



*Designed by Huyton Cooperators*



**SALESIAN COOPERATORS  
UK PROVINCE NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER 2009**



**Art. 23 Style of Action**

Salesian Cooperators sanctify their existence through work and daily life. They live as “good Christians and honest citizens”. They are available , altruistic and generous and believe in the value of acting without selfish interests. Their activity is rooted in union with God.

**Strenna for 2009**

Let us commit ourselves to making the  
Salesian Family a vast movement of persons  
for the salvation of the young

## ANGELS

I don't know if you believe in Angels, but I do and when you believe in them, they do help you. Sometimes they appear to some people too but this has not happened to me yet. Although sometimes they can look like ordinary people, so you could be meeting Angels every day and not be aware of them.

They do not always have wings but usually quite tall. People have had encounters with them all over the world.

Another sign that Angels have visited you are white feathers you may find them in the most unusual places and wonder where they came from. Of course Angels have been around since time began you only have to look in your Bible to read many of the stories printed there about them. If you are open to Angels and ask their help from time to time they will help you also never forget to thank them too for their help.

I wanted to know the name of my guardian Angel who often helped me from time to time, so I asked him/her for they have no gender what was their name. They way they told me was I had a bean bag angel my granddaughter had bought me about seven years ago I had hung it in my bedroom where it had stayed ever since, that night when I went to bed I looked at this Angel took it down and I looked at it more closely I then noticed it had a label on it which said, "my name is Halo". I received my answer so you see they do help. Try it for yourself just asked their help to find something you have lost or need help with and I am sure they will not let you down.

Good luck with finding your Angels and I hope you have many stories to tell me next time we meet.

Freda Renton (Croxteth Cooperators)

## U.K. Province—Contacts

### The Provincial Council:

Daniel Sharp	Coordinator
Paul Barnes	Secretary Cornwall & Detached
Steve Langton	Treasurer Cowley & Henley
Eleanor Neeley	Councillor Liverpool, Bootle & Huyton
Ann Oboh	Councillor Bermondsey, Streatham & Battersea
Jessica Wilkinson	Councillor
Anne-Marie Fulton	Councillor Scotland & Kendal
Fr Bernard Parkes	SDB Provincial Delegate
Sr Agnes McGuinness	FMA Provincial Delegate



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***(for further contact details refer to the Salesian Directory)***

## “From Your Delegates”

As I tap away with three fingers (I’ve progressed from two!!) at the computer keyboard composing this page my window is open and I can look out onto green lawns, sun kissed hills and trees gently swaying in the breeze, all covered by a clear blue sky. The summer has come and the holidays will soon be here!

Some Cooperator groups have already had their last meeting before the summer recess and others will be meeting for their “end of year” event soon. Some groups use these events to celebrate what they have done and to plan for the coming year. Very often this planning is done in the light of a very careful and honest evaluation. I would like to congratulate each and every one of you on what you’ve achieved since last September and for looking forward with such faith, optimism and energy.

As we look back on one year and ahead to another our thoughts turn to how faithful we are to Don Bosco’s charism and vision. The annual retreat at Kendal (9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October) will develop these thoughts and I urge you to attend if you can. To take this process a stage further, Sr. Agnes will be trying during the coming months to assist those who are responsible for initial formation in the centres and I will be trying to provide materials for ongoing formation. A couple of centres have recently been giving very careful thought to how they might “accompany” enquirers in their first steps along the road of becoming Cooperators – even before the initial formation process takes place – and how they might make potential members feel really welcome in their group. It would be good if, during their planning for the coming year, groups identified two or three of their members who could do this “walking with” enquirers, helping them explore how the Lord might be asking them to respond to their calling, discerning whether the Salesian Cooperator vocation might be for them. All of this, of course, needs to be done in an informal, one-to-one setting and probably before the enquirer attends their first meeting with the group. Providing support for those who do this accompanying will be one of my priorities.

By the time you read this I shall have made my last visits to the centres before the holidays. My sincere thanks for your hospitality if I’ve visited you, and my apologies if I didn’t manage to get to you this time – you’re first on my list for next time! Have a good summer and enjoy the sunshine!

*Sr Agnes FMA Provincial Delegate*



## FR FABIO

We were very pleased to welcome Fr Fabio Atard to St Dominic’s during his visit to all our Salesian Communities here in England and Scotland.

He wasn’t able to be with us for a week end but he was pleased to meet those who were at Mass on the week-days.

He attended our monthly Cooperators meeting where he also met members of the Croxteth Group. He brought greetings and prayers from our Salesian Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chavez. We asked Fr Fabio to thank Fr Pascual for our Salesian priests and the Sisters in Croxteth. St Dominic’s has been very fortunate to have Salesians in our parish for over twenty years. Parishioners and young people in our area have benefitted greatly by their presence so we wanted our gratitude passed on. Our prayer and the business meeting was followed by a social. We all enjoyed Freda’s stories about the Angels!! One particular encounter was when they were travelling to Kendal and got lost. Freda said a prayer to her angels and within ten minutes a van with the inscription “Salesian Centre” to which Freda said “follow that van”. They all promptly thanked the angel for getting them to their destination.

Fr Fabio was pleased with what he saw here in St Dominic’s, particularly with all the help being given in the parish by so many people. His prayer for us was that many more will join in our mission of spreading the Good News.

**Provincial Council**  
**Report of the Regional Congress for West Central Europe**  
**Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2009.**

**Representation from Great Britain**

We were allowed four representatives including one Delegate and three Cooperators. As it worked out on availability, Father Bernard, Sister Agnes, Eleanor Neely and Paul Barnes were our representatives. All Council members had been given a chance to say if they were interested and available.

**Travelling to the Congress**

After a 55 minute flight from Manchester we arrived in Cologne late at night to be warmly welcomed by Anja Leuwer, the Provincial Coordinator for Germany. The drive to Junkerath took another hour. A late supper followed of salad, meats and cheese which we were to get used to during our three day stay.



**The Venue**

This was a Salesian Retreat House high up in the woods with excellent facilities for retreats and youth gatherings alike. The grounds were beautiful with a play area for children, several rabbit huts and outdoor Stations of the Cross.

**Format and purpose of the Congress**

This was the first of its kind since new Regions were set up. There were 29 people present from West Central Europe including Germany, Great Britain, North and South Belgium, France, Austria and The Netherlands. Ireland was notably absent. In addition there was a SDB and a FMA representative from the World Council to guide proceedings. **The main purposes of the Congress were as follows:**

- \* **To agree the Regulations of the Regional Congress**
- \* **To elect a representative to sit on the World Council.**
- \* **To elect the Regional Formation Councilor**
- \* **To elect the Regional Councillor for Administration**
- \* **To agree topics for future discussion.**

**BERMONDSEY YOUTH TRIP**

Three Salesian Cooperators along with Sr. Rita Said from Bermondsey (Southwark) took 53 kids from St. Michael's Catholic school to Paris in May this year to visit Disney Land, Notre Dame, Sacre Coeur and the Eiffel Tower to name but a few destinations. The pupils had a fabulous time, and so did we.

*Caroline Delaney (Salesian Co-operator Bermondsey)*



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**10 Year's Anniversary—Streatham**

The current Cooperator's Group has been going for 10 years. This is how it started:

Sr Ella Flynn had given out letters of invitation in the hope of starting a Group. She must have been praying hard because a small handful of ladies responded with the tear-off slip and assembled for the very first meeting on Thursday, 13th May 1999.

Actually, the chosen meeting day was to be the Friday, but for some reason that particular Friday was unsuitable and Thursday was agreed upon. Even better, as it happened to be the feast day of St Mary Mazzarello, although at that time it didn't mean much yet. It also happened to be the feast of the Ascension of the Lord and dear Sr Ella found a priest to celebrate Mass with us in the Convent Chapel. The official Chronicle says that "five people were present and Mass was celebrated". We cannot remember who the nice priest was. 10 years is a long time, but we are reasonably sure that the first five people were: Sr Ella, Ann Oboh, Anne Longley, Geraldine Sneddon and myself. People have come and gone. We meet every second Friday of the month, at present six of us, one of whom is "in Formation" and one "Enquirer".

The plan is to mark the occasion of our 10th anniversary with Mass in the Chapel and celebratory refreshments at the July meeting on Friday 10th 2009.

A big THANK YOU to Sr Ella for her initiative ten years ago. May St Mary Mazzarello continue to pray for us.

*Ruth T. Kamalagharan (Streatham Cooperators)*



## Salesian Anniversary Year Celebrations

To mark this the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Salesians, Chertsey Cooperators organised two inaugural events. On the 24<sup>th</sup> May we hosted a Celebration Day and on June 6<sup>th</sup> a Celebration Meal.

The Celebration Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> was open to all the Southern Centres. Alverstoke are to be congratulated for their loyal support despite the long journey. Fr Martin Poulson SDB led the day on the theme "Signs and Bearers of God's Love". It proved to be a very thought provoking and inspiring day. We started with a "Prayer 'n Praise" session followed by the first input by Fr Martin centred around "Inspiration". A Marian session – focused on Mary Help of Christians and Mother of the Salesian Family - took us up to lunch. Fr Martin ("have guitar will travel") then kicked off (strummed would perhaps be a more appropriate word!) the afternoon with an input on "Incarnation" and the day finished with Mass in the Parish Church.

Our second celebratory event took place at a local restaurant. Over 30 people attended including all the local SDB community and two previous Local Delegates of the Chertsey Group – Fr Brian McGraw and Fr Peter Quinn. The restaurant – The Plaza – was a small venue and the Cooperators and guests more or less took it over. The food was excellent and the socialising was animating. We reminisced on how the SDBs had first come to Chertsey in 1900 and "set up shop" not far from where we were assembled. The FMAs followed in 1902 and we shared a word or two on the subsequent growth and development, in those early days, of both parish and schools. Toasts were then made to the "Salesian Presence" – past, present and to come. Ad Multos Annos!

*Ken Greaney (Chertsey)*

**N.B.** This year has been designated by Pope Benedict, as a "Year of Prayer for Priests". In the Chertsey Centre we have decided that at every meeting we have over the coming 12 months we will spend at least 5 minutes in praying for our priests.. Other groups may wish to follow suit.

### **The Congress itself**

English, French and German languages were used and we met in small groups with report backs in all languages. The following business took place:

- \* Election protocol was agreed whereby only one third of all present voters were allowed to be SDB or FMA- in the event we had four votes!
- \* Don Stjepan, World Council, spoke on the new understanding of the Salesian Cooperators and the structure according to the PAL (Project of Apostolic Life)
- \* Nominations were taken for the World Council Representative and after a lengthy election process, including photographing every person who voted, MARIE-JOSE KANDEL (France) was elected.
- \* The Regional Advisory Council representatives were then agreed by invitation and approved by all present  
Formation ...Elisabeth Likar (Austria)  
Secretary..... Brigitte Sinnaeve (Belgium North)  
Administration....Hermann Zoller (Germany)
- \* An extra post was agreed for Married Couple support and our own Eleanor Neely agreed to take on the role.
- \* Statistics of the provinces- this to be sent annually to Marie-Jose.

In groups we discussed topics for the future

- Formation
- Married couple support
- Growth-renewal
- Communication with young people
- Cooperation with the Salesian family

We gave out copies of our leaflets and Provincial Plan which were well received.

### **Date of next meeting**

This will be in Lyon in March or April 2011 (Belgium was second choice)

### **Other matters of interest**

The final approval of the PAL will be done during the next World Congress in 2012. Our prayers and mass were celebrated in a beautiful church with various languages being used for prayers, readings and hymns.

The accommodation was fine and the food was German.

The social on the final evening was "Mceed" by yours truly with concert items and food items from all nations present. It was a wonderful sight to see Sister Agnes demonstrating Scottish dancing, Eleanor reciting Shakespeare and yours truly leading them in "Swing low sweet chariot" and of course taking them all up Sunshine Mountain!

## Easter at Brettargh Holt 2009

The celebration of the Easter was something very special for me this year. It is almost impossible to capture the atmosphere of those days in words, but I'll do my best.



### Maundy Thursday

Those taking part, were welcomed warmly by the community and the team of volunteers resident at Brettargh Holt. Everything really started with the re-enactment of a paschal meal during which it was possible to enter into the memory of the Jewish people re-living the experience of passing from the bitterness of slavery into the sweetness of freedom. Fr. Bob Gardner helped us to take part in this solemn ritual just as Jesus and his friends must have done on the night before Jesus died. We shared the same kind of meal that they probably did, talking to each other and making new friends around the table. After a break we went into the chapel for the first liturgical event of the Easter services and celebrated the solemn Mass. The familiar words of the liturgy stood out with special significance, echoing the thought of being delivered from slavery into freedom, through the sacrifice made for us on the Cross. The Blessed Sacrament was removed from the chapel and we were invited to watch and pray just as Jesus asked his friends to watch with him during the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. We went to bed that first night with solemn thoughts in our minds.

### Good Friday

The day was bright and sunny and we came to breakfast full of the memories of the night before. In preparation for the celebration of the passion and death of Jesus we were invited to take part in the preparation and various choices were offered. There was scope for readers, actors writers and musicians. We each chose and found ourselves in small groups with the freedom to prepare for the Good Friday liturgy and the Stations of the Cross. During the morning we were all very busy and working

after supper we went out again into the grounds for the Stations of the Cross. These had been made by young people and were fixed to trees on either side of a path leading upwards to where a Cross stood at the top of the hill. Various people had prepared the reflections for each station. One person had volunteered to carry a very heavy rucksack up the hill, in remembrance of Jesus carrying his Cross. When we heard of Simon of Cyrene helping Jesus, we shared out the contents of the rucksack as a sign of being ready to help each other to carry our burdens. We stood round the Cross and silently committed ourselves to being disciples of Jesus. Later in the evening we prayed together around the cross in chapel, singing and listening as we prayed

### Holy Saturday

This was a really busy day with lots of things to do to prepare for the Easter Vigil. People were very creative in the way they planned to present the readings, made the special Easter candle, prepared for a really spectacular Easter fire, planned the music which reflected the joyfulness of the Resurrection event. Everyone was involved in one way or another. We waited outside until the light was fading from the sky and then it all began. The fire was kindled, the paschal candle lit, and as we processed into a dark chapel we realised how even with small candles, the light makes such a difference. The Mass itself was very special. It was long, but very meaningful. The companionship we had shared in all of the preparation gave us a great feeling of belonging together and being real Christians. The music, especially at the end of Mass was a fitting triumph for the end of the celebrations.

Of course it didn't end there! We enjoyed partying together well after midnight, and we left Brettargh Holt next morning as different people! I would like to thank Fr. Bob and everyone at Brettargh Holt who made this possible. I hope it will be the first of many other celebrations.

*Young persons retreat held at Brettargh Holt  
by Catherine Callaghan*