching out... maybe what would help would be a contact list. I kind of got lost, Salesian Mission, SDB, FMA, etc... there's a loss of source. When you go to a conference in person, and just be with the person, there's a joy that's there.

Elizabeth: I would love to connect across the world, but even just the different part of the U.S.... I was able to pull just some cooperators from across the country would be a great event. I don't even know all the ministries in the Eastern Province that we're in... I would love to connect with *other* Salesians.

Lisa: When an aspirant from Honduras came in... Her sister in law lost their house, etc. we are isolated from hearing about it. Some of the big catastrophes... we don't hear about it. Like sponsoring a kid, it would be nice to hear about it.

Stephanie: I know, when we were hearing from Fr. Tom, about priests and brothers from COVID, losing their brothers... it isn't something I heard, I could've added to my prayers. Not just the FMA group... but something as an entire Salesian Family.

Roman: This is a Salesian Family (the benefits of...) I've been lazy lately, not exercising, being cooped up... it's impacting everything. My attitude and everything. So God is telling me, "get out"... I had breakfast today with a family

from Africa one-on-one and I asked “what do you think?” and we’re going to start working out together MWF... me *sharing* that dryness, something new is going to move forward.

Kelsey: Makes me think of song *Don't Get Comfortable* that's kind of like, nope! Keep going! don't get comfortable with what you're doing (idea; to stay stagnant)....

Roman: If I'm working out by myself, it's accountable if I'm going to be meeting there. Sometimes we can't do things on our own...

Joyce: we can do one just for Salesians

Roman: You want me to do it on the treadmill?? (laughs, motions to phone zoom while walking)

Joyce: ...I go downstairs to exercise with people... makes difference to have someone there, hold you for accountability, someone there.

Fr. John: I'm just about ready... I've been a little bit on theological reflecting... In the beginning I found it hard to get with the whole idea of hope. Whatever “new normal” will be. Obviously our anchor of hope is the Word, it's God. Looking to the future with a certain amount of confidence.. there is something there that makes it worthwhile. A certainty to the idea of hope and a confidence... the LORD is out there in the future as well as in the present. We have the future. And that confidence allows us to make all those efforts that we're trying to do. The idea of hope is, what gives me the reason why? We're going to be successful in some of it, and maybe not in some of it. But the confidence in certainty, we're moving into the future. What I heard right now, which I think is great, is to get ourselves connected with the Salesian family. To find a purpose. To find out where, what's going on to walk together in the future...

I'm inspired by a lot of it, but I'm still in the beginning of sorting it out. But we're still in beginning of the year... Okay- Amen!

Elizabeth: Hope isn't a solution or that “everything is okay”... but that knowing that you're not alone. Showing [a person] that *you're loved*... that *I'm there*.

Kelsey: to go off of that (not everyone knows they're loved, or that someone is there).... (In her experience w/ Speech Therapy) how many kids I have seen that don't have that person who loves them or don't have that sense of belonging and safety... trying to provide that virtually for some of those kids and making that connection.] Mom got her logged on, child didn't know what was going on... kid looked at me GOT EXCITED, ah! I have made connection with that kid. But it is hard in the virtual world now to do that at times.

Joyce: You can extend that out, I know I've been lazy too Roman. Like going to the grocery store. It's so convenient to order online. If you *do* go out in public, it's strange, it's a weird feeling.. no one wants to talk to each other. So as Salesians, keep our joy and do the same thing as usual. Even with a mask, you can still say “HI” right? Being yourself like you were before the pandemic, just say hi to everybody.

Me: I like that, picturing makes me happy

Joyce: Going to the store- it's been 10 months now? Maybe we can raid the grocery store and say “HI” to as many people as possible.

Kelsey: even with mask, you can tell person is smiling, or not....

Stephanie: there is a gentleman who has been doing a Rosary reflection, in the spirit of St. Dominic Savio.. through [] and her rosary movement, met up with priest from Poland who met JPII who met him as a youth.... “who seemed lost” and we ended up with a pope!... I heard from several people. That Jesus is that connection and hope. Abraham on mount, God will provide. Christ came, died on the same mountain. He is truly new lamb and new hope. We are one people, through Jesus and with Jesus, if we *remember* that connection in our hearts, even if we're not so hopeful, sending that... I did have a miscarriage. That bottom, that complete empty.... If we allow God in and share that emptiness with others. I think in a way, my faith has grown so much stronger in the LORD... this hope for me. I love that idea of hope, being light of Christ for the world. “The light of the candle”... take your light to the world bc we don't know them

Sue: I'm always quiet (in response to Kelsey)... I like that idea of hope. To Bring light of Christ to world. I particularly love that... to be the first person people see (in the clinic) that hope. Saying "have a blessed day" as they leave... people are so appreciative. I'm sorry we're still do isolated, but I've been doing my very best to reach out by telephone, by zoom, reaching out by text. Esp. my sister (Leukemia diagnosis), Bethany's family... esp hard for our friends, and all of you who knew here.

Stephanie: Bethnay was a cooperater, move to AZ, mid-Dec COVID.... Passed away on Monday. I feel like we have a special Salesian angel in heaven. When I think of her I smile, and think of her family. Idk if I ever met her in person.. She was in hospital, O2 in her nose, and she asked us to pray with her. You could feel Holy Spirit, so powerful and so strong.

Sue: H.S. always shone through Bethany.

Stephanie: I want to be like her and show that bubbly spirit to others.

Kelsey: other question... (always welcome to talk on other questions too) **How do we share this experience (conference, weekend) and its calling of us in our local area w/ rest of Salesian Family, through formative encounters, Salesian Family Days, and strong orientation to mission.....** it kinda goes hand in hand how to share that hope. Sharing on Rector Major's strenna. Maybe you have some of your Cooperators... sharing that with them, the parts you experienced. I know our St. Charles group... we have play and praise night. We're going to do worship and praise and games to share Salesian hope with all those we can. That's our hope to share.... Like this weekend, everyone connecting from everywhere else... our St. Charles group is unique, we kind of live all over, but all of us who live in IL come from diff. parishes also.

Stephanie: I think Sr. Denise sent to all of us too... a little reflection from Strenna, at min. will share with our centers. Here are 8 things... man there's so much here. This closing prayer too, he's still one of my favorite theological writers, he hits nail on the head sometimes... there's our closing prayer. Eah. There's a lot here.

Kelsey: there's a lot in the strenna too, I skimmed and picked out some stuff

Joyce: way I share on personal level... Linked In, FB, social media, "I am a Catholic Salesian"

On a personal level, people know we are Salesian Cooperators, they don't know what we do. It is hard to spread the word sometimes, but I guess one way to do it now, is to do it virtually. Like that virtual St. DB day, play and praise... I spread through hope schools, I think they posted in our bulletin...

Kelsey: one of our members who isn't here today does a beautiful bulletin saint corner, posts on GoogleDrive for us to pass out to others for their bulletins, so we can put it on Salesian Missions... I'm part of Young Adult faith and fellowship group. There's always someone, no matter how many times, continual reminders of what we do... there's always someone who says "what's that?"

Stephanie: (rector major...something about new book... it looked like he showed a digital image. And also physical copies in several languages...) It was so brief, but I thought, "man that sounds amazing!"

Fr.: when?

Joyce: end of the world presentation

Fr.: I do have link for digital version... reminding me, I wonder if we could exchange emails to keep in contact

Kelsey: We have that, everyone give permission? (yes), Elizabeth, our tech person can send it out.

Fr. John Puntino: I had idea about formative encounters, I've been putting together PP for our monthly meetings. The difficulty is it needs a narrator, otherwise you won't understand just the picture and few phrases that is there.... Is there a way to connect that with other people....

I thought of a good way to share Salesians. Just have a picture of DB on your desk or something... they may not recognize "Salesian" but they will recognize DB.

Lisa: My license plate says same. Everyone asks "what is that?"

Stephanie: Lisa used to work at a jail, she would have DB in Italian. Boys always asked, “what is that?” I couldn’t share religion, unless they asked. Same thing with (?)—if no desk, medal. Medal of DB. “What’s that all about?”

Kelsey: one of my little boys who came in from speech said... singing from Vacation Bible School. One day he was stuck on “God loves you. You’re a child of God, God loves you.” If *they* bring it up.

Joyce: they have a new youth ministry... asking for 22-25 group leaders... had to apply. I’m excited to spread word of our Salesian families.

Me: We’re missing youth centers....

Elizabeth: Parish would allow us to do family events... I think some of it is until we get a center going (pastor open to it, to us having a place at the church to share our charism....), how can we share it in the church??

Stephanie: sometimes you have more contact with mom or dad than youth... but inviting the entire family. Sometimes it’s mom or dad who need a little extra love and hope... because eif they’re comfortable with it, they’ll be glad to let their kids hang out. There’s so much fear in our society.... Sr. Denise asked “what age?” for Praise and Play... *everybody*. “I’m working with the poorest of the poor...”it’s sometimes helpful to throw a wider net.

Lisa: (forgot...)I was just going to tell you.... For \$50, I was able to get pencils that say St. DB pray for us... at our schools we have Bosco Days, Bosco sticks... or whatever kid who was closest to me had to answer something about DB... it is awesome.

Joyce: I was wondering if we could post something during class.. I could ask religion teacher during class. I’ve seen a couple of teachers.... Who have pictures of St. DB in their classrooms. It’s just now that the Sr.’s aren’t there... there’s 3 of us Salesian Cooperators in our parish... I wonder if that too would help spread our Salesian mission about St. DB.

Stephanie; there are other ways to connect, instead of keeping it private, locked down and secure (to a point yes it needs to be).... But when we get together, realize “distance still disconnects a lot of us.” Living in Kansas,... part of me would be lost. There are a lot of ppl who don’t like virtual but saying “this is a fruit of technology once” Cat in the Hat, “try it! Try it once! Try it!”

Joyce: you don’t have to convince youth, they’re on screen anyway.

Kelsey: I think there’s also Fr. Steve in NY through FB he does mass. It’s awesome because it’s a Salesian mass... I even have my dad watching it on Sundays. (Eugene) brings in Salesian

Me: Explained about Oratory

Fr. John: I’m copying the link right now... ☺

Kelsey: this has been so wonderful, thank you for sharing your joy.

Stephanie: Taking time for prayer and our own self-development. He is our friend. Maybe it is having a friend, having someone within our groups too... maybe not globally (yet?), maybe having a prayer partner to be integrated with Jesus. Learn more. Pray more... this I think will help develop that hope to develop that Light of Christ. I feel like we’re one big melting pot in Midwest.

Kelsey: want to recap, Elizabeth: can you send out that list of emails?

Elizabeth: do you want to start with this group or all Salesian Midwest cooperators?

Kelsey: we can start here... Stephanie and Jazmin will start notes to Fr. Tom Dunne... .by 8pmEST tonight. I think that was it, this was really enjoyable. Steph and Jazmin, you want to send notes to everybody...so people remember what we talked about today and how we got to know ea. Other.

Joyce: Can I say something?(sure) I watched strenna 2 3 times... the kid is walking around beginning.... Did he pick up mirror from ground? (yeah), I was thinking what is he doing? Connecting hope... one point he was shining it in a guy’s car. Maybe that’s some way you pick up God’s light and shine it someone’s eyes to get their attention- “hey!” I thought originally, “What is he doing?” but I get it. Everyone has their own symbol. God’s light.

Roman: wasn’t someone chasing them away at some point?

Joyce: yes, encountering diff. people in their life, maybe some are open and some are not so open.

Elizabeth: before closing prayer, Sr. Denise wants a screenshot of our group

Stephanie: Fr. I will read prayer, but can you do a little blessing for us too?

Fr; I'd be happy to.

Stephanie... (prayer)

Fr. John: What I'd like to do is end with prayer for MHC.. will pull it up... here we go. (Final blessing prayer)

- Spread the good -invite a friend (to Oratory following pandemic, with the base as our schools, parishes, youth centers, et.). The young are evangelizers with us. "Come and see". Start thinking outside the box, work together.
 - Focus on- a return to the poor. We need to do more for those that are abandoned, families in disarray. Seek out poor/ most at risk youth and families -share the Gospel and hope of Christ.
 - Start with your sphere of influence: e.g. Good Night, Opportunity of growth -share with our community and with the young and other people. Take some thought of the Strenna and perform a concrete action to bring hope to the young and others we encounter.
 - A formative encounter can be done informally. "Moments of a ray of light" - e.g. reaching out to someone who is ill, etc.
 - Examples: of Virtual Camp and Oratory -Good news and activities (conversations, games, crafts, faith, etc.)
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- Intensify our prayer, personal and in the faith community, in our families and Salesian centers. Take the time to grow in friendship with Jesus. For example, could we have Mass with the groups of the Salesian Family in our area every three months? Pray for the sick and deceased members of the Salesian Family, especially those sick from Covid. Use modern technology to join in prayer, maybe vespers together once a week. Prayer is a school of hope.
 - In Lent we usually have a day of recollection. We can organize the day of recollection on the strenna. Let's not lose this opportunity, even it has to be virtual because of the pandemic. Although we would prefer gathering in person.
 - Break through the isolation caused by the pandemic and connect with each other through digital media. Join in special events of the Salesian Family in the province and region. For example, the new Cooperators of El Salvador took their promises; Cooperators in the USA were able to feel part of this celebration. We can join in moments of formation and prayer. Another example, the series of conferences given by Fr. Pascual Chavez for the MEG province.
 - Organize study days on the strenna or connect with other groups that are organizing study days.
 - Revive the experience of the Oratory in all our presences. We would all benefit from this.
 - Don't let the limitations of the pandemic or society stop the mission. We have to persevere with creativity and initiative, especially looking for opportunities to support in-person human contact. The young people need this after so much time alone.
 - Social media can be used to create the virtual Oratory. We can meet the young where they are.
 - We feel the importance of gatherings with the groups of the Salesian Family at the local level, gatherings in which the young people would be included.
 - Include the voice of the young people in the study days. Their presence at pastoral activities, social events, formation, etc. keep us real. Emphasize the simpler things in life, where the young can feel welcome and be integrated into the faith community.
 - Christ renews all things. We can do things with renewed energy, in new ways, reinvent the way we do things, revive the passion of Don Bosco and the Da Mihi Animas.
 - Pray for vocations to the Salesian Family. Promote vocations.
 - In the face of so much chaos, anxiety and depressions, we can give encouragement to parents, and help them find renewed hope. The parents need our help in creating healthier environments at home. Faith builds resilience. We realize we are not alone.

- ✦ Brother Rafael summed up our meeting and thanked the group for sharing. He also sent an email with all links and documents shared during the weekend.
- ✦ Angela gave thanks to Rafael for his faith and enthusiasm—She feels joy for his fiat and commits to pray for him and for his formation.

REMEMBERING THIS EXPERIENCE – SHARE ONE MEMORABLE WORD, THOUGHT, EXPERIENCE THAT YOU CONNECTED DEEPLY WITH DURING THIS WEEKEND...

- Mass of Rector Major – Don Bosco celebrated Mass on that altar and was aware of how Mary was so active in his life and ours.
 - Together: things are more hopeful.
 - What does it mean to be Salesian Family – the high numbers of those that gathered over this weekend speaks volumes of commitment to charism. Awareness and gratitude of the beautiful charism we have been given.
 - Our Blessed Mother –it has been said that Mary was a single Mother. Please pause and reflect on Joseph’s role, – ”Joseph was there, he was present” – bring back the family. Mary was not alone. Joseph was there –we need them both, we need the family. We need to give witness to the family and strengthen families.
 - Largest religious family in the world, we can be such a force. We are given the foundation of Faith, Hope and Charity. What we can do with such a force when we have God directing us. The impossible becomes possible.
 - Struck by the Video – the light of the mirror. The sun is always shining and we as Salesians need to reflect the hope and joy. So many families are needy and not in touch with these beliefs and values – we need to get them involved and share the “good news”.
 - Hope is cultivated in friendships and the work we perform – the openness to new ideas for collaborating and ministering with others.
- Intensity—these days have been full of meaningful presentations and intense feelings, especially unity with the Salesian Family throughout the world.
 - The participation of the Rector Major had a great impact. He was inspired by the Holy Spirit to choose this strenna. His comments were inspiring. There is a familiarity in his style of leadership, we feel close to him. He speaks with eloquence, and reminds us of Don Bosco.
 - The Bishop’s reflections were profound and meaningful. He included concrete proposals about hope. He told us to change the dialogue, not getting stuck in our head, but move to dialogue from the heart and with the heart, as if we were talking among family.
 - We feel connected with the thousands of people in the Salesian Family throughout the world, and even closer to those in our region.
 - We liked getting to know better some of the groups of the Salesian Family. As the Rector Major pointed out: you cannot love what you do not know. Great that we received the book on the Salesian Family that the Rector Major highlighted.
 - Hope is life. It like blood to the body. If there is no blood, there is no life. If there is no hope, there is no life.
 - We can have an intellectual understanding of hope and faith, but they must be in our hearts and actions. Prayer helps translate hope into commitment and action.
 - This was a marvelous experience of the spirit of Don Bosco, do diverse in expressions and geography. The Salesian charism is truly the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - This has been a lot to absorb in a few days.
 - This experience inspires us to be bearers of hope, to be light. In the darkness of society today, we Salesians must bring light into the world, especially to the world of the young and their families.
 - I feel a special connection to the presentation on the Hijas del Divino Salvador, because of personal contact with them while in El Salvador.
 - We have been able to overcome the limitations of the pandemic with the effective use of modern technology.

- Several of the people in this group appreciated the remarks by Fr. Timosi and the team from the Center of Ongoing Formation in Quito. We would like to receive their written comments to read them again. Timosi encouraged us to relate our realities to the Oratory, not as an institution or program, but as something we do everywhere, a charismatic experience in which we are mediators. Like the original Oratory, we trust in Mary Help of Christians, and involve the young as active members (protagonists).
- The Bishop's comments guided us to reflect on how to live with hope. We need to listen to the cries of the young and sow seeds of hope. We need to go out to encounter those who need hope, to be a Church going out. We cannot be closed in on ourselves in comfortable surroundings, expecting the people to be coming to us. We need to go out.
- Perseverance. How much the young need someone to talk with, someone to go out to meet them where they are, to be signs of God's love for them. We can't be waiting for them to come to us.
- The young people are signs of hope for us Salesians, even if sometimes they are overlooked by society.
- Christ is our hope. A Christian without hope is not a real Christian. Christ at the center of our lives gives us hope. We experience a living hope, like the Resurrection, a hope we want to communicate, like the Good News.
- The images of young people in Valdocco was inspiring. We hope to go there some day.
- This phrase struck me, "I have a family that loves me, the Salesian Family." It is an affirmation and a challenge. We can see it in so many past pupils who are proud to be known as sons/daughters of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello. They are enthusiastic to be connected with the Salesian reality wherever they go in the world.
- To work with the young is to believe in hope. The Salesian Family forms a world-wide network of hope! We are mediators of hope.
- Thanks to Mary Help of Christians, who guided Don Bosco and will guide us.

What Was YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THESE SPIRITUALITY DAYS?

- The Rector Major's homily on Sunday.
- The testimony of the vice-provincial of Ecuador who spoke about Don Bosco sending out missionaries as an expression of sowing hope, even when the needs were so great in Europe. Salesians, especially missionaries, are repeating the "fiat" of Mary and those first Salesian missionaries.
- The Rector Major's comments on Friday and at other times. It feels like the world has been beaten up, and it is waiting for hope from us. The Pope expects us to be active witnesses of hope.
- Remembering the importance of prayer. To ask for the grace to do God's will, to have an openness to do God's will, like missionaries. With prayer, our mentality changes, our approach to pastoral ministry and pastoral planning changes. More God, less us.
- The message that hope is concrete, practical, integral to our relationship with God and with others, less talk and more action.
- The interventions from the team in Quito, relating hope to the Oratory and to our Salesian reality today.
- The "good nights" from the regionals, because we got to see them and know them better.
- The opportunity to know more about Don Albera.