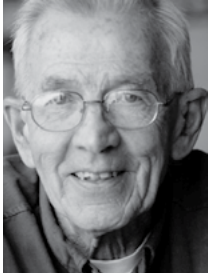


THE SHOESHINE SPECIAL

NEWS FROM THE WORKING BOYS' CENTER • QUITO, ECUADOR • Summer 2013

Padre's Message



DEAR FOLKS,

There's happiness and excitement all year long if we stay with the thoughts of Jesus coming back to life, introducing us to the Holy Spirit and making us comfortable in our Father's presence. I mean thoughts like we read in the Book of Revelations about a new Jerusalem, the new city of God settling down out of the clouds to be part of all this with us. I like it even better as a vision of just Jesus having risen from the dead and coming gloriously back down to think and feel again about why we're here - to know, love and serve and be served with Him. "Serve" or "save", same thing. Whether we're flying a jet or rocking a chair, we're always high-powered saviors and/or rescued heroes on campaign with Him. We are all reaching out, even in the ordinary things, to welcome each other into the kingdom.

What started me rambling on this topic is watching the bustling daily routine of hundreds

of members of working kids' families in our Working Boys' Center. On the surface it's a daily jostle of bus rides or footing it; getting the littlest kids into their programs; rushing off to work or rushing back to meals or occasional visits with the doctor or dentist; volunteer turns keeping the place shipshape for each other; ordinary misunderstandings to be solved in the family, on the job, in school or playing; calculating savings for enough to buy materials for use on Sunday house-building work gangs; getting to mass if at all possible or hoping those at mass will include everybody else too. In everything, the whole crowd is keeping the Center's commitments for improving our life style. It's a contemplation of Christ with us, alive, well and joining in our ordinary progress to our extraordinary glory. Some of all that action is spread all over the centerfold in this issue.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John J. Halligan, S.J." The signature is written in a cursive style.

John J. Halligan, S.J.

2012-2013 Volunteers



Absolutely none of all we accomplish in the Center would be possible without our year-long volunteers who spend themselves lavishly on progress for our Center members. The volunteers are into teaching classes to all ages, counseling the same kids and adults, socializing with them on weekends and, in general, being for all of them a fun-loving presence of the risen Christ. Every year we count on them to replace themselves with other friends whom they attract to a full year of twelve-hour days of work for poor people who will never forget the kind of love our volunteers give

Our 2012-2013 Volunteer Family: Standing: Julia Kropf, Saul Gaona, Lea Saenger, Lili Kroll, Joe Stella, Mike Byrd, Bobby Reynolds; Sitting: Olivia Young, Colleen Caragher, Julia Sellers, Elizabeth Welch, Robin Phillips; On floor: Irene Costigan, Lauren Combs, Rebecca Kiely, David Ehle and Andrew Behar

The Center – Shared Events Connected to Our Past and to Our Future and Powered by God

A guide to viewing the heap. There's no strategic, start to finish plan to our reaching out to each other, unless our sincere effort to be actively good friends is a strategy. When Jesus said, "As the Father sent me, so I send you; whose sins you forgive are forgiven and whose sins you don't forgive aren't." He didn't send us to incriminate each other; He sent us to destroy the barriers and extend His welcome to join the good life. We need the practice and a bit of the joy of doing that here on earth before we die and rise into its whole unending realization in eternity. The following are a scattering of typical events we're always sharing.



All of Marco Polo's adult life has been dedicated to running our formal education programs in the Centers. He has a winning team of teachers who are up to the latest best standards in all levels: pre-school, kinder, grammar, technical, adult and special students. He has always had to find strategies to deliver our good education in between the piles of rules enforced by officialdom. But more important than that talent is his style of preparing our graduating class of young students for their traditional spiritual retreat to get good order in their lives. Marco starts with a sign he copied from Socrates, a wise old Greek, that says, "The unexamined life isn't worth living."

In our grammar school the kids dramatize the lesson that you have to use all the wits God distributes in order to get big deeds done. Christopher Columbus knew it would be a hard sell to get a boat and crew out of Queen Isabella. So he worked up a model of the whole world like a big ball she could roll wherever she wanted. That and a hat worthy of a matinee idol, the tinted hair and all the fuss he made over her got the boat and crew and her solid backing until the day they left to find new friends with different ways to share the world with.



This is just a "lest we forget" picture in case we ever want to recapture the high class our native ancestors showed to the new settlers in America. The mothers of our kids train during many evening hours to coordinate their beautifully graceful steps to offer some fruits of the earth to the Creator. They make a quiet, thankful, slow moving, solemn ceremony of presenting some common ordinary grains and stuff that keep us all alive and in awe. They don't rock it or blare it. We feel a bit guilty keeping it from stage and screen all for ourselves.



Sometimes at Mass we act out important ideas like how to fight for your opinion with no punching or insulting or taking your membership back. In this picture, Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch from Jerusalem to announce that some of the Jewish convert Christians are officially outvoted on their idea that pagan converts had to be circumcised just like all Jews in order to get into the Catholic Church. From Jerusalem they brought a letter: “No unnecessary eligibility requirements for new members!” Of course, our folks don’t know circumcission from circumvention or circumlocution. But they get the point that Jesus established a headquarters that can’t be burned down and left us a system to work out agreements by as many trips there as we like without going off in a huff.

It’s not what you think! Our sixth graders didn’t go out and beat the pants off anybody to win a trophy that will mean nothing but vainglory in eternity. Nobody but nobody was traumatized with the disgrace of losing in front of jeering cruel spectators. This picture commemorates our gang’s decision to buy themselves a trophy because they deserve one. They had invited some other teams to a sports day at the Center which was a lot of fun. The way our kids tell it, the other teams were so bad they were no challenge; but a good time was had by all. After the visitors went home, our kids decided to give a wake-up trophy to Father Halligan because he doesn’t seem to know how good they are.



Fooled you this time! You thought they were the Swiss Guard at the Vatican. Those guys are a lot bigger. These are just our kids showing their solidarity with the bumble bees and all the other busy creatures who tend our food supply from the land. They’re waiting for the music to start buzzing around the message of life lived for others as well as for selves. The reality represented is our mix in the Center where occasional crashes and even counter-crashes occur. We need to change directions and start again many times. Quick little presentations like this help all of us feel our mysterious connections and hear the mysterious music to get us moving.



The Center has hosted any number of groups of USA persons who are not only benefactors with financial help but also hands-on companions on the journey. These “spiritual journey” groups come and identify with our families as new friends for life. They lodge with us at the Center and spend all their time visiting the houses of our members or working with our families at the Center. The fact that most of the visitors don’t speak Spanish and most of our folks don’t speak English highlights the mutual outreach going on. In the pictures here, a spiritual journey group from Dubuque, Iowa are sprucing up the patio where the folks

gather and relax outside the computer education room. The lady proud of Iowa’s helping hands around the world is Mary Moothart and she’s not behind bars; she’s working from outside. Mostly sign language with a bit of Spanglish at the sites of the families’ houses facilitate understanding about the physical surroundings, like maybe about that opening near the roof for the gales to blow through on the cold nights up there on the mountainside; and a lot of strong spiritual connection develops in reference to our kids here and your kids there, the opportunities and dangers and opportunities and, most of all, the deep gratitude on both sides for the sharing.





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“**m**  **oved!**”

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