

John J. Roche, SDB

**Director of the Institute of Salesian Studies (ISS)
at Don Bosco Hall**

(the ISS is an affiliate program of DSPT and a proud supporter of the educational and catechetical goals of DSPT)

Current Position: Adjunct Professor of Spiritual Theology at DSPT as instructor for these semester courses in the post-graduate program

- STSP 3081 Post-Modern Evangelization
- STSP 2362 Salesian Christology: Jesus as Companion

These areas of study demand constant updating and reflect the type of ongoing research that I have taken as a focus. With special attention to the Catholic Philosopher Charles Taylor and the recent work of Irish Theologian, Dermot Lane, I continue to engage the inter-disciplinary work involved in addressing a new evangelization for our times as well as foster inter-faith dialogue.

It has been my conviction that a Salesian Spirituality of Accompaniment has great significance for these areas of study and research. Much has been done inside and outside of Salesian circles reflecting upon the significances and effectiveness of the mode of education and evangelization offered in this specific school of spirituality. This school suggests a deeper knowledge of its roots in St. Francis de Sales, the pastoral applications made by the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Salesian Family worldwide in their living out the gospel mission chosen by St. John Bosco.

Professional Memberships:

Currently, I am a member of the Lay Project Commission for the Salesians of Don Bosco in the western Province of the United States of America. We are affiliate members of the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry and we are active members of the National Catholic Education Association.

I also serve on the Formation Team for the western Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco.

Youth Ministry Memberships

- Serving Member of the Edmonton Diocesan Youth Commission 1987-1991;
- Serving Member of the Province Youth Ministry Team 1996-2000,
- Serving Member of the Board of Directors for St. Francis Central Coast Catholic High School, Watsonville, CA 1999-2001;
- Present Member of the Province Youth Ministry Team beginning Fall 2007;

- Present Member of the Province Vocation Team beginning Fall 2007;

Secondary Catholic Education Faculty Retreats

- Conducted Bishop Mora Salesian High School Faculty Retreat, 1987;
- Conducted St. John Bosco High School Faculty Retreat, 1995; 2004, 2008;
- Don Bosco Technical High School, 1996;

Secondary Catholic Education Student Retreats

- Coordinated and conducted student retreats at all levels of secondary education;
- Bellarmine Jefferson High School, Burbank, CA;
- St. John Bosco High School, Bellflower, CA;
- Bishop Mora Salesian High School, Los Angeles, CA;
- Don Bosco Technical High School, Rosemead, CA;
- Bishop O'Leary High School, Columbus, Ohio;
- Salesian Junior Seminary, Goshen, NY;

Elementary Catholic School Faculty Retreats

- Conducted St. Dominic Savio Faculty Retreats in Bellflower, CA, in collaboration with High School students in 1995, 2001, and 2004;
- Conducted St. Benedict School Faculty Retreat, Montebellos, CA, in collaboration with High School students in 1996;
- Conducted St. Bridget's Parish, Thomas More Faculty School Retreat Hanford, CA 1997, 1998;
- Conducted Sta. Isabel School Faculty Retreat, East Los Angeles, CA at Carmelite Retreat Center in Alhambra, CA; coordinated the work of the high school retreat planners 2002, 2003
- Conducted the Don Bosco Study Nights in October 2011 in Berkeley, CA and again in January 2012 in Rosemead, CA
- Conducted the Board of Directors Retreat at St. John Bosco High School in Bellflower California in November 2011
- Conducted Our Lady of Grace Faculty Retreat in Castro Valley, CA at the school in September 2014

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENTS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Speaker, Facilitator for the First Annual Alberta Education Conference, 1990
- Speaker, Facilitator for a Workshop at the National Catholic Youth Ministry Convention in Cincinnati, OH, 1998
- Summer Retreat for the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians Province of Mary, Immaculate Summer 1994, San Antonio, TX
- Keynote Speaker at the San Antonio, Second Annual, Catholic Youth Convention, 1996;
- National Facilitator for the YouthLeader Program for the Center for Ministry Development
- Facilitated the Salesian YouthLeader Conference in Aptos, CA, 2005, 2006

- Coordinator and Facilitator of the Salesian Leadership In Ministry Institute 2010 through 2012
- Retreat Director for the Salesians of Don Bosco of East Africa 2010
- Summer Retreat for the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians Province of North Haledon, NJ Summer 2010
- Summer Retreat for the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians Province of Mary, Immaculate Summer 2011, San Antonio, TX
- Retreat Director for the Salesians of Don Bosco in Ireland 2011
- Retreat Director for the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Students of Theology at Moshe, Tanzania in East Africa 2012
- Conference for Salesian Past-Pupils and School Faculty at Mary Help of Christians Academy in Laredo Texas in April 2014
- Retreat and Marian Rally for Salesian Sisters' Junior High in San Antonio Texas in May 2014
- Conference for the Salesian Sisters Eastern Province May 2014
- Retreat Director for the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Students of Theology at Ratisbonne, Jerusalem in Israel 2014

Director of the Salesian Youth Leadership Connection Training Week

- Camp St. Francis, Aptos, CA, 1994;
- Salesian Youth Renewal Center, Rosemead, CA 1996;
- Salesian Youth Renewal Center, Rosemead, CA 1997;
- Camp St. Francis, Aptos, CA, 1999, 2000;

Speaker for Adult Formation and Catechesis

- St. Dominic Savio Parish, Bellflower, CA, numerous occasions;
- Beatitudes Parish, La Mirada, CA, numerous occasions;
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Los Nietos, CA, various occasions;
- St. Bartholomew Parish, Long Beach, CA, RCIA training;
- St. Bernard Parish, Bellflower, CA;
- St. John Bosco High School Parent Booster Association, Bellflower, CA;
- Saints Peter and Paul RCIA conferences 2009 to present

Speaker for Adolescent Formation and Catechesis

- Youth Ministry Leaders Training, St. John Bosco School, San Antonio, TX;
- San Luis Rey Youth Ministry Leaders Training, Laredo, TX;
- Holy Spirit Youth Parish, Albuquerque, NM, Youth Ministers' Training 1996;
- Youth Encounter Spirit High School Retreat, Bishop Kelly High School, Boise, Idaho;
- SEARCH Retreat, St. Joseph Salesian Youth Renewal Center, Rosemead, CA, various occasions;
- Parents' Conference: St. Apollinaris Parish, Napa, CA;
- St. Michael Parish, Calhoun, CO, 2001;

Speaker, Facilitator for the Edmonton, Catholic Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Team Planning Meeting and Retreat, 1989

Instructor for Media and the Message: A Course on Media Literacy and Usage

- Offering an annual one week intensive seminar offered to the men studying for Salesian Religious Life in the eastern and western United States;
- The course was updated in March 2008 with a revised curriculum and an integration of standards for Salesian Social Communications

Presenter for Initial Formation Courses:

These seminars and mini-courses have been offered in the eastern and the western provinces of the Salesians of Don Bosco since about 2002; Some of these seminars were offered for the Inter-Conference of Formation for various congregations in Gardena, California

- Salesian Chastity I
- Salesian Chastity II
- Salesian Communal Life
- Salesian Intimacy

Current Curriculum Vitae:

EDUCATION

STL in Salesian Spirituality, *magna cum laude*, Università Pontificia Salesiana, Rome, Italy, 18 June, 2007

- *Thesis for Licentiate title: "A Salesian Youth Spirituality of Accompaniment: The Vision of Juan Vecchi and a New Moment"*
- *Thesis advisor: Joseph Boenzi, SDB*

MA in Theology with Biblical Concentration, *magna cum laude*, Pontifical College Josephinum, Worthington, OH, 1986

MDiv in Theology, *magna cum laude*, Pontifical College Josephinum, Worthington, OH, 1986

BA in Philosophy with minor in English Literature, *magna cum laude*, Don Bosco College, Newton, NJ, 1980.

English Literature Teaching Credential, St. Peter's College, Jersey City, NJ (awarded through completion of training and practicum through Don Bosco College at Don Bosco Preparatory High School, Ramsey, NJ, March 1980.)

Nearing Completion: MA in Religious Education (SUMORE) with concentration in Spirituality, Seattle University, July 1995

- *Synthesis*: “Literature as a Means for Teaching Religious Imagination”
- *Synthesis advisor*: Molly Neville, SNJM,
- *Completion Project*: “Literature as a Means for Conducting Retreats for Religious Educators”
- *Submission of current courses I am teaching has been supplied for fulfillment of the completion project truncated by departure of the SU professor and coordinator 2012*
- *MA should have been awarded*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Team Member for the Institute of Salesian Studies, Don Bosco Hall, Berkeley, CA,

- Responsible for offering courses in Salesian Spirituality as part of an integrated program of updating in Salesian Spirituality and refresher courses in Salesian Religious Life. The courses are designed to work together with the ISS courses offered by other Team Members for the renewal and enrichment of members of the Salesian Family worldwide. These courses, however, are designed to augment the studies of other students in Pastoral Theology.
- **Inter-session Course**: During the month of January, it has long been the tradition of the ISS to offer mini-intensive courses in Salesian Spirituality and Pedagogy for Salesians and Lay Salesians in leadership. In January 2008, I offered a series of courses (the first part of a three year cycle) analyzing the Salesian Spirituality of Accompaniment. In a later week that same month, I contributed to the course on the Preventive System of Don Bosco, specifically addressing one of its three pillars: Loving Kindness.

Coordinator of Youth Ministry, St. John Bosco High School, Bellflower, CA, 2001-2005

- Serving as Coordinator of Youth Ministry, Chaplain, Religion Department Chair, Vice-Director, and Administrator.
- Serving as Religion Department Instructor, 2001-2005 at all levels of secondary education.

Director and President of St. Francis Central Coast Catholic High School, Watsonville, CA, January 1999-June 2001

- Serving as part of the three person team working with the Bishop of Monterey, CA and the Provincial and his Council for the Salesians of Don

Bosco of the San Francisco Province (region) of Salesian Ministry in the United States. in preparing the development of a new Catholic High School, setting up a Board of Directors, working with the parishes throughout the Monterey Diocese to promote the project, launching the first diocesan wide Annual Youth Day, meeting with architects, city planners, and local planning commissions

- Serving as director of the Salesian Site overseeing the work of Mary, Help of Christians Parish in Watsonville, CA

Provincial Delegate for Salesian Youth Ministry, St. Joseph's Salesian Youth Renewal Center, 1996-2000

- Coordinator of Youth Ministries for the Western Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco in the United States,
- Serving to provide leadership, guidance, and training for the youth ministries of the Western Province
- Designing educational and evangelical tools for promoting Salesian Youth Ministry throughout the province
- Coordinating Province-wide seminars, formation events, celebrations, and youth leadership experiences
- Voting member of the Provincial Council of the Salesians of Don Bosco of the San Francisco Province

Continental Formation of Salesian Leaders in Youth Ministry, September 1998, Montreal, Quebec

- Serving as the facilitator of a formation in the Salesian Youth Ministry Reference Manual created in Rome and completed in 1998
- Creating the formation program for this continental training of the Salesians of Don Bosco for the San Francisco, New Rochelle, and Quebec Provinces of North America together with the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians Provinces of San Antonio, North Haledon, and Jacquet River, New Brunswick
- Working with a provincial Youth Ministry Team for the development of this formation experience and to set a direction for ongoing formation throughout the Western Province

Salesian Provincial Delegates for Salesian Youth Ministry Training in Rome, April 1998

- Participating as the North American representative for Salesian Youth Ministry Provincial Delegates at the World Training of Delegates at the Salesian General House in Rome
- Designing the training curriculum for the North American Region

Vocation Director for the Salesians of Don Bosco in the San Francisco Province, Bellflower, CA and Rosemead, CA, 1991-1995

- Serving as the Director of Vocational Ministry throughout the province;
- Maintaining correspondence with interested persons making inquiry;
- conducting retreat experiences for demonstrating and sharing the Salesian charism and mission;
- publishing materials for promotion of the Salesian lifestyle, charism, and mission; offering nationwide exposure at various religious educational conventions, youth conventions, and youth ministry conventions;
- offering formation and information for vocation promotion and awareness in the various communities of the Salesian Western Province; conducting interviews and making important links for the process of psychological assessment of potential Salesian candidates

Coordinator of Youth Ministry, Chaplain, Instructor, and Assistant for St. Mary's Salesian School in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, 1987-1991

- Serving as the Coordinator of Youth Ministry providing faith formation programs, retreats, educational settings, faculty formation and parent formation at this special boarding school reaching out to many young persons with no educational alternatives
- Serving as chaplain for the spiritual needs of the students and faculty
- Serving as instructor for various academic courses including Alberta Religious Education for Junior High Students grades 7, 8, and 9;
- Serving as instructor for Language Arts in the Alberta Language Arts for Junior High Students;
- Serving as instructor for Mathematics for the Alberta Arithmetic for Junior High Students;
- Serving as Study Hall, Dining Room, Recreation, and Dormitory Assistant for three of four years

Director of Religious Education, Campus Minister for Bishop Mora Salesian High School, Los Angeles, CA 1986-1987

- Serving as religious instructor for all levels of secondary education;
- Serving on the religious education faculty as Chair;
- Serving as Campus Minister for a new model of retreat formation for all levels of students and faculty;
- Serving as Coordinator of Campus Ministry outreach and action programs

Salesian Assistant for After-school and Weekend Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club of Columbus, Ohio, 1982-1986

- Serving as an assistant in youth programs for afterschool and weekend youth at the downtown club in Columbus, Ohio

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND MINISTERIAL SERVICES

PUBLICATIONS

Salesian Journal of Studies, Fall, 2007;

“Cultivating Hearts: A Response to Salesian Youth Ministry Today” in *Journal of Salesian Studies*, Thomas Prendiville, general editor, Volume XV, Fall 2007, The Institute of Salesian Spirituality, Don Bosco Hall, 145-166.

Salesian Accompaniment Inter-session Reader, 2008;

Contributing author and presenter, The Institute of Salesian Spirituality, Don Bosco Hall, January 2008.

Salesian Preventive System: Loving Kindness; Inter-session Reader, 2008

Contributing author and presenter; The Institute of Salesian Spirituality, Don Bosco Hall, January 2008.

Thesis for the Licentiate, defended June 2007 at the Salesian Pontifical University, Rome

The Salesian Youth Spirituality of Accompaniment: The Vision of Juan Vecchi and a New Moment;

Università Pontificia Salesiana, Rome, 18 June 2007.

REFERENCES

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What I am passionate about my academic discipline:

A driving force in my education and formation has always been a precise understanding of religious experience and the event of conversion. To every discipline I have always posed the simple question, "What is conversion and the experience of conversion for this discipline?"

Over the years, this quest has taken many pathways for a better understanding of evangelization and education. There is, after all, no one answer or one simple equation to respond to this driving question. Yet, in the lives of great saints and educators such as St. John Bosco and St. Francis de Sales, there is the essence of a mission for salvation and an offering of that mission to a wide audience. In the words of Fr. Ron Rolheiser, this is the ONE THING that drove their search for meaning and their quest for God.

The difficult application of a pastoral approach that invites to inspiration and conversion seems to be all the more chaotic and complicated in this moment of globalization and rampant secularization. Into this confusion arise various voices of authority from St. Thomas Aquinas to Dr. Leonard Sweet, from Thomas Merton to Charles Taylor. Across the spectrum of culture, of intellectual and philosophical debate, and the musings and disciplines of theological investigation, these diverse and distinct voices are swelling with the crescendo of Salesian spiritual study worldwide.

At the bottom of this pursuit is the restless desire for encounter with Jesus and with that the desire to translate that experience and meeting into something that is attainable and accessible to young people of any time and any culture. My passion is to deepen that encounter for myself and by that deepening open up a pathway and an invitation for a new generation of believers, seekers, thinkers, and even persons doubting a deeper meaning for their lives.

What I hope to instill in my students:

By considering the quest described herein, it is my deepest desire that each student will move beyond mere academic formation and enlightenment to an authentic encounter with the living God, in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. And it is my hope that this encounter will open for them an understanding and an empathy that allows for no level of elitism but, rather, an embrace of all faiths and persons on the path to meaning. In this way, Jesus becomes for these students not the exclusive leader of their club but the inspiration for a life of self-giving service for others.

My favorite quote:

At the risk of conveying a romantic and pious notion of my academic pursuits, I share a quote from Jeremiah 29:11-14. Long before Christian art and book stores discovered this quote for its plethora of posters and coffee mugs, this simple quote summarized for me the accompanying God in my life. How I long for others to know this God. In this quote from Jeremiah is the promise of our God not only to hold a plan for our lives but for his presence to be made known when we seek him. There is a cryptic promise at the end of this proclamation: "And I will change your lot." For me, this last line is not about "fixing" anything. Our God is the Creator. Our God is the Alpha and Omega of my faith and yours, of your life history and my own. Our God makes all things new. I rest assured that my God knows me, knows the plan for my life, makes his person knowable and enters into encounter whenever I seek God, and because of this, God will change whatever needs to be changed in my life and history that I may be made continually new.

"For I know well the plans I have in mind for you', says the Lord, 'plans for your welfare, not for woe; plans that will give you a future full of hope. When you look for me you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart,' says the Lord, 'you will find me with you and I will change your lot.'"

