



THE BOSCO-LINK

A monthly publication of the Youth Ministry Team @ Bosco

No. 95

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September 2009 in Bosco

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Life's most urgent question is: what are you doing for others?

Martin Luther King, Jr , civil-rights leader (1929-1968)

From the Rector's keyboard:

Dear Bosco-Link Readers,

Welcome again to our short newsletter that recounts some of the activities and goings on at the Bosco Youth Centre this past month.

One of the highlights was the Conference held on the 24th September (Heritage Day) at Bishop Bavin School in Bedfordview. It was the inaugural annual conference on Youth Human Sexuality, titled “*Life and Love@schools*” The Bosco team was well represented with present members and former team members attending. There were three key sessions that subdivided the progress of the conference. Firstly: Today’s reality and how we got here; secondly: Tackling important human sexuality issues prevalent at schools today, and thirdly: Tackling the way forward.

There was a high-powered panel of speakers starting with the Minister of Basic Education. A Skype broadcast from Belgium by M. Peeters revealed to me how language forged in the West by Post-Modern intelligentsia was now finding a place in Africa and our education systems. These are not only words, but introduce and whole new value system.

We should be alert and check these new values propagated by the UN against our values as Africans so as not to be absorbed unwittingly into a Western global culture. Some of these “words” need careful thought.

“Parents” is now substituted by “Couples”; “Spouse” has become “partner”; “Happiness” has been replaced by “ Well being”; “Procreation” is no longer used...it is now “reproduction” and “reproductive health”. I could carry on!

Other speakers were equally as challenging in their presentations – giving parents, educators and youth leaders present much food for thought, and plenty of insights for action.

This Conference will be held again next year once again on Heritage Day at Bishop Bavin. Let me add that the food for the tummy was every bit as yummy!

Peace and Blessings

Fr Robert

Fr Robert Gore SDB

“Let Africa not make the same mistakes as the West”

M. Peeters.

My Experience as a short-term Volunteer.

I spent two months in Bosco Centre, South Africa and I can say that before going there I thought two months was going to be too long, but being there I realized it was too short.

As I was telling my family and friends my stories from Africa, they were asking me if I no longer remember that people in Mexico live very similar lifestyles. I realized that even though I had been raised in Mexico, with its similar lifestyles, there is something about Africa in general that caught my attention and grabbed my heart since I can remember.

My experience as a volunteer was great; it was freeing and refreshing. The people that I had the chance to live with were amazing. The programme, LoveMatters, is very comprehensive. I truly hope that the teenagers that get to attend this program can take everything, all of it, and absorb the information... it is gold, like Pam Stenzel would say.

Now that I am back home and I ponder about the last two months, it strikes me... I learned a lot and experienced something that will stay with me.

The process of adjusting back to life in the U.S. is an eye-opener. I thought I would be free and be able to drive my self up and down and live so independently. But here I am where the cost of gas (or petrol) will not let me feel free to drive anywhere! How much more freeing it is to live simply!

With all that volunteering encompasses, I am grateful I had the opportunity to do it and I really hope that all of us, volunteers, get to make a difference for someone, even if we never witness it.

I hope to go back to Africa one day... hopefully more than just one!

Gena Mar 7 September 2009

Some of the Groups through during September:

LoveMatters: Veritas College (55); McAuley House (60).

Mini-LM: St John Berchman (80);

Own Run Programmes: St Laurences College (74); Y.O.U.T.H. (40); Food and Trees (300).

Weekend Retreats: St John's Florida; Student Christian Organisation (50); United Forum Church (20); Church of Jesus Christ (240)

Day Retreats: St Patrick's, Benoni (107); Dominican Convent (144)

Community News:

1. We received the sad news that Bro Leluma's father died suddenly. Community and team members attended the funeral held in Maputsoe on Saturday 26th September. Our condolences to the family. You are remembered in our prayers. May he rest in peace.
2. Sakhile Padi and Ellen Mokaba finished their term of volunteering and moved on to greener pastures. We hope that they have gained as much from their involvement as Bosco Volunteers as we have gained from them. We wish them well in their futures.
3. Dipuo Chokwe has left the team to be married. We wish her well in her new vocation.

BOSCO CENTRE NEWS

1. Plans are progressing for the building of more double en-suite rooms, specially for adults. These will overlook the swimming pool view. Also plans are ready for the completion of our

security fence with the building of a new entrance to the Bosco Youth Centre. It is hoped that it will be inviting for visitors, but a deterrent for those with criminal intentions.

2. A number of the trees (especially the blue gums) around the property have been destroyed by fire and felled. We are looking at planting indigenous trees to keep the environment very tree friendly and proudly South African. If you wish to donate / sponsor a tree, I have been told that R100.00 would get us a sapling (*Rhus Viminalis* – White Karee) don't hesitate. See the bank details at the end of this letter!

A FEW COMMENTS FROM THE MOST RECENT LOVEMATTERS PARTICIPANTS

I will be much more careful when it comes to relationships etc. and I will have more sympathy for those living with HIV and AIDS

It has made a difference because I have learnt more about myself and made me take notice that by having a condom won't protect you

It shows me what diseases are out there and it helped me a lot to make that pledge to abstain from sex until marriage

There are no words - all I can say is I leave the love matter program a changed person for life in all good ways!!!!

About how to plan a family and the precautions

I'll get better view on a few things

Making better choices

I am more aware of what is happening with STIs and STDs, and i do not want to risk getting them

I'm now going to make sure that i have a stable partner and get tested before i get involved in any sexual behaviour

Not to have sex outside Marriage

That life is not all about having fun

It has allowed me to think more on my future and how i will live 100% abstinence

If a person really loves you they won't force you to have sex with them.

Even though you had sex and you are not pregnant it doesn't mean that you don't STI's.

You can be a recycled virgin.

The most striking thing that I learned this week is that God can forgive all your wrongs as long as you forgive yourself

That when you have sex there are a lot of consequences and I also learned a lot that if a person really loves you, then that person will wait for you. I also liked the talk with Sandile, he touched my heart because he was up for change which is scarce in this country.

The most striking thing I learnt is that no matter how hard you try/look there will always be someone with faults, not every relationship should be rushed, we are worth waiting for.

It will help me not to fall pregnant at a young age and help me to not get STI's and live a good life

It will make me think twice before doing anything irrelevant

It will help me stay a virgin until marriage and if I don't I should not have abortion if I am pregnant

They have thought me to say no to sex until marriage

I'm more informed which means I can make more informed decisions about my life

LIFE ISSUES

An international study has ranked Britain among the worst industrialised countries for the welfare of teenagers, citing a high level of sexual activity. The report, published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), compared data from 30 industrialised countries on children's welfare. Britain scored worse than many countries in areas such as teenage pregnancy, single-parent households and teenage drunkenness. [\[Daily Mail, 2 September\]](#) Anthony Ozimic of SPUC commented: "Teenagers have been left vulnerable by, among other things, government policies which effectively facilitate sexual activity. The family bonds which protect teenagers are undermined by policies such as the arranging of secret abortions for schoolgirls without parental knowledge or consent. It is worrying that the government has yet to rethink its failed policies."

Women who have an abortion may run an increased risk of subsequently giving birth to premature or low-weight babies, according to a study. Researchers from Toronto, Canada, reviewed evidence from 37 studies from around the world between 1965 and 2001. The study's author, and the UK's Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists insisted that the study should not be used to argue against abortion. [[Guardian, 16 September](#)] <http://is.gd/3kwJl> Anthony Ozimic of SPUC commented: "The more evidence which emerges about the harm abortion causes, the more the supporters of abortion insist that abortion not be restricted. We will be exposing the contradictions in their responses to the study's findings."

SPUC has said that, when Pope Benedict visits the UK next year, he will find "the valley of the culture of death". John Smeaton, national director, said: "In Britain, the government organises secret abortions on schoolgirls behind parents' backs. The chief prosecutor has today issued rules tolerating assisted suicide, under which the disabled will be treated as second-class citizens. The leaders of the major political parties all voted for sinister destructive experiments on embryonic children. I hope that Pope Benedict will issue stern reminders to church leaders and Catholic parliamentarians of their absolute duty to place the right to life from conception to natural death at the top of Britain's moral and political agenda." [[SPUC, 24 September](#)] <http://is.gd/3CLja>

Ireland is experiencing a baby boom with the highest number of births in more than a century [[BreakingNews.ie, 31 August](#)] <http://is.gd/2LbpC>

"I used to think that the brain was the most wonderful organ in my body. Then I realised who was telling me this." (Emo Philips)

Some strange, funny and thought provoking stuff received at BYC

Life Is a Gift.

Today before you say an unkind word - Think of someone who can't speak.

Before you complain about the taste of your food - Think of someone who has nothing to eat.

Today before you complain about life - Think of someone who went too early to heaven.

Before whining about the distance you drive Think of someone who walks the same distance with their feet.

And when you are tired and complain about your job - Think of the unemployed, the disabled, and those who wish they had your job.

And when depressing thoughts seem to get you down - Put a smile on your face and think: you're alive and still around

"How do I get to heaven?"

I was testing the five-year olds in my Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven.

I asked them, 'If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?' 'NO!' the children answered.

'If I cleaned the church every day and mowed the grass, would that get me into Heaven?'

Again, the answer was, 'NO!'

By now I was starting to smile. Hey, this was fun !

**May your troubles be less,
may your blessings be more,
and may nothing but happiness
come through your door!**

'Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?' I asked them again. Again, they all answered, 'NO!'

I was just bursting with pride for them.

'Well,' I continued, 'then how can I get into Heaven?'

A five-year-old boy shouted out,

'YOU GOTTA BE DEAD.'

Irena Sandler

Recently there was a death of a 98 year-old lady named Irena. During WWII Irena got permission to work in the Warsaw Ghetto as a Plumbing/Sewer specialist. She had an ' ulterior motive ' ... She KNEW what the Nazi's plans were for the Jews, (being German.) Irena smuggled infants out in the bottom of the tool box she carried and she carried in the back of her truck a burlap sack, (for larger kids.) She also had a dog in the back that she trained to bark when the Nazi soldiers let her in and out of the ghetto. The soldiers of course wanted nothing to do with the dog and the barking covered the kids/infants noises. During her time of doing this, she managed to smuggle out and save 2500 kids/infants. She was caught, and the Nazi's broke both her legs, arms and beat her severely. Irena kept a record of the names of all the kids she smuggled out and kept them in a glass jar, buried under a tree in her back yard. After the war, she tried to locate any parents that may have survived it and reunited the family. Most of course had been gassed! Those kids she helped got placed into foster family homes or adopted.

In 2009 Irena was up for the Nobel Peace Prize ... She was not selected. Al Gore won, for a slide show on Global Warming!!

**'Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world.
There are those who wake up in the morning and say,
'Good morning, Lord,' and there are those who wake up in the morning and say,
'Good Lord, it's morning.'**

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter.

Then, he put a note under the windshield wiper that read:

'I have circled the block 10 times.

If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment.

Forgive us our trespasses.'

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note

'I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job.

Lead us not into temptation.'

Swine Flu...has it been cured?

I called the Swine Flu hotline - all I got was crackling

I heard that the first symptom is that you come out in rashers.

Another is that you get the trotts.

I woke up with pig tails this morning ... Should I be worried?

The doctor asked me how long I'd had the symptoms of Swine Flu. I said it must have been about a Weeeeeeeeeeeeeek!

Apparently my mate's got Swine Flu - I think he's just telling porkies!

The only known cure for Swine Flu in humans has been found to be the liberal application of 'oinkment'. IF YOU GET AN EMAIL ABOUT SWINE FLU DELETE IT AS ITS ONLY SPAM.

Swine flu, however, is not a problem for the pigs because they're all going to be cured anyway!

I just heard on the news that, "Swine Flu could potentially be a threat to every single person in the world". Well it's a good thing I'm married then, isn't it?

TREE DONATION (or any other donation for that matter!)

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Account Name: Salesian Catholic Church
Account No. 22 431 8578 Type of Acc. Marketlink
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