

To Our Young Parishioners:

Don Bosco Monthly Commemoration Number 1: *February 28 2022*

Dear young parishioners,

Saint John Bosco, Patron of Youth in the Catholic Church, died on January 31 1888. Don Bosco is the founder of the Salesian Congregation and the Salesian Family in the Catholic Church. It has become our custom in the Salesian family to commemorate Don Bosco on the last day of each month, since he died on the last day of the month of January.

I am going to try to offer you at the end of each month a story from the life of Saint John Bosco. He still has so much to teach us.

Let us start with the dream he had as a ten year old boy, the dream which shaped his entire life.

In May 2019 I visited the Sacred Heart Church in Rome, built by Don Bosco, and had the joy of standing at the side altar dedicated to Mary Help of Christians where he celebrated Mass as an old man on May 16 1887, just months before he died. Don Bosco stopped fifteen times during Mass, weeping. When asked after Mass what happened, he said: "There appeared before my eyes the scene when at the age of ten I dreamt about the Congregation. I could actually see and hear my mother and brothers, as they argued about the dream." At that time Our Lady had said in the dream to young John Bosco: 'In due time you will understand everything.' At the end of a long and extraordinary life Don Bosco could see the fulfilment of that dream.

God has a special plan for you. He will guide you and show you what that plan is.

I encourage you to have a devotion to Don Bosco and a confidence in him. He is your patron and cares about you.

God bless.

Fr Brendan

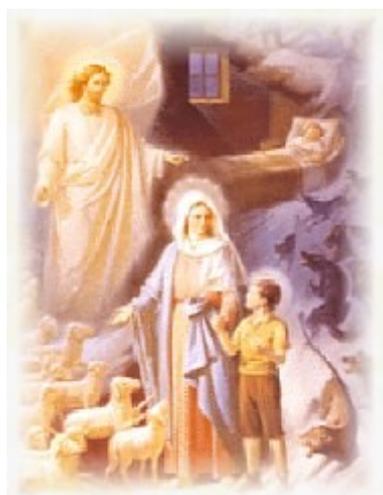
HIS FIRST DREAM

When John was about nine years old, he had a dream which followed him through life. He dreamt he was in a large playground surrounded by boys who were laughing or singing or playing games. But there were also others who were fighting and using bad language. On hearing the bad language, John lost his temper, dashed in among them and laid about him with his fist. So those who were struck by his flying fists lost their tempers, too, and a battle royal began with everybody shouting everybody fighting, and finally everybody pounding John.

All at once appeared a noble looking Man in a long white dress, and both his face and his dress shone as if they were made of light. The boys stopped fighting to stare at him.

“Come here, John.” The Man put his hand on John’s shoulder. “You will never help these boys by beating them,” he said. “Be kind to them, lead them, teach them that sin is evil and that purity is a precious gift.”

But John was still too angry and too confused to listen. “Who are you to tell me to do all these hard things?” he demanded. “I am the Son of the Lady whom your mother taught you to salute three times a day.” answered the Man. “And these things are not hard. By obeying the Lady whom I shall send to you, you will do everything with ease.”



The man disappeared and the boys immediately changed into dogs, wolves and other wild animals. Trembling with fear John turned and saw a woman appear beside him. She was beautiful and gracious and wore a mantle of gold.

“Don’t worry, John,” she said, taking his hand in hers. “What I shall do for these animals, you must do for all my children. If you are to change them into lambs, you must be humble and strong.” When she had finished speaking, John saw that the wild animals had indeed been changed to lambs and were cavorting about the woman’s feet.

Still more confused and upset by what he saw, he burst into tears. “I don’t understand!”

“Don’t worry, my child,” the lady comforted him. “You’ll understand everything in good time.” Awakened and covered with perspiration, John thought for a long time about this dream before he fell asleep again.

Next morning when he told his family about it, everybody had something to say.

“You’ll be a goat-herd when you grow up!” teased his brother Joseph. ‘

“No!” taunted Anthony, his older brother, “You’ll be a leader of a gang.

Grandmother scoffed. “Don’t be silly! You mustn’t put your trust in dreams.”

“Who knows but one day you may become a priest,” said his mother.

John looked up at her and smiled.