

Spring 2023

# *Salesian Family Connections*



*The Magazine for Family & Friends of the  
Daughters of Mary Help of Christians*



**Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice**

*Salesiane di Don Bosco*

Mary Immaculate Province - SUO  
San Antonio - Texas (USA)

# A Message from Sr. Bernadette

Dear Friends,

St. Mary Mazzarello frequently reminded her Sisters, and the young people she ministered to, that “Joy is the sign of a heart that loves God very much.” As Christians, joy must be a part of our conversion to love throughout our life journey. Joy is not only the result of fun moments, but it may also arise from our pains, challenges, and sorrows when they are united to the redemptive suffering of Jesus.



The cover photo of Sr. Ngan Do, FMA, and her student from St. John Bosco School in San Antonio, TX, is a great example of holy joy! It reminds me of the three truths that Our Holy Father wrote in the apostolic exhortation to young people, “Christus Vivit,” which are: God infinitely loves you; Christ is your Savior; and He is alive. May this be an invitation for us all to allow Jesus, the true source of joy, to overflow through us and not be stifled. Together, let us support one another, touch hearts, and inspire minds in the radiant light of the Gospel.

With Gratitude,

*Sister Bernadette Mota, FMA*  
Director of Mission Advancement

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Mary Help of Christians**

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🌐 [SalesianSistersWest.org](http://SalesianSistersWest.org)

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## Our Mission

To provide Christian education and formation to the young, especially the poor, and women at risk; joyfully proclaim the Good News to all cultures; and promote the regeneration of a more just and humane society.

# Jubilarian Celebration

25

Sr. Thuy Virgine  
Nguyen, FMA



25

Sr. Quyen  
Pham, FMA



40

Sr. Elizabeth  
Villanueva, FMA



50

Sr. Carmen  
Botello, FMA



50

Sr. Rosann  
Ruiz, FMA



60

Sr. Theresa  
Sironi, FMA



60

Sr. Lourdes  
Trevino, FMA



70

Sr. Theresa  
Murillo, FMA



We rejoice with our eight Jubilarians who are celebrating 25, 40, 50, 60, and 70 year anniversaries of their religious consecration. We thank them for their loving service as Daughters of Mary Help of Christians!



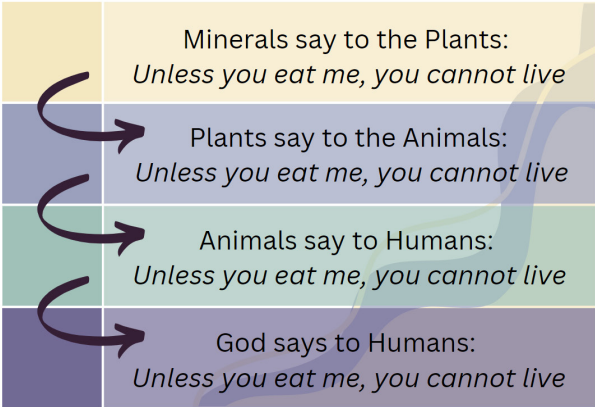
By Sr. Rosann Ruiz, FMA  
 Provincial of the Western Province



For a simple Lenten reflection, instead of an article, I thought sharing a diagram about CREATION can show us what Lent is all about. In one way or another, we’ve heard it said that people learn willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if they listen to teachers, it’s because they’re witnesses. Well, God is the perfect teacher and has given us the perfect audio visual . . . CREATION! He shows us the way to Him, perfect happiness through His creation! This is the wonderful message we read in Pope Francis’ Apostolic letter, “*Laudato Si.*”

**The Law of ANABOLISM**

The phase of metabolism in which simple substances are synthesized into the complex materials of living tissue.

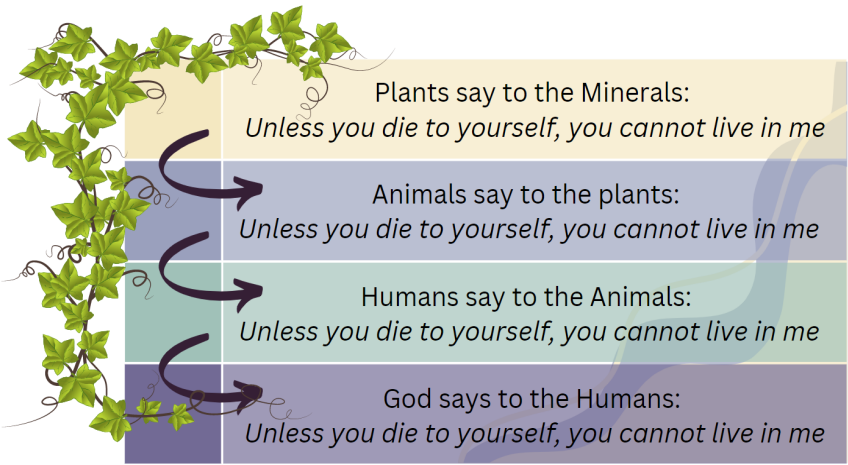






**The Law of CATABOLISM**

The metabolic breakdown of complex molecules into simpler ones. It is the opposite of anabolism.



# Summer Camp Ministry

Katherine Cristelli helps the Salesian Sisters with faith formation for the youth during the school year, and with Vacation Bible School camps during the summer. When asked to describe the Salesian Sisters, she thoughtfully replied, “Happy... spiritual... love for the children, love for each other... a happy family. They are uplifters! They lift those around them up because of their love for their faith.” She recalled her time with the Sisters with great warmth and enthusiasm.

The Salesian Sisters travel to various parishes in the Diocese of Colorado Springs for summer camps. One summer, the Sisters invited

Katherine to join in on the fun! “They started making me a part of their family,” says Katherine. “I enjoy camp because I get to see the children sing, dance, pray, and perform skits. It’s beautiful to see the children all together - the older ones taking care of the younger ones.”

Volunteering with the summer camps has taught Katherine to not be afraid of putting herself out there. As a result, she encourages other adults to give their time and talents towards the summer camp programs. “We need volunteers to help fix snacks. We need help with the younger children when they’re eating,” explains Katherine. It takes a village to carry on the Salesian mission, and the Salesian Sisters are grateful for all their volunteers and benefactors who make the summer camps possible.



For more information on our summer camps, visit [salesiansisterswest.org/camps-oratory](http://salesiansisterswest.org/camps-oratory)

# Summer Camps 2023



## CAMP AUXILIUM



**JUNE 25 - JULY 21, 2023**  
**CORRALITOS, CA**

**Dates:** June 25-July 21, 2023

**Description:** Both a residential and a day camp, girls ages 5-14 are invited to attend as campers.

**Contact:** [campauxiliumcalifornia@gmail.com](mailto:campauxiliumcalifornia@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.salesianschool.org/summercamp](http://www.salesianschool.org/summercamp)

## ST. JOHN BOSCO CAMP



**JUNE 19 - 30, 2023**  
**SAN ANTONIO, TX**

**Dates:** June 19-30, 2023

**Description:** A day camp, boys & girls ages 6-14 are invited to attend as campers.

**Contact:** [sjbsalesiancamp@gmail.com](mailto:sjbsalesiancamp@gmail.com)

**Website:** [salesiansisterswest.org/camps-oratory](http://salesiansisterswest.org/camps-oratory)

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



**VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN**  
**COLORADO SPRINGS**

**Dates:** Please see website for details

**Description:** A day camp, boys & girls entering grades K-8th are invited to attend.

**Contact:** [SalesianCampCO@gmail.com](mailto:SalesianCampCO@gmail.com)

**Website:** [salesiansisterswest.org/camps-oratory](http://salesiansisterswest.org/camps-oratory)

## Salesian Sisters' Wishlist

Every bit helps! The following giving opportunities are for our various convents and ministries. You can support one, some or all of the projects. For more information, contact us at (210) 431- 4999 or at [dma@salesiansisterswest.org](mailto:dma@salesiansisterswest.org).

### Provincial House

- Sponsor a meal for 30 Sisters
- Industrial washer & dryer
- Fresh fruit or produce
- Industrial stove
- Household cleaning supplies
- Outdoor flood lighting

### Salesian Sisters' communities throughout our Province

- Used or new cars or minivans
- New or used desktops or laptops for our convents and schools
- Educational supplies and sports equipment for schools, parishes, and camps



View our Amazon Wishlist at [salesiansisterswest.org/amazon](https://www.amazon.com/?ref=AWS_Wishlist)

Privacy Policy: Your name, address, and other information is held in confidence by our ministry and will not be shared in any way with any other organization without prior consent.



# MINISTRIES ACROSS THE U.S.





## How your support is making a positive impact:

- Serving youth in 9 dioceses, 11 parishes, and 9 Catholic schools
- Accompanying 21 young ladies at various stages of religious formation
- Bringing Christ to the young through our presence at 18 camps or youth events this summer
- Guiding 50 young women as they discern God's call through the Fiat Project



# The True Presence of Jesus



My name is Hayden, and I'm from Colorado. In our religion class with Sr. Quynh, we were asked to write an essay on the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist using evidence from the Old and New Testaments and the Eucharistic Miracles. The following is a brief version of my essay.

In the Genesis Creation story, God spoke and what He spoke came to be. He created the entire universe and everything in it by telling it to exist. This goes to show that the Word of God has power over everything.

In the Gospel of John, it is said, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This quote shows that Jesus is the Word of God and therefore has power over all creation. The miracles in the gospels give us evidence of the power of Jesus' word. One example is from Mark 4:35-41. Jesus was on a boat with His apostles when a storm came. Jesus woke up and said, "Peace! Be still," and the storm calmed.

The greatest miracle of all was at the Last Supper, where Jesus said, "This is my Body" and "This is my Blood." If everything else Jesus has said has come to be, then why should this be any different? If Jesus himself told us that, "This is my Body and Blood," it must be true because Jesus does not lie. If Jesus lied, then our entire faith would be false. St. Cyril of Jerusalem stated, "Since Christ Himself has said, 'This is My Body,' who shall dare to doubt that it is His Body?"

Why does Jesus want us to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood? It's because He wants us to "have eternal life" with Him (John 6:54). The Eucharist therefore, is our "true food and drink" to remain in Him and He in us (John 6:56). The presence



of God and His salvation are demonstrated in the Eucharist and Eucharistic miracles. Blessed Carlo Acutis created a website to show us all of the miracles sent by God regarding the Eucharist.

With all of this information in mind, I now understand and believe that Jesus is truly present - Body, Blood, Soul,

and Divinity - in the Eucharist. His promise to “stay with us until the end of time” is true (Matthew 28:20).

Bringing souls to Christ, especially the young, is at the heart of our mission. For more ways on how you can help support our mission, please visit our website at [salesiansisterswest.org/donate](https://salesiansisterswest.org/donate).



*Fishers of Men*  
**2023 Honoree**  
Daughters of Mary Help of Christians  
Western Province

Guadalupe Radio Network of South & Central TX will be honoring the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians for their contribution to the community at their 16th Annual "Fishers of Men" Benefit Dinner on April 13th.

Thank you to all of our benefactors and collaborators that join in on our mission. You are making an impact in the lives of countless young people and their families.

*Thank You*

# SOMETHING INCREDIBLY MAGICAL

*By Giancarlo Bernini, Catholic Magician*

January 31st is known amongst magicians as International Magicians' Day. It is also the Catholic feast day of St. John Bosco, the patron saint of magicians. Anyone who knows me knows how much I love St. John Bosco. He founded the Salesians, who, to this day, continue his ministry worldwide.

This year, the Salesian Sisters asked me to perform for the kids at the schools where they serve and to share a message, just as St. John Bosco would do. The order FOUNDED BY my favorite patron saint, St. John Bosco himself, asked me to perform AT St. John Bosco School, to basically DO what St. John Bosco was known for doing. On top of that, I spent the Feast Day celebrating with the Salesian Sisters!

Due to inclement weather and flights getting cancelled, I spent a few extra days with the Sisters on a sort

of "impromptu" retreat. I learned more about my patron saint and had some much-needed time to pray and spend time with the Lord. This is the closest thing I've ever done to following in the footsteps of my personal hero and patron saint. I've been performing illusion shows since I was in high school, but in my heart, this was the most meaningful show I've ever done.

On the way back home, I noticed that the person next to me on the airplane had a phone case that said "You are exactly where you need to be." Never in my life have I felt so perfectly tuned in to my vocation and identity as I am today.



[www.CatholicMagician.com](http://www.CatholicMagician.com)





# Friend a Sister Today!



## How can you join and send your donation?

Friend a Sister connects Sisters with the community to enrich faith life and friendships. Upon donating, you are matched with a Sister who offers daily prayers for your intentions, and you have the opportunity to correspond. Donations support our elderly and infirm Sisters and our mission.

**CHECK:** Fill out form below;  
check payable to Salesian Sisters.

*Salesian Sisters: DMA*  
6019 Buena Vista St.  
San Antonio, TX 78237

**ONLINE:** Sign up to donate  
monthly/annually by credit or  
debit, or checking/savings at  
[SalesianSistersWest.org/friend-a-sister](http://SalesianSistersWest.org/friend-a-sister)

*Yes, Sister, I am ready to join!*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Cell ☐ Home Phone

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



► Preferred means of  
communication  
(check all that apply):

- ☐ Mail
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Phone Call
- ☐ Text Message

► Preferred language:

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Vietnamese

► Check one:

- ☐ Match me with a Sister
- ☐ I am requesting Sister: \_\_\_\_\_

### Suggested Gift Amounts

	Monthly	Annually
<input type="radio"/>	\$15	\$180
<input type="radio"/>	\$25	\$300
<input type="radio"/>	\$50	\$600
<input type="radio"/>	\$100	\$1,200



We asked two of our young women in formation, Theresa and Kresentia, a few questions about their formation journey.

*What has the Lord been teaching you in your formation journey?*

He's teaching me love through sacrifice. Small and big sufferings in this life are meaningful through His death and resurrection. I've been coming back to Jesus at the foot of the cross, and He desires so much to transform those sufferings into joy, but it's only through the cross! It's a call to a deeper love and a deeper relationship with the Lord.



*What is the most exciting part of becoming a Sister?*

The most exciting part of becoming a Sister is that, in all things, I have been able to see the love of Christ active and present. I have especially loved seeing this coming alive in ministry, in that I have been able to do things that I never would have thought myself capable of doing before. I know that it is all the Holy Spirit, and I have so joyfully felt that presence in some of the most challenging times.



*Where have you seen the Lord at work lately?*

I have recently seen the Lord so alive in the charism of the FMA. I have fallen so in love with the rich history and deeply rooted traditions that form every aspect of our day-to-day life. I cannot help but feel connected to our early Sisters in Mornese, and from that, feel the active work of the Lord in the day-to-day.



*What has been the most challenging part of your formation journey?*

The adjustment to the pace of life, especially coming from working at an engineering consulting firm and having a lot of activities after work. We still have deadlines, and there's always work and fun things to do, but with greater intention. I've really learned to slow down and stop being so "busy."



Is God calling you to discern religious life? To find out more, visit our website at:  
[salesiansisterswest.org/vocations](https://salesiansisterswest.org/vocations)

# A Loaf-Changing Experience

By: *Samantha Ruiz*



While dropping off bread donations at Lourdes Grotto in San Antonio, a replica that honors Our Lady of Lourdes, Sr. Thuy Virgine stopped at the shrine to pray before the Blessed Mother. There, she met a couple and offered them bread. It turned out that the gentleman had attended St. John Bosco School as a boy! As they prepared to leave, the woman asked Sr. Thuy if she had extra bread for another family visiting the Grotto, whose son, Jose, was battling stage 4 cancer of the throat. They were visiting from Laredo, TX and were staying at the Ronald McDonald housing so that their son could receive his treatments.

The family was invited to the Provincial House so that the Sisters could pray for Jose and his family. They prayed to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and entrusted their son to Mary Help of Christians. They were also given holy water and other religious articles, and the Sisters encouraged the family to continue praying for healing.

A few weeks later, the family returned to the Provincial House. They had done testing and discovered that their son was cancer-free! They gave praise to God for His divine healing and celebrated His love and mercy.

The Sisters were invited to surprise Jose and his family when they later returned to San Antonio. He would be ringing the infamous bell to celebrate being cancer-free. What a wonderful miracle and reminder that when we break bread with others, we share Jesus.





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