

## Monthly Commemoration of Don Bosco (#2-March)

### FORCED TO LEAVE HOME

John's older brother, Anthony, was big and strong and a hard worker on the farm. But he could not see why John should be allowed or even should want to study. According to him, study was for rich folk and the Bosco's were poor peasants.

Because of these objections, it was arranged for John to go to school in the morning and work in the afternoon. And when would he do his homework and prepare the next day's lessons? Whenever he could find time. This meant that he was obliged to bring a book to the fields, lay on the ground and study it while digging, raking or hoeing. During the mid-day break he would withdraw from the others and take out his books. He did not mind these sacrifices, however, since he was making progress in his studies.

Even this arrangement, however, was still too much for Anthony. "Who needs Latin to work in the fields?" he burst out. "A peasant studying Latin!"

Given this constant nagging and John's quick temper, something was bound to happen.

One day Anthony came home in a rage. "I've had enough of this book business!" he shouted. "I am big and strong and I never looked at a book!"

"Our donkey is bigger and stronger than you," retorted John. "And he never looked at book, either!"

Anthony rushed at him. If it was John's quit that got him into trouble, it was his quick legs that got him out of it.

This meant a definite break up in the family. Aware now that no compromise was possible with Anthony, Margaret finally came to a decision. She told John that since the only solution was for him to leave home, she would send him to some near by friends to ask for work. If these failed him then he was to go the Moglias, who would certainly find work for him on their prosperous farm.



On a morning of February John left home in search of work. It was bitterly cold and he was neither warmly covered or heavily laden. All he carried was a small bundle of clothing and a few books.

He was lucky to find work as a cowherd at the friend's house, but only until the end of the year when he was driven to try his last hope, the Moglias who owned a successful farm and

vineyard.

When John arrived he found some farm hands shaping rods for the vines, others preparing the evening meal.

Of all the heart-rending scenes in his life - and there are many - none is more moving than the one which took place that evening at the Moglia farm.

The first person John ran into was the owner's uncle. "Hello, John" this man greeted him. "What are you doing here?"

"I am looking for work"

"Good. Just keep going"

The remark stunned John. When he recovered his senses it was to understand that the Moglia farm was his last chance.

If he failed to get work here there was no where else he could go. The desperate nature of his plight forced him to seek out the owner. "

"Well, my boy, what can I do for you?" asked Louis Moglia.

"My mother told me to come here and ask you for work"

"Your mother? How could she let a child like you leave home?"

John tried to explain how things were at home, but Moglia cut him short.

"I'm afraid I can't help you. We're not taking on any hands. We're laying them off. Come back around the beginning of the year when we start hiring."

John saw his last chance slipping through his fingers and in despair ran to join the farm-hands who were bundling up the rods for the vines. But Moglia was not moved.

A tearful John again pleaded with him to give him a job at any price. He would even work for nothing, only give him a job. With that he sat down on the ground and refused to budge.

"I just can't," repeated Moglia, who found himself confused by this unusual situation. "Besides, what could you do around here?"

At this critical moment, Louis' wife appeared. Moved by the tears of the boy she, too, began to plead with her husband. His daughter Theresa also joined in. She was tired taking care of the cows, she declared. It was not ladylike and, anyhow, she wanted to work with the others in the fields. Under the pressure of the two women, Louis finally gave in and hired him.