



# THE BOSCO-LINK

A monthly publication of the Youth Ministry Team @ Bosco

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***“Today as in the past, people who wish to be Christ's disciples are called to go against the tide,”***

*Benedict XVI, to the Italian Catholic University Federation, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2007*

## **Some of the Groups through during November :**

**LoveMatters:** Masibambane Gr 7 (48); Orange Farm Parishes(40).

**Retreats etc:** St Peter Claver (50); Finetown (165); Holy Family Gr 11 (80); Masclenyana (150);

**Own programmes:** Hector Peterson Primary (150); Word Centre (100); Free Baptist Church (70);

PATCO; SPDO (20); Jesemiel Ministrires (35); Hope Restoration (20); Thokosa Methodist (30); St Therese Alberton (150); Jackson drift (250).

## A few Comments from LoveMatters Participants

I have learnt to make choices and now know how much love matters

It has helped me to gain more and more confidence

That love is not all about sex.

I have changed by attitude towards my teen stage.

To abstain until marriage.

What I learnt was that pregnancy and sex are the most precious gifts from God when you're married.

I have discovered how to stand my ground.

This experience has shaped my values and in turn strengthened them.

The members of Bosco are the best.

I came here with an empty brain but today I'm going home to make right choices.



## **From the Rector's keyboard:**

8<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Gentle Reader,

The 8<sup>th</sup> December, today as I type, is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. It is a special Feast Day on the Salesian calendar. One may wonder why!

When Don Bosco began or celebrated anything important with his works he took as the significant date what was to be the day of declaration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. He relates his first practical step in this direction when he met Bart Garelli on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, his very first pupil. Lemoyne records: "He dearly loved the Immaculate Conception in which he firmly believed, although the church was yet to proclaim it a dogma of faith." The growth of Don Bosco's work always seemed to peak on the 8<sup>th</sup> Dec. In 1844 – he blessed his first chapel in honour of St Francis de Sales; In 1847 he opened St Aloysius Oratory. The incidents continue...it was Don Bosco's favourite feastday, even more so when on the 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 1854 the Dogma was defined by Pope Pius IX.

What is this dogma about...it holds that Mary was untouched by sin from the moment of her conception. In other words that she was born free from original sin and remained free from sin the

rest of her life. It is only fitting that God should want Mary free from sin as she would be the mother of Jesus. Does this sound impossible??...in human terms it goes beyond our grasp of intellect or logic...that is why it is a matter of faith.

Are we able to link the **impossible** in human terms of God's intervention in human history and our faith in being called to be part of this mystery as sisters and brothers of Jesus? This is not about flashy miracles...this is about our humanity being woven into the mysterious fabric of God's eternal plan. "Elizabeth in her old age is with child".... "Virgin and sinless Mary, blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus." In Mary, the child Jesus is an announcement of God's power at work in the world, in people.

Don Bosco dedicated his seemingly impossible undertakings on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, entrusting them and the care and protection of Mary. If God could work the impossible in Mary with her cooperation, then Don Bosco's insight was to cooperate with Mary so that through her the impossible may once again be manifest to God's greater glory in the works that he and his Salesians undertook.

Thus it is that the celebration of the feast of the Immaculate Conception once more pin point's God's interaction with Mary, and also with and through someone like Don Bosco and even, dare I say, us too. Do we believe in the possibility of the impossible? Mary did! Don Bosco did!

*Have a blessed and graceful Christmas Celebration.*

*Blessings and peace*

*Fr Robert*

Fr Robert Gore SDB

#### Past Pupil Notes:

Klara Steenkamp (Nee Fekete) is visiting from Australia during December. Landed on the 26<sup>th</sup> November, just missing the last Sunday November gathering.

Grant van Dassie and extended family showed for the PP gathering. The weather was great for Gauteng! Lovely warm swimming pool sunshine, with a quick downpour, followed by more sunshine. Also seen was Vincent Puglia and Elias de Gouvia. A couple of other PPs dropped in but did not hang around too long.

Other contacts: Michael White dropped in with his young daughter. Brian Garrett called

#### News Snippets from the Community

1. On the evening of November the 1<sup>st</sup>...vigil of All Souls Day, we celebrated Mass in the Bosco cemetery calling to mind in our prayers all those buried there, and all our deceased family members and friends of Bosco.
2. The Salesian Planning and Development Office held meetings of the Salesians and staff involved in youth projects over two days, firstly in Cape Town and secondly in Johannesburg.
3. Bro Vincent Thai Quang Hoang arrived from Vietnam to join us at Bosco to improve his English before he goes to assist in the Salesian Mission in Lesotho.
4. 17<sup>th</sup> November was really special for us as Bro Alberto Villalba was ordained a priest at his home in Paraguay. Fr Francois Dufour represented all of us at the ordination.
5. The younger SDBs and Volunteers visited Malealea in Lesotho for a night to do some exploration of the Mountain Kingdom on horseback.
6. A group of young people from the Parish made their First Holy Communion on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>.

7. Bro Peter Trung Hieu Nguyen left our community after almost a year to join the Manzini community where he had been destined from the start. Visa problems had hampered a more speedy arrival in Swaziland.

## **LIFE ISSUES**

The Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute has pointed out that UN agencies calling for a "right to abortion" base their arguments on maternal death statistics which they themselves admit are either lacking or unreliable. A 2005 report on maternal mortality by UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA and the World Bank said there was a lack of reliable data from developing countries. Yet 99% of the maternal deaths they estimate are said to occur in such countries. Dr Joseph Chamie, former head of the UN statistics divisions said the figures can't be proved. UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA were involved in the recent Women Deliver conference which called for a global right to abortion in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals target for reducing maternal mortality. [[Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, 1 November](#)]

More than 80,000 girls aged 13 to 16 attended contraception clinics in Britain last year. The proportion of under 16s seeking advice has risen from six percent to 8.5% over the last decade. Mr Mike Judge of the Christian Institute said that children had been let down by not being empowered to delay sexual activity. [[Telegraph, 30 October](#)]

Research published in the *British Medical Journal* found that women who chose to have caesarean section for non-medical reasons were putting themselves and their babies at greater risk of serious complications. Experts said the study was a reminder that caesarean sections carried risks and should not be seen as just another delivery option. [[Telegraph, 31 October](#), and [Sun, 31 October](#)]

A study published in the *Journal of Reproductive Medicine* suggests a link between abortion and premature birth in subsequent pregnancies, which, in turn, increases the child's risk of cerebral palsy due to low birth-weight. The study, led by Dr Byron Calhoun, professor and vice chair of obstetrics and gynecology at West Virginia University, used data from more than four million births and found that about one third of births at 32 weeks' gestation or less were linked to prior abortions. About eight percent of low birth-weight premature babies developed cerebral palsy. Previous research from the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences also found a correlation between abortion and subsequent premature births. [[LifeNews, 1 November](#)]

Population decline in Russia has reportedly led to the health ministry requiring women seeking abortion to sign a document which describes the procedure's medical risks. Doctors would also need to confirm that they had told the woman about potential problems and about alternatives. Russia has more abortions than births. [[LifeSite, 8 November](#)]

A commentary by Mr Dennis Byrne in the *Chicago Tribune* has noted that the mainstream media's almost universal decision to ignore a study linking abortion and breast cancer can only result in more hurt to women. The study, by Mr Patrick Carroll, a statistician and actuary, published in the *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons*, found that abortion was "the best predictor of breast cancer" in eight European countries. [[LifeSite, 12 November](#), [Chicago Tribune 22 October](#)]

Professor Ian Wilmut, who cloned Dolly the sheep, has announced that he will no longer pursue cloning to obtain human stem cells for therapies. He has decided that there is greater potential in a technique pioneered using mice by Shinya Yamanaka at Kyoto University, Japan, in which stem cells have been developed from fragments of skin. [[Scotland on Sunday, 18 November](#)]

Source of info: SPUC

### **Some strange, funny and thought provoking stuff received at BYC:**

A story is told of a youth shining shoes in a Mall. A silver medal danced on his neck as he slapped his shine cloth on the man's shoes. After watching the medal for a moment or two the man said curiously: "Sonny, what's that hardware around your neck?"

"It's a medal of the mother of Jesus" said the boy.

"But why her medal?" retorted the man, "She's no different from your mother."

"You could be right," said the boy, but there's a big difference between her son and me!"

[Life is tough. It's even tougher if you're stupid !!](#)

*We all have our stories to tell...see if any match the following...*

Recently, when I went to McDonald's I saw on the menu that you could have an order of 6, 9 or 12 Chicken McNuggets. I asked for a half dozen nuggets. "We don't have half dozen nuggets," said the teenager at the counter. "You don't?" I replied. "We only have six, nine, or twelve," was the

reply. "So I can't order half dozen nuggets, but I can order six?" "That's right." So I shook my head and ordered six McNuggets

I was checking out at the local supermarket with just a few items and the lady behind me put her things on the belt close to mine. I picked up one of those "dividers" that they keep by the cash register and placed it between our things so they wouldn't get mixed. After the girl had scanned all of my items, she picked up the "divider", looking it all over for the bar code so she could scan it. Not finding the bar code she said to me, "Do you know how much this is?" I told her "I've changed my mind, I don't think I'll buy that today." She said "OK," and I paid her for the things and left. She had no clue as to what had just happened.

A lady at work was seen putting a credit card into her floppy drive and pulling it out very quickly. When I inquired as to what she was doing, she said she was shopping on the Internet and they kept asking for a credit card number, so she was using the ATM "thingy."

I recently saw a distraught young lady weeping beside her car. "Do you need some help?" I asked. She replied, "I knew I should have replaced the battery to this remote door opener. Now I can't get into my car. Do you think they (pointing to a distant convenience store) would have a battery to fit this?" "Hmmm, I dunno. Do you have an alarm, too?" I asked. "No, just this remote thingy," she answered, handing it and the car keys to me. As I took the key and manually unlocked the door, I replied, "Why don't you drive over there and check about the batteries?" She replied: "It's a long walk."

Several years ago, we had an Intern who was none too swift. One day she was typing and turned to a secretary and said, "I'm almost out of typing paper. What do I do?" "Just use copier machine paper," the secretary told her. With that, the intern took her last remaining blank piece of paper, put it on the photocopier and proceeded to make five "blank" copies.

I was in a car dealership a while ago, when a large motor home was towed into the garage. The front of the vehicle was in dire need of repair and the whole thing generally looked like an extra in "Twister." I asked the manager what had happened. He told me that the driver had set the "cruise control" and then went in the back to make a sandwich.

My neighbour works in the operations department in the central office of a large bank. Employees in the field call him when they have problems with their computers. One night he got a call from a woman in one of the branch banks who had this question: "I've got smoke coming from the back of my terminal. Do you guys have a fire downtown?"

Police in Radnor, Pa. interrogated a suspect by placing a metal colander on his head and connecting it with wires to a photocopy machine. The message "He's lying!" was placed in the copier, and police pressed the copy button each time they thought the suspect wasn't telling the truth. Believing the "lie detector" was working, the suspect confessed.

A very worried mother calls 911, asking the dispatcher if she needs to take her kid to the emergency room, because the kid ate ants. The dispatcher tells her to give the kid some Benadryl and it should be fine. The mother says, I just gave him some ant killer..... Dispatcher: Rush him in to the emergency room!

They say that good things come in threes...so:

*Three things in life that, once gone, never come back*

Time Words Opportunity

*Three things in life that may never be lost*

Peace Hope Honesty

*Three things in life that are most valuable*

Love Self Confidence Friends

*Three things in life that are never certain*

Dreams Success Fortune

*Three things that make a man/woman*

Hard work Sincerity Commitment

*Three things in life that can destroy a man/woman*

Alcohol Pride Anger

*Three things in life that, once lost, hard to build-up*

Respect Trust Friends

*Three things in life that never fail*

True Love Determination Belief

I dialled a number and got the following recording:

"I am not available right now, but thank you for caring enough to call. I am making some changes in my life. Please leave a message after the beep. If I do not return your call, you are one of the changes."

*Thoughts*

Remember, when the world pushes you to your knees, you're in the perfect position to pray.

Being happy doesn't mean everything's perfect. It means you've decided to see beyond the imperfections.

IDLE THOUGHTS OF A RETIREE'S IDLE MIND

I planted some bird seed. A bird came up. Now I don't know what to feed it.

I had amnesia once -- or twice.

I went to San Francisco. I found someone's heart. Now what?

Protons have mass? I didn't even know they were Catholic.

All I ask is a chance to prove that money can't make me happy.

If the world were a logical place, men would be the ones who ride horses sidesaddle..

What is a "free" gift? Aren't all gifts free?

They told me I was gullible and I believed them.

Teach a child to be polite and courteous in the home and, when he grows up, he'll never be able to merge his car onto the freeway.

Experience is the thing you have left when everything else is gone.

One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.

My weight is perfect for my height -- which varies.

I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.

The cost of living hasn't affected its popularity.

How can there be self-help "groups"?

If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain whales?

Show me a man with both feet firmly on the ground, and I'll show you a man who can't get his pants off.

Is it me--or do buffalo wings taste like chicken?



**Advent is a time when we recall that God wants us to make something beautiful of our life. Advent is a time when we recall what God had**

**in mind for us when he created us. Advent is a time when we ask ourselves how we are using the gifts that God has given us.**