



YMI ST. JOHN BOSCO COUNCIL # 613 JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

Next Meeting: January 13th @ 7:00 p.m. (St. Cecilia's Lower Church.)

Menu: Dinner coordinated by Br. Jeff Wu Fee \$10

Stop by between 6:30-7:00 p.m. for a beverage; dinner at about 7:00 p.m. The meeting concludes with our popular "Find the Joker" game.

YMI #613 Events & Activities:

2026 Membership Dues – Please remember to pay your membership dues before January 31st. YMI #613 Council Dues remain at \$85 per Benefit Member. (50th Year, Honorary and Junior members are exempt from paying dues). Checks are acceptable, made payable to "YMI Council #613" and sent to YMI Council #613, P.O. Box 320584, San Francisco, CA 94132. A \$15 late fee will be assessed for late dues submitted after January. If any questions about the dues, please contact **Br. John Kavanagh at jkavesq@gmail.com.**

YMI Grand President Official Visit: YMI Grand President Bill Walls #80 will be visiting the YMI San Francisco District at our scheduled meeting on **Tuesday January 13th**. We will be joined that evening by many YMI #32 Brothers from South SF and possibly a few Brothers from YMI #80 in Atwater. As the meeting will involve more people than usual, we will meet in **St. Cecilia's Lower Church**. Please plan to attend this meeting and hear from the YMI Grand President.

YMI Pasta Bingo: The YMI Grand Council plans to hold its popular **Pasta Bingo** event this year on **February 14th (Valentine's Day)** at **St. Cecilia's Lower Church**. **Br. Mike Dimech #613 and Br. Steve Cresci #32** are co-chairing the event. Please plan to bring your special Valentine, as well as your family to this event which will include a dinner and many games of bingo! Proceeds will support the YMI Pro Patria Essay Contest Fund. If any questions about Pasta Bingo, please contact Br. Dimech at 650-922-2667. **To make reservations, please see the attached flyer.**

Christmas Party: Party co-chairs **Br. Mike Amato** and **Br. George Totah** extend our heartfelt appreciation to the 85 people who attended our Christmas Party on December 14th. Many enjoyed a wonderful time that evening, which included a great meal and a fabulous raffle with many terrific prizes! Br. Amato's annual after-dinner remarks highlighting Council accomplishments are attached to the end of this newsletter. We extend a big thank you to:

- **Anna Totah** for taking a lead role in organizing the raffle;
- **Br. Dominnic Bordachar** for donating the over a dozen bottles of red wine served during dinner; and
- several YMI Brothers who generously donated raffle prizes.

Jim Calabretta Essay Contest - We received 78 essay submissions for our 23rd Essay Contest. The essays have been distributed to the judges and results will be announced at an Essay Contest Awards Ceremony to be held in the Spring. If any questions about the contest, please contact **Br. John Kavanagh** at jkavesq@gmail.com.

YMI Red & White Mass: Please also save the date of **March 14, 2026**. Our **Grand 2nd** Vice President **Mario Balistreri** is organizing this YMI anniversary celebration this year. The Red & White event will include a Mass at St. Cecilia's Church and dinner afterwards in the Lower Church with YMI Brothers from many YMI Councils in the state. More details will be provided as we get closer to the event date.

YMI Raffle Tickets: Last September, you should have received a YMI letter asking you to buy raffle tickets for the YMI Pro Patria Essay Contest (*this is separate essay contest than the Jim Calabretta Essay Contest discussed above*).

- We ask all our members to buy YMI raffle tickets as the funds collected ultimately support students who participate in the YMI Pro Patria Essay Contest. If you lost the letter, please contact Br. Dimech or Br. Amato for raffle ticket forms.
- We invite you to share the essay contest application with students you know. The contest requires a 500-word essay and the deadline is **January 16th, 2026**. You can download the essay contest from:

https://ymiusa.org/files/forms/Essay_Contest_Form.pdf

YMI #613 Council Info:

Personal Info Changes: **If you have recently changed any of your personal info (e.g., phone number, e-mail address, mailing address, etc.), please contact Br. Mike Amato at mamato871@aol.com to update your YMI contact information.** We have noted that several members people have either cancelled landline phones or changed their e-mail addresses. If you haven't already, **please let us know in writing of any updated info** in case we need to contact you. Similarly, **for YMI Death Benefit coverage, please advise us in writing if there have been any recent changes to your listed beneficiary.**

Canned Good Reminder: Please remember to bring canned goods or toiletries to our monthly YMI #613 meetings. All items collected are delivered monthly by **Br. Mike Dimech** to the Catholic Workers' Hospitality House in San Bruno.

Meal Coordinators: Here is the line-up of YMI #613 Brothers volunteering to serve as **meal coordinators in 2026**. As a meal coordinator, you basically just need 1) to place an order for food for about 25-30 people at a restaurant that either delivers or has pick-up service and 2) take a lead role with the meal set-up & clean-up during the meeting.

- January: Br. Jeff Wu (Grand President Official Visit---expect 40-45)
- February: Br. Rod Ordona (Chinese New Year: Asian)
- March: Br. Mike Amato (Irish: Corned Beef)
- April: Br. George Totah
- May: Br. John Kavanagh (Cinco de Mayo: Mexican)
- June: Br. Jeff Schwind
- July: Br. Mario Balistreri
- August: Br. John Bower
- September: Br. Dominic Panina
- October: Br. Mike Dimech
- November: Br. Stephen Goulding (Thanksgiving: Turkey)
- December: Br. Bob Fiorito

Membership Status: Our YMI #613 membership level remains at 113 members. However, one of our Junior Members (**Br. Jack Kavanagh**) has elected to stay in YMI #613 and become a Benefit Member. YMI #613 now has 94 Benefit Members, 4 Junior Members, & 15 Honorary Members and we are the 4th largest YMI Council!

With the Grand President attending the next YMI #613 meeting, **please consider bringing a relative, friend, co-worker, or a neighbor to become part of our terrific YMI Order!**

Congratulations, Salutes, & Sentiments:

- **Congratulations:**
 - We congratulate **Br. Jack Kavanagh** on his decision to become a Benefit Member after serving 8 years as a Junior YMI Member in our Council. Br. Jack (the son of **Br. John Kavanagh**) has been active in YMI #613 participating annually in the annual Italian Heritage Parade, as well as participating & winning prizes in YMI essay contests.
- **Season Greetings:**
 - We extend a **Happy New Year** wish to all our YMI #613 YMI Brothers, wives, and families! Enjoy 2026 but please keep safe!
- **Thank You's:**
 - We thank YMI #613 widows, **Connie Mertes** and **Irma Calabretta**, for keeping active in the YMI by attending recent events. Great to see you both there!
 - We also are grateful that one of our longest tenured YMI Brothers with 65 years of service, **Br. John Repetto** attended our Christmas Party with his wife **Loretta** again. Great to see you both too!
- If anyone has a personal/family milestone or event to share with your YMI Brothers or are seeking prayers for a loved one from the YMI network, please send info to **Br. Mike Amato** (text to 650-296-6297 or e-mail to mamato871@aol.com)

Birthdays: Happy Birthday to the following YMI #613 Brothers who will be celebrating birthdays in January

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Br. John Repetto | 1/4 |
| Br. Art Jimenez | 1/4 |
| Br. Paul Wuerstle | 1/5 |
| Br. Mike Bottarini | 1/10 |
| Br. John Cleary | 1/14 |
| Br. Joseph Grazioli | 1/19 |
| Br. Aaron Dilleshaw | 1/20 |
| Br. Dominic Panina | 1/22 |
| Br. Thomas O'Connor | 1/26 |
| Br. Brendan Dimech | 1/26 |

2025 Christmas Party Remarks of Br. Mike Amato

Ladies and Brothers....As the Christmas Party co-chair with Br. George Totah, let me begin my remarks by thanking each of you for attending our Christmas Party. The 85 people here tonight marks one of our largest Christmas Party turnouts that I can recall since chairing this event. We are truly grateful that you have joined us this evening to celebrate Christmas together!

As has become our tradition for many years now, this is the time when I report on YMI St. John Bosco Council #613's many accomplishments. I will try to keep my remarks brief as we have a phenomenal raffle coming up, but I believe it is important for us to take a few moments and reflect with on our successes this year!

- First, YMI #613 **initiated 5 new YMI Brothers in 2025!** While many YMI Councils are losing YMI Brothers, we are maintaining a membership base of 113 members and are now **the 4th largest YMI Council!**
- YMI #613's **Finances** have reached **all-time highs** thanks to a surging stock market and the astute investing skill of our Investment Committee! I'll spare you specific numbers here but let us recognize the solid efforts of our Investment Committee: **Br. John Cleary, Br. John Kavanagh, and Br. Paul Wuerstle** .
- YMI #613 **Social Events** did quite well again in 2025, as we successfully hosted several events such as Ladies Night, the Summer Picnic, the Italian Heritage Parade, the Bocce Ball Turney, the Hour of Memory, and our Christmas Party. Let us take a moment to thank the great work of our Event Chairs, co-Chairs, and Assistant Chairs: **Br. Bob Fiorito, Br. Joe Soracco, Br. Mike Dimech, Br. Mario Balistreri, Br. Cosmo Amato, Br. George Totah and myself.**
- Most significantly for 2025, YMI #613 expanded its generous **goodwill programs**. Namely, :
 - **We awarded over \$21,000** in essay contest awards to 50 students who participated in our **22nd Annual "Jim Calabretta Essay Contest"**! Let us recognize **Br. John Kavanagh** for his terrific work running our essay contest.
 - We provided a record high **\$16,000 in scholarships** through our Council's newly re-named "**Cosmo Amato Scholarship**" program to **eight 8th graders** from four different parish grammar schools who will be attending Catholic High Schools! Let us recognize **Br. Cosmo** for his passion in supporting our scholarship program
 - We contributed over **\$15,500 in cash donations** during the year benefitting Catholic churches, seminaries, religious orders, and worthy non-profits helping our youth, our military, the sick, the disabled, & those in need.
 - We collected a huge number of canned food & toiletries at YMI #613 meetings and social events and distributed them to the San Bruno Catholic Workers Hospitality House (I would estimate at least **over \$1500 worth**). Tonight ---thanks to your Christmas Spirit, we have plenty more goods to help those in need!
 - YMI #613 sponsored **7 seminarians** this year from the Salesian and St. Patrick's Seminaries through the **YMI Seminarian Education Foundation**, for scholarship awards totaling **approximately \$4000!**
 - For the **2025 Pro Patria Raffle**, YMI #613, once again, was among the YMI leaders in ticket sales contributing over a \$1000 in support with a reported **24% participation level**.
 - Finally, for the **2025 Grand Council Pro Patria Essay Contest**, YMI #613 sponsored **4 of the 15 contest winners** in the High School Division. Collectively, those students received **\$1100 in contest prizes from the YMI!**

By doing some basic math here on these many efforts, I estimate we are responsible for **well over \$60,000 in goodwill projects during 2025!** Folks, we deserve a **HUGE** round of applause for all this goodwill we do as a YMI Council!

Looking ahead to 2026, YMI #613 will be expanding our impressive goodwill efforts. At our recent meeting last week, we voted:

- **to increase** our Cosmo Amato Scholarship Program from **\$16,000 to \$30,000**, which will mean the award of **10 scholarships awards at \$3000 each!**
- **to increase** our mandated annual donations by \$3,000 to **over \$11,000** by including two new charities and giving more to our current supported churches.

In addition for 2026, we will be taking the leadership role of two YMI Grand Council events:

- On February 14th, **Br. Mike Dimech and Br. Steve Cresci** #32 are organizing a **YMI Pasta Bingo Fundraiser** at St. Cecilia's.
- On March 14th, **Br. Mario Balistreri** is handling the annual **YMI Red & White Mass**. Also at St. Cecilia's.

We hope to see you attend these two YMI events, as well as regular YMI #613 events held next year.

Let me conclude here by thanking you **AGAIN** for all you did this past year, as well as offering my sincere wish that you **ALL** enjoy a **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**