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Spinning Yarns: De Sales Trading Company

Located just outside of Greensboro North Carolina is a business with the intriguing name of the De Sales Trading Company, which imports and exports all kinds of yarns. It was started over 30 years ago by William T. Murray, a graduate of Northeast Catholic High School (Class of '31). He was with the Oblates for several years and a classmate of Fathers Dooling and Ed Friel. Over the years Father John Conmy kept in touch with him and reports that Bill

Murray was a very good benefactor of the Visitation monastery in Snellville, GA. Mr. Murray greatly admired St. Francis de Sales. At the age of 57 with seven young children, he decided to strike out on his own. Knowing that he would need a good deal of patience, courage and perseverance for such a venture, he started the company around the feast of St. Francis de Sales and decided to give the name of De Sales to his new business because he believed he would need those virtues which our saint exemplified. It is an interesting instance of how St. Francis de Sales has touched the lives of others in unusual and captivating ways. The thriving company is now managed by three of Mr. Murray sons – Michael, Mark and Joe. We wish them continued success and the loving guidance of St. Francis de Sales. (The address of the company is: P.O.Box 269, Burlington, NC 27216; Phone: 1-800-528-9337; Web site: www.desales.com).

Fr. Brisson's Cause

Fr. Roger Balducelli, OSFS, reports from Troyes that "Father Yvon Beaudoin, OMI, has completed a piece of work known, canonically, as *Positio super virtutibus servi Dei L. Brisson*. With the help of the sisters, in Rome and here, I have prepared the manuscript for printing - six months of work." The 700 page manuscript has been recently printed. The main part of this manuscript is called *Biographie Documentée*. "This title," Fr. Roger writes, "fits the contents perfectly. Father Beaudoin is a professional historian with an uncanny capacity to translate a heap of documents into a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. This is why the *Biographie* is somewhat dry, by my tastes, but as solid as granite, thanks to the documentation in support of each and all its contents."

The Cause of the Good Mother

The Oblates' Archivist, Fr. Roger Balducelli, OSFS, has not only thoroughly organized the Roman archives but has become very familiar with them. In 1994 to commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of the Good Mother, Fr. Roger delivered an excellent conference on the status of the Cause of the Beatification of Mary de Sales Chappuis, which contains a devastating rebuttal to the unsubstantiated charges of quietism leveled against her by the Belgian Jesuit, Fr. Watrigant. This conference, originally written in French, is currently being translated into English and German under the auspices of the ICSS and will be published for internal use only among the Oblates to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Good Mother's death in the year 2000.

De Sales Resource Center (DRC) Goes Cyber

With some encouragement from the ICSS, especially in the form of a small grant, the DRC has set up a very attractive home page. The Center, a very important apostolate of the Toledo-Detroit Province, not only provides numerous books on Salesian spirituality for sale but also serves as a resource for anyone working in the field of De Sales' spirituality. For this purpose the DRC has a specialized, catalogued library of Salesian materials, books and periodicals in several languages, a "vertical file" of articles and other shorter pieces, and some audio and video tapes. Additional uncatalogued visuals (videos, slides, portraits, etc.) and some computerized resources are also available. Over 2000 distinct resources! In addition, the DRC staff (Fr. Joe Power, OSFS and Ms. Joanne Kinney) and a few associates trained in DeSales' spirituality can be persuaded to do programs for groups at the DRC or elsewhere in the U.S. and Canada. These programs include retreats, workshops, missions in Salesian spirituality or in the contemporary spirituality of everyday life - i.e. of work and family. Here are some examples of what the staff is available to do:

Retreats (3-5 day): How's Your Heart? (J. Power)

What in the Name of God is God's Will? (J. Power)

Parish Mission (3-4 evenings):

Finding God Wherever You Are (2 team members)

Youth Retreats (one day):

About Your Heart (J. Kinney)

Making a Difference (J. Kinney)

Tour to France: The Land of De Sales

and De Chantal. Oct 3-11, 1999.

Although the DRC is not exactly amazon.com, books, pamphlets and other Salesian materials can be ordered on-line. The new releases that are available from the DRC will be listed below. But you are urged to check out the DRC home page at: <http://www.desalesresource.org>. A link to the DRC on-line can be found on the Salesian Studies home page under "Salesian Resources."

ICSS

Globalization of Salesian Studies

Through the efforts of Bill Finley, Director of the Academic Computing Center at Allentown College, it is now possible to have very detailed statistics about the people who access the College's various home pages by means of a weblog program. In the past three months (November, December and January), the Salesian Studies home page had almost 1,500 "hits." ("Hits": the total number of files requested from the College's server). These "hits" were made not only from people in the United States but from 21 foreign countries (Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, British Indian Ocean Territory, Canada, El Salvador, France, Germany, Italy, Kenya, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand and the United Kingdom). Some of the most frequently downloaded files for the three-month period alone were: Fr. Pocetto's article on "Spiritual Friendship in Salesian Spirituality," (64 times), the Verlag Franz Von Sales catalog (42), Information on the Oblates (24), Fr. Pocetto's article on "Compassionate Love in Salesian Spirituality" (35), Fr. Boenzi's bibliography (9) and the ICSS newsletter for fall 1997 (7). This is concrete evidence that the ICSS Salesian Studies home page is reaching an international audience and making known to a much wider public over the globe Salesian spirituality since a number of these requests were from foreign countries. The Internet appears to be an excellent medium to disseminate Salesian thought and charism. If you have a worthwhile article on some aspect of De Sales' spirituality that you would like to have on the ICSS home page in any language, please send it, preferably in html format to the e-mail address above. The great need now appears to be articles in the Spanish language since there are not many "hits" from the Latin American countries. This might be a worthwhile project for the ICSS to usher in the new millennium

?Grant Proposals

The ICSS grant proposal form has been revised to emphasize that priority will be given those proposals that clearly and convincingly demonstrate a broader and more universal appeal. Copies of the revised form in the three official languages (English, French and German) are available from the ICSS home page or from the ICSS President. All applications must be submitted by **April 1, 1999** to the President of the ICSS for consideration for the next funding cycle, which begins in September 1, 1999. The ICSS urges interested Oblates to apply.

Salesian Virtual Library

Thanks to the kindness of Fr. Kolencherry, MSFS, Director of the S.F.S. Press in India, we now have its very readable English version published in 1990 of the *Introduction to a Devout Life*. This work may be viewed on the Salesian Studies home page under the "Salesian Resources" link. In addition to this version, we

now have on-line the original Annecy text and Fr. Reisinger's German translation of this great spiritual classic.

French Province

Fr. Michel Tournade, OSFS, recently appointed Provincial, is not only busy running the school of St. Michel, but has had time to write a book entitled "*Un Monde à aimer*" (A World Worthy of Love) Édition Nouvelle Cité, 1998, 37 avenue de la Marne, 92120, Montrouge, 110 FF). It is essentially the *Introduction to a Devout Life* written in a style suitable for students and young adults in the space age and of the TGV. He has also written a play entitled, "*J'ai rêvé d'un monde nouveau*" (I Dreamed of a New World), which will be produced for the next large diocesan youth meeting to be held on Palm Sunday and incorporates Salesian spirituality.

Fr. Jean Gayet, OSFS, the former French Provincial, has been giving a series of conferences on the *Treatise of the Love of God* to the Visitation Sisters in Annecy and serves as Secretary to the *L'Association - Recherches et Études Salésiennes* (RES), the group that sponsors the annual Salesian Conferences in France newly named *Les Échanges Salésiens*. The ICSS is deeply grateful to Fr. Gayet for all the work he has done and continues to do in translating many documents from English to French, including the ICSS Newsletters.

German Speaking Provinces

?Austrian-South German Province

Arnulf Rainer, a famous Austrian artist, said in an interview for the Austrian magazine NEWS, that the *Philothea* (as the German translation of the *Introduction to the Devout Life* is known) of St. Francis de Sales is one of his favorite books. The reason is that in no other book are the important virtues of love and gentleness so well described than in the *Philothea*. One of the future editions of the Salesian magazine *Das Licht* will also carry an interview with him.

Dr. Hanna-Renate Laurien, a well-known German politician, was asked by *Das Licht* about the importance of the *Philothea* in her personal life. She replied, "The *Philothea* gives a courageous 'yes' to a spiritual life lived in our world. It also says 'yes' to the same value of faith between religious and lay people as expressed in Vatican II. St. Francis de Sales realized in his relationship with St. Jane a kind of friendship between a devout man and a devout woman without

any sex-specific power structures. This means for our modern world that priests too should be allowed to develop true friendships with women. A possible way of doing so is described in the *Philothea*."

Fr. Alois Bachinger, OSFS, has published the third of his pamphlet series *Suggestions for Salesian Spirituality for Every Day*. This third suggestion is intended to help those who are struggling with their love for God. The pamphlet series is very successful and will continue.

The bishop of the Bavarian diocese of Würzburg, Paul-Werner Scheele, celebrated the feast of St. Francis de Sales at the Oblate community of Fockenfeld. At that time he stated that he is very familiar with St. Francis de Sales and that in his next book to be published in the fall he intends to include a chapter about the relationship between St. Francis de Sales and St. Vincent de Paul.

The recent issue of *Das Licht* carries an interview with Bishop Walter Mixa from the diocese of Eichstätt, Bavaria. In this interview, he was asked about his relationship to the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. He answered: "Francis de Sales lived in a time in which the Catholic Church had to find new approaches. St. Francis renewed the Church not in an aggressive manner but with kindness. I think that this way of renewing the Church is also very useful for our times." On a personal note, he said, "The writings of St. Francis de Sales showed me how to find my own special way to Jesus Christ by meditation, prayer, the daily Eucharist, the sacraments and with the virtues of kindness and patience."

?German Province

The students of the high school of Haus Overbach presented a special play about St. Francis de Sales to commemorate his feast day. The title of the play was "Francis de Sales and the Microchip." The play tells how Francis de Sales comes into the year 1999 by a timemachine and wants to help the people with their problems. He becomes familiar with the computer and the software WINDOWS. At the end he advises the people to open a special WINDOW – the window to the reality of God. For further information about the play contact: Bro. Georg Okon, Haus Overbach, D-52428 Jülich Barmen. Phone (+49)02461-930-01. Fax: (+49)02461-930. e-mail: Haus.Overbach@t-online.de.

From August 27th to September 5th Fr. Konrad Esser, OSFS, will offer "Salesian Accompanied Retreats." These retreats will take place in the monastery of the Visitation in Zangberg, Bavaria. For further information contact: Fr. Esser at Haus Overbach, D-52428 Jülich. Phone: (+49)02461-930-01; Fax: (+49)02461-930-499. E-mail: P.Konrad.Esser.OSFS@t-online.de.

India

In a recent article entitled "A Hermeneutical Strategy for Liberationist Interpretation of St. Francis de Sales," Fr. Anthony Ceresko, OSFS, has broken new ground for the interpretation of the saint's writings. In this study, Fr. Ceresko, Professor of Old Testament at St. Peter's Pontifical Institute in Bangalore, shows the way to a hermeneutic of the writings of St. Francis de Sales through a re-reading of his texts from the Indian and liberationist cultural perspective while taking into consideration the cultural presuppositions of St. Francis' day. From a fusion of the two horizons a new meaning emerges, viz., the social concerns underlying the writings of the saint of gentleness. The article appears in *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection*, Dec.-Jan. 1999 published by the Jesuit Theology Faculty in Delhi. The ICSS is seeking to obtain permission to put this article up on its web page.

Wilmington-Philadelphia Province

Bro. Mickey McGrath, OSFS, has recently published a stunningly beautiful catalog of his paintings, holy cards and note cards. There is one section entitled Salesian Images from the Heart of St. Francis de Sales. The influence of his stay in India can be readily seen in several of his paintings. A copy of this catalog can be obtained from Bee Still Studio, P.O.Box 71, Flourtown, PA or by Fax: (215) 836-0343 or e-mail: beestill@aol.com. Brother Mickey has also done a series of 8 paintings of De Sales, which Fr. John Hanley, OSFS, has hung in the Mc Shea Center, Allentown College.

Fr. Thomas Dailey, OSFS, gave a retreat at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary on the theme of "The Phenomenon of 'Niceness': Cultivating Civility Among the Clergy." The conferences focused on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Francis de Sales. In addition, he presented the Archbishop Edmond Fitzmaurice Fall Lecture for the St. Thomas More Society in Delaware on "Peace Without Justice: Not Only Possible But Necessary!" which featured a Salesian theology of forgiveness. He also gave the renewal retreat to the VHM sisters in Tyringham, MA on the theme "Revisiting the Visitation," focusing on the biblical event as the ideal for Salesian religious life.

Fr. Pocetto, OSFS, gave a retreat at the Oblate De Sales Retreat Centre, Childs on "Our Emotions and Spiritual Growth". The conferences attempted to relate Salesian teaching to modern brain and psychological research.

Fr. Dailey has published in booklet form with a Preface by the Fr. Joseph Morrissey, OSFS, the conferences of last summer's Oblate Retreat held at Allentown College on the theme "Something Sacred." The booklet contains the

following themes and talks: Fr. Dailey: "Something Sacred: The Real Contribution of Salesian Spirituality for our Virtual Culture" – Fr. James Greenfield: OSFS, "Sacred Psyche: Cultivating the Importance of the 'Soul' and "Sacred Surroundings: Envisioning the 'Ordinary' as a Locus for Holiness." - Fr. Pocetto: "Sacred Heart: The Place of the Emotions in Salesian Spirituality" and "Sacred Friends: Human Relationships in Salesian Spirituality." - Fr. James Finnegan, OSFS: "Sacred Person: A Salesian Approach to the Priesthood" and "Sacred Acts: A Salesian Approach to the Sacraments"

Fr. Richard DeLillio's parish presentation, entitled "Seven Virtues to Make the Ordinary, Extraordinary," will be summarized for distribution on Bookmarks. Along the same line, the Fall 1998 issue of *De Sales World* includes a feature article on the Salesian understanding of "joy" and five practical ways one might instill joy into everyday living.

In the interest of promoting scholarly research in Salesian thought, Fr. Daniel Gambet, OSFS, President of Allentown College, has generously agreed to bear the costs of a feasibility study to be conducted by the Benedictine publishing house of Maredsous in Belgium on putting the Ancey edition of the *Oeuvres complètes* on a CD-Rom. Should the project prove to be feasible, then additional substantial financial support would be needed to bring the project to completion.

Toledo-Detroit Province

The September-October 1998 issue of OBLATE NEWS carries an article by Fr. Paul Henry, a former Oblate, on the De Sales Secular Institute. The Institute was originally founded by Fr. Reisinger, OSFS, and is known in the United States as the Marian Institute of St. Francis de Sales. Fr. Henry notes that the Institute, whose members are particularly called to live the Spiritual Directory in their secular vocations, can be found in eight countries in Europe, North America, South America and Africa. Fr. John Conmy, OSFS, at the age of 88, is still very active as the National Assistant of the Institute in the U.S.

With some financial assistance from the ICSS, Fr. Joseph Power, OSFS, organized an international seminar at the De Sales Resource Center last November on the Relational Aspects of the Mystery of the Visitation. Papers by most of the 12 participants were circulated prior to the seminar and served as the basis of very lively, enlightening and in-depth discussions. Fr. Robert McGilvray, OSFS, created a 12 minute video centering on two of the stained glass windows located in the basilica of St. Francis de Sales in Ancey as they relate to this mystery. The list of papers submitted for discussion is as follows:

?Dr. Hélène Bordes – "*Visitation, Amitié, Amitié Spirituelle et 'Amour d'Amitié': Leurs Traces dans la Langue et le Style de François de Sales*"

?Dr. Nancy Bowden – "Elizabeth to Many Marys: The Mystery of the Visitation as Reflected in Jeanne de Chantal's Relationship with Visitation Superiors"

?Dr. Roberta Brown – "Salesian *Caritas* and the Triune Mystery of the Visitation"

?Fr. Joseph Chorpenning – "Connecting Mysteries: The Visitation and the Holy Family in the Salesian Tradition (From St. Francis de Sales to the Année Sainte[1867-1871])"

?Fr. James Cryan – "The Visitation: Paradigm of the Church – Francis as Mystagogue"

?Sr. Mary Paula Mc Carthy, VHM – "Suitability of the Name Visitation: A Study of the Meaning of this Mystery in the Writings of Saint Francis de Sales"

?Fr. A. Pocetto – "The Mystery of the Visitation in the Writings of Francis de Sales"?

Fr. Joseph Power – "*Cordialité* – Another Form of Friendship and Key to Relational Spirituality"

?Dr. Wendy Wright – "Margaret Mary Alacoque and the Relational Mystery of the Visitation"

Fr. Power is planning to have these papers published in book form.

Visitation Sisters

From April 30th to May 2nd a Salesian weekend for women will take place in the monastery of the Visitation in Zangberg, Bavaria. The theme of this weekend for personal reflection is "Our Life as an Everyday Life." You may contact Sr. Claudia Maria Seitz, OVM, Kloster St. Josef, Hofmark 1, D-Zanberg. Phone (+49)08636-9836-12. Fax: (+49) 08636-9836-50.

Research Notes

Fr. Joseph DiMauro, OSFS, is working on a doctoral thesis with the tentative title: "Organizational Socialization of Lay Administrators in Catholic Secondary

Schools Operated by a Religious Congregation of Men." He will attempt to answer the following specific questions of how the lay administrators of 4 of our Oblate schools: (1) learn the educational philosophy of the OSFS, (2) apply this philosophy in their daily professional lives in a way that furthers the mission of the school, (3) see themselves enacting the mission of the school. In addition, he will seek to discover (4) how the staff, the faculty, and the students with whom the above administrators relate see them enact the mission of the school, and (5) what effect the declining numbers of religious administrators, staff, and teachers have on a school's mission and philosophy. The results of this study should be helpful in maintaining and enhancing the Salesian character of Oblate schools. We wish Fr. Di Mauro success in this important research project.

Additional New Publications and Releases

The De Sales Resource Center announces the following new releases: *Finding God's Will for You*, a slightly abridged edition of the J.K. Ryan translation of the *Treatise on the Love of God*, Books 8 & 9. – *Saint Maker: The Remarkable Life of Francis de Sales, Shepherd of Kings and Commoners, Sinners and Saints*. An attractive reprint of the 1960 biography by British Journalist Michael de la Bedoyere. - *Spiritual Conferences* Volume I & II, translated by Fr. Ivo Carneiro, MSFS. – *The Art of Loving God* makes available in a reader friendly manner, several of Francis' Spiritual Conferences. - *Serenity of Heart: Bearing the Troubles of This Life* presents St. Francis' Spiritual Conference 'On Constancy.'" Both of the latter works are updated versions of the H.B. Mackey 1906 translation.

The Paulist Press has just recently published Fr. John Crossin's, OSFS, third book, *Walking in Virtue*, which discusses how daily moral decisions shape one's life and how those moral decisions in turn are shaped by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Scripture, interaction with the community, and the formation of conscience. The work includes Francis de Sales' approach to the virtues as well as his method of discerning God's will.

Conference

Les Echanges Salésiens will be held at Annecy-le-Vieux, France from July 12-17. Last year the conference began an in-depth study of the *Treatise on the Love of God* centering on Books 1–4. This year's theme will be "*L'Oraison, colloque de l'amour réciproque*" (Prayer, a Conversation of Mutual Love) focusing on Books 5 & 6. For further information contact: Marc BOUTANTIN, 27, rue de la Gare, 67118 Geispolsheim, FRANCE.

D.S.B.

This newsletter and past newsletters can be accessed on the Internet at:<http://www4.allencol.edu/~salesian/salesian.html>. (Note the change in the URL). Suggestions for improving this newsletter and information for future issues may be sent to A. Pocetto via email:atp0@email.allencol.edu or by Fax: (610)282-2059 or by snail mail at Allentown College, 2755 Station Ave., Center Valley, PA 18034-9568, USA. The ICSS is very grateful to Allentown College , especially its President, Fr. Daniel Gambet, OSFS, for the technical assistance and other resources it generously makes available to continue the ICSS' work.