

# Don Bosco

**TODAY**

The Salesian Bulletin  
Year 126  
Issue 3  
Winter 2018

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“If there’s a story you think we should be covering, let us know!”

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“When we are about to do something let us see, first of all, whether it is for the greater glory of God. Having made certain of that, go ahead, do not hesitate for your work will be successful.”  
Don Bosco  
**Welcome to the winter edition of the Don Bosco Today.**

**T**he last time I had the chance to write something, I was preparing to go camping and was expecting to get very, very wet! I’m glad to report that I survived the experience (and it didn’t rain too much). Now, it feels as if we have moved from the summer to November without much being in between. So, as the nights get darker and colder, I hope this edition of the Don Bosco Today brings a little warmth and cheer ...

Many thanks for the affirmation we received for our last edition. It is always good to hear from our readers, especially to hear what you like and what you don’t like—it helps us in our planning future editions.

We have a great mix of articles for you this time: we are living in exciting times with the synod on young people happening in Rome and the 125th anniversary of the Consecration of the Sacred Heart Church in Battersea. We whet your appetites now, and there will be more to come in our 2019 spring edition.

The period of Christmas is such a special time for us all. I want to finish with a few lines from the diary of a German officer, who witnessed the miracle of Jesus amid so much blood and horror. And when it arrives, may the peace and joy of Christmas be upon you, your family and your friends. A very happy Christmas with every blessing for 2019.

*We came up to take over the trenches on the front between Frelinghein and Houplines, where our regiment and the Scottish Seaforth Highlanders were face to face. It was a cold, starry night and the Scots were a hundred or so metres in front of us in their trenches ...*

*Suddenly, for no apparent reason, our enemies began to fire on our lines. Our soldiers had hung little Christmas trees covered with candles above the trenches and our enemies, seeing the lights, thought we were about to launch a surprise attack ...*

*Next morning the mist was slow to clear and suddenly my orderly threw himself into my dugout to say that both the German and Scottish soldiers had come out of their trenches and*

*were fraternising along the front. I grabbed my binoculars and, looking cautiously over the parapet, saw the incredible sight of our soldiers exchanging cigarettes, schnapps and chocolate with the enemy. Later, a Scottish soldier appeared with a football, which seemed to come from nowhere and a few minutes later a real football match got underway ...*

*The game finished with a score of three goals to two in favour of Fritz against Tommy.*

*Leutnant Johannes Niemann of the 133rd Royal Saxon Regiment.*

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE RECTOR MAJOR DON ÁNGEL FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME

# I LOVE YOU, SALESIANS!

*“Many of us cannot imagine a life without Don Bosco, without Salesians, and we can attest that without him we wouldn’t have fallen in love with God in a ‘crazy’ way, full of laughter and great experiences.”*

### Dear friends and readers of Don Bosco Today

The Church wants to listen to the dreams of young people and to respond to them with all its “maternal love” with the Synod gathering in Rome. We Salesians, in full concert with the Church, are preparing ourselves to do the very same thing with our General Chapter gathering, now in the organisational stage.

We want to listen to the heart of young people, of all young people: those who are nearest to us as well as those who are the most distant or from whom we are the most distant. We are asking them what they expect of us and how we might help them. We are also asking them how they can help us to be more faithful to the Lord like Don Bosco. Their participation in the assembly will be more than ‘symbolic’ even if they cannot always physically take part. They will be present to us through their words—words that are youthful, strong,

courageous, even daring—and words that we will receive and welcome with a ready heart.

The theme of the chapter is ‘What kind of Salesians for today’s youth?’ This is the most beautiful and most coherent question that we can ask. Indeed, philosopher Umberto Galimberti explains, “The young are seeking teachers who are motivated and charismatic because people learn when they are fascinated.” And they say to the adults: “We do not hate you; indeed, we are grateful if you can help us realise what we wish to become because we, too, have a dream that we don’t want to see extinguished like falling stars that die.”

“Dear Don Ángel”

As an example of this, I wish to share with all of you two messages that I received recently. The first is a personal message received on Facebook. The second is a testimony of a young man whom I met during one of my most recent visits.

I am relating both messages here just as they were written by the young people. The first one, received two weeks ago, is from a young woman who is a youth animator:

“Dear Don Ángel,

“I just saw your message about General Chapter 28 and I decided to write you just to tell you this: the chapter’s theme seems marvellous to me. I have already spent a little bit of time reflecting on who a Salesian is, and how our reality and our young people need them. These thoughts were motivated by my own personal life experience with the Salesians who accompanied me as I grew up. It seems to me that the chapter will directly involve us youths in formation/accompaniment and those who are already youth animators—from the moment in which we become very open to the gestures made to us.

“In all sincerity, sometimes I felt a little sad because some Salesians, apparently, seem to give more value to other things like bills, household goods, saving money, buildings, administration, etc.

“Still, the invitation to give first place to the things of the heart fills me with joy. The challenge of leaving aside the realm of the ‘easy life’ fills me with joy because we need Salesians who live by their convictions, dreams and zeal, and so can be living witnesses to the love of Christ and an example to us of all that Don Bosco professed.

“In this way, I believe we can fall in love yet again with this lifestyle and thus our dear Salesian Family can grow greatly, obviously with each one doing his fair share.

“I hold you in my heart. With great affection, ...”

Then, during my last visit to Mexico, a young man who is part of the Salesian Youth Movement handed me this message after having read it aloud publicly.

“Ciao, Don Ángel. Before anything else, I want to greet you and thank you for all that you do. It is a true joy to be able to share a little of the experience of my community as a member of the Salesian Youth Movement.

“My name is A.K. I am 23 years old. I am from the border town of Nuevo Laredo, in Tamaulipas. Writing these words has truly been a challenge since I knew that I was writing them to be read before Don Bosco’s successor—our beloved Don Bosco and the person who has inspired thousands of young people to conversion because of the love of God, and to live unforgettable experiences and to come to know themselves more intimately.

“I now tell you that I have known the Salesians for ten years and I consider it a great blessing to have seen the birth of an oratory in a place that was once a genuine landfill. It is a joy to see how little-by-little a community formed that wanted to work, to make a difference, and to cultivate a place where we young people could live together in peace and where we can love Christ freely, dedicating both our time and our labours.

“During this time, it was difficult to keep the oratory running on account of the rough neighbourhood surrounding us—one filled with drugs, alcohol, trafficking, illegal migration and a place where the boys and girls are the most at-risk. The struggle we face every day is a very difficult one—a struggle of all against all.

“The support of the Salesian community and the volunteers who accompany us and seek to free us young people from these situations must be acknowledged. But there are also young people who are in love with Jesus and with Don Bosco—young people who have found a second home, new friends and a place where they can be themselves and have fun in a way that is wholesome and good for them.

“Therefore, we young people of Nuevo Laredo wish to tell Don Bosco that we are courageous just like him by having to live in such situations without losing hope or surrendering—always fighting for our dreams even if we don’t know how far we’ll be able to go. Many of us continue to ask ourselves what we did to be chosen to know and to live in an oratory, and to learn there how to share Don Bosco’s example.

“We get fired up knowing how he dedicated his time and his life to those most in need, giving them a place to live and sending people to look after us and transmit to us the same strength to believe in Jesus and to live according to His example.

“Many of us cannot imagine a life without Don Bosco, without Salesians, and we can attest that without him we wouldn’t have fallen in love with God in a ‘crazy’ way, full of laughter and great experiences. Don Bosco, you guided the lost who, not knowing where their lives were going, found their answer here within this home, this school, this church and this playground.

“Therefore, dear Don Bosco, I want to say ‘thank you’ because you continue to encourage and to motivate young people always. I also wish to thank you because you keep alive my ‘Great Salesian Family’ where I have spent the best moments of my life and where I have known stupendous persons from whom I am still learning, above all, the joy of loving God in a way that I never would have thought. Here I know the joy of being myself and of doing what I enjoy, without fear or feeling embarrassed in front of others, living simply to the greatest degree the Salesian charism and, therefore, being able to say that Christ, in Don Bosco’s style, is my choice.”

And so, there you have it: the two testimonies that tell us how important it is to live life in a Salesian environment where the young are and how that Salesian environment has brought them to meet Jesus. At the same time, they ask us to be close to them, to walk beside them, especially when they must make important and the most profound decisions that truly affect their lives and their hearts.

We are the sons and daughters of a dreamer, and we cannot allow the dreams of the young to be extinguished like falling stars that die.



All photos used © Australian Salesian Bulletin



# LOVE THE CHURCH

—you must be joking!

**Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB**  
**Archbishop of Perth, Australia**

**S**ome years ago, I managed to watch a few minutes of 'Carols by Candlelight' on television. One of the artists introduced her selection of explicitly religious Christmas carols, and remarked that at Christmas we celebrate the birth of Christ, who came to bring peace, not religion! Similarly, I remember a talk I gave to a group of Christians and suggested that Christ, Eucharist and the Church were absolutely joined together. To my surprise, a member of the audience was greatly offended by my suggestion that belonging to a Church enables you to come into contact with Christ in a unique way.

Likewise, I recall an article about a retired tennis star, who said that although he was brought up Catholic, he was drawn to Buddhism because it, unlike Catholicism, was a spiritual religion! On another occasion, I heard a discussion on the radio about whether you could be a good person without believing in God. The thrust of the discussion seemed to be some of the very best people in the world didn't believe in God or go to Church, and therefore religion and Church aren't all that important. Indeed, I recently came across a book entitled 'Love Jesus, Hate the Church!' All these examples convinced me to share some thoughts on who Jesus really is, what the Church really is and how Jesus and the Church are two sides of the same coin.

Many members of our Church have betrayed everything that the Church stands for, in the most shocking of ways. The sexual abuse of young people is a terrible crime and I would be the last person to try to minimise or dismiss the awful damage this has done to the victims and survivors of this abuse, their families and friends, the Church community and our wider society. On top of these abysmal failures, there are many other things which make people walk away from our Catholic faith, such as the teachings of the Church, which some people find very hard, the liturgy of the Church, which some people find boring, and the poor example set by those who claim to be good Catholics.

There were many things about Jesus that people in his own time didn't like or found too hard. The reality seems to be that most people didn't accept him or follow him, but at least they were honest enough to admit that they couldn't accept what he was saying or doing: they rejected his word and walked away. These days, many people try to recreate a Jesus that they are comfortable with, one who doesn't challenge them too much. They pick and choose the bits about Jesus that they are at ease with and conveniently forget about the rest and in turn, do the same with the Church.

"Who is Jesus?" is actually a question Jesus himself asked his disciples in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus became curious as to what people were saying about him and asked the twelve: "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" (Mt 16:13–20). I think we can imagine that Jesus is wondering just how his mission is going: *Am I succeeding with the people? Do they understand and believe me? Have they got it?*

The answer Jesus gets is probably not what he was looking for. "Well," the disciples say to him, "some people say that you are John the Baptist come back to life. Some say that you are Moses, or Elijah, or one of the great prophets." The people realise that Jesus is someone special, but they have missed the truth. All they do is try to make sense of him in terms that they already understand. "He is another great prophet, just like the ones we have had in the past."

Jesus must have been disappointed by this answer, although he was probably not surprised. It is hard for people to

see when something completely unique is happening to them. "And you" Jesus asks them, "who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter speaks up on their behalf. "You are the Christ," he says, "the Son of the Living God." It would have done Jesus' heart good to hear Peter speak those words. *At least my closest friends and supporters understand me, Jesus must have thought. At least they get it. I can afford to rely on them. I can afford to keep on trusting them.*

This story shows us that, just like the disciples, we can get Jesus wrong, but we can also get him right. We have to work hard to make sure that we get Jesus right. If we recreate and follow a Jesus of our own choosing, we are only following ourselves rather than the real person who was sent to us by God to reveal God's face to us.

**These days, many people try to recreate a Jesus that they are comfortable with, one who doesn't challenge them too much. They pick and choose the bits about Jesus that they are at ease with and conveniently forget about the rest and in turn, do the same with the Church.**

The simple fact is lots of people get Jesus wrong. Some think Jesus was a great man who had a great message, but after he died his followers made up a crazy story about him rising from the dead because they wanted to hang on to the special role they had as his closest followers. Jesus was a great man with a great message, but if that was all he was then his followers would have died out under the pressure of persecution.

If Jesus were here in conversation with us, I think

he would ask the same question he asked his first disciples: "But what about you—who do you say I am?" The best place to find your answer is the Gospels and the New





Testament. Jesus lived about two thousand years ago; we do not have video or audio recordings of his sermons or his parables. He does not have a blog nor a Facebook page. What we do have are the Gospels, written in the first fifty or so years after his death by people who either knew him personally or belonged to communities that traced their beginnings back to him. And by asking “Who is Jesus?” I am also beginning to ask about what the Church really is.

If millions upon millions of people still think that Jesus’ message is powerful and worth listening to, it is because the Gospels have kept the memory of Jesus alive. There is no other way to come in contact with the real Jesus except through the pages of the New Testament, and we only have these because we first had the Church. Before the earliest disciples wrote the Gospels, they were recounting the stories of Jesus to each other: “Do you remember that time

**“The community of the disciples of Jesus, which we now call the Church, then decided to put its stories and its beliefs into writing. In this way, the Church gave birth to the scriptures, and so the scriptures will always be the book of the Church and the Church is where the scriptures can best be understood.”**

when he cured that blind man? Or when he told us about the sheep that got lost? How about that last evening when he shared the bread and wine with us and told us it was his body and his blood? And that awful day when he was crucified? Do you remember how amazed we were when we realized that he had risen from the dead?”

However, these early disciples of Jesus were not just sitting around reminiscing. They were organising communities where everyone was cared for, led by the apostles, or leaders appointed by the apostles. They were sharing bread and wine among themselves, knowing and believing that these were the Body and Blood of the Lord, given for them and to them so that they could be in real communion and intimacy with him and with each other. On top of all this they were spreading Jesus’ story far and wide, inviting the world to become his disciples.

The community of the disciples of Jesus, which we now call the Church, then decided to put its stories and its beliefs into writing. In this way, the Church gave birth to the scriptures, and so the scriptures will always be the book of the Church and the Church is where the scriptures can best be understood.

The most important thing the scriptures tell us is that Jesus knew he had a special and unique relationship with God, who was his Father in a way that is not true for anyone else. Jesus called God “Abba”, a word which expresses a very intimate and personal relationship. Jesus also spoke a lot about how he had been sent by God, to make the truth about God available for everyone.

This is tremendously important. People have all kinds of strange ideas about God as an old man with a long beard sitting on a throne up in heaven, or a policeman watching and waiting for us to do something wrong who then works out a fitting punishment, or a divine vending machine: you work out what you want, make your payment with some prayers and then your selection comes tumbling out.

None of these ideas of God have much to do with the kind of God Jesus tells us about. The God of Jesus, the real God, is the God who says to people who have sinned, “I do not condemn you—go and do not sin anymore.” We know this because it is what Jesus said to the woman who had been caught committing adultery and was being condemned

**“The most important thing the scriptures tell us is that Jesus knew he had a special and unique relationship with God, who was his Father in a way that is not true for anyone else.”**

by everyone else. We know that God forgives us with no strings attached and no punishments demanded, because Jesus showed us through the parable of the Prodigal Son. We know that God wants us to live rich, wholesome and full lives, because when the leper said, “If you want to, you can cure me,” Jesus said to him in reply, “Of course I want to: be cured.” We know that God invites us to work with him and let him work through us, because when the crowds were hungry and had nothing to eat, Jesus multiplied bread and fish but then gave the food to his disciples to distribute among the crowds.

Jesus formed the Church, gave it leadership through St Peter and the apostles, promised to send the Church the gift of his Holy Spirit and then made the Church his preferred way of being present and active in the world

as its saviour, healer, brother and servant. We say “yes” to the Church because it is what Christ is asking of us, as the Church is filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit and is Christ’s way of maintaining his gift of life to the world.

There are lots of reasons why saying “yes” to the Church can be tough, but Jesus asks anyway; he knows that the “yes” can be a difficult answer. He knows that our leaders can disappoint us; the leaders he appointed, the apostles,

constantly disappointed him yet he never gave up on them. He knows that others may make it hard for us if they find out that we go to Mass: he warned his first disciples to be ready for this and to rely on him to help them remain faithful. He knows that we will find some teachings hard: his disciples did, but in the end, they decided that Jesus had the words of life. He knows that sometimes it is easier to stay in bed than go to Mass: in Gethsemane his disciples fell asleep when he needed them most, yet he woke them up and asked them once again to keep watch with him. Jesus knows that it is sometimes hard, but he still asks us to say “yes” to him and to the Church.

It is through this “yes” that we will find Him. We will find the one who promised us his gifts of peace, abundant life, spirit, baptism, Reconciliation, Confirmation and most of all, Eucharist. Our “yes” to the Church and our “yes” to Christ are two sides of a coin that offers us so much, in fact it offers us everything.





# THE SYNOD ON YOUNG PEOPLE: *Heart Speaks to Heart*

In October 2018 the Church gathered to listen to the experience of all young people across the world. That gathering included many Catholic young people from sixteen to twenty-nine years of age, but also many young people of other faiths and of no faith. This synod on young people is the fifteenth ordinary synod since 1967, following on from a synod on New Evangelisation in 2012 and one on the family in 2015. Each of these synodal moments are part of a pattern of renewal of the Church under the leadership of Pope Francis.

But what is a synod? The word comes from the Greek σύνοδος (sýnodos) and is translated as 'meeting' or 'assembly'. In the Catholic context it is an authoritative meeting to decide issues of belief and practice. The process for the synod on young people began two years ago and young people have been consulted across the world about their views. The results of the survey have then been considered by professionals in many disciplines, and young people have been involved at every stage expressing their views in meetings. Some of those young people have reported that it took a lot of determination to stop the older clergy in the meetings talking and really begin to listen to the voice of the young. At one point, the young adults had to go away and make a video overnight to present to the whole assembly in order to have their voice heard. It worked. The whole agenda and process was reviewed, and a more collaborative approach was adopted.

That instinctive response by the young people illustrates some of the themes of the synod which include listening to the young and also engaging their strengths as 'digital natives' in a very different world from their elders. The importance of this synod in the Church is captured in the statement of purpose put forward by Pope Francis:

To examine herself on how she can lead young people to recognize and accept the call to the fullness of life and love, and to ask young people to help her in identifying the most effective way to announce the Good News today.

There are two parts to the aim: first it is an invitation to fullness of life which continues the theme of family and evangelisation; and secondly, which is probably the most striking, is an appeal to young people to help the Church to make the Gospel more accessible in a rapidly changing world. The Church is asking for advice,



admitting that it does not have the answers! The Church is also asking guidance from young people who in the past have been seen as passive recipients of the faith. This is the emerging voice of a humbler Church that needs to move into the future as a pilgrim people ready to listen to the experience of all ages and especially the young.

The synod has established three themes for listening and reflection:

- the world of the young;
- faith, discernment and vocation;
- pastoral action.

Listening is the core activity of this synod. How we listen to each other across generations in a way that unlocks the fullness of life in listener and speaker. Francis de Sales writes:

Truly, the chief exercise in spiritual life is to speak to God and hear God speak in the bottom of the heart; it is a silent conversation. Eyes speak to eyes, and heart to heart, and none understand what passed between them save those who speak (Book 6 *Treatise on the Love of God*).





So, all good listening has a spiritual dimension. It is a heart-to-heart conversation that the Church is seeking with young people for the good of young people and also for the Church, which needs guidance. This turn towards young people is great news for the Salesian approach, because it amounts to a charter for youth ministry and

a recognition of a way of evangelising, a way of proclaiming the Gospel, that reaches back to Don Bosco's experience in Valdocco. But it also suggests that the gradual way of listening, accompanying and drawing out vocational gifts is a valid model of bringing the Gospel to everyone whatever their age. Evangelisation is about relationship, walking with others, understanding,

appreciating rather than presenting rules and explanations that do not connect with the lived experience of those involved. Evangelisation is an invitation to authentic relationships that are the only sacred space where the Gospel can be proclaimed.

In the process of preparations for the synod, the Bishops of England and Wales conducted a survey of the views of young people. From the published results in 2018, here are my top ten findings:

1. relationships are central to young peoples' personal world view. The Church is not part of that world;
2. for young people, the best Church events are those that invite them to an adventure and an encounter with Jesus Christ;

3. there are two distinct groups: a small vocal group looking back to an era they have been told was better and who want clarity; and a much larger group who want authenticity and are embedded in the culture and want the Church to engage more;
4. young people are asking the Church in England and Wales for a monumental change in attitude orientation and practice;
5. we lack integration between young people's desire for solidarity with the poor and their baptismal vocation;
6. educators identified what young people most needed from Church: exploration, encounter, purpose;
7. Catholic schools create the largest face-to-face contact with young Catholics with 350,000 secondary pupils in daily contact with Catholic adults.

8. for some Catholics the word 'vocation' seems too narrow in the way that it is used;
9. the Church is good at laying out the steps that lead to a well-lived life, not so good at explaining why anyone would want to do this in the first place;
10. six in ten young people brought up as Catholic currently affiliate with the Church.

For the Church in this country, these ten items

point to a sense of disappointment in young people with the way we are proclaiming the Gospel. But they also promise idealism, energy, flexibility and renewal. The key lies in establishing good listening relationships at every level so that young people can guide our Church to a new engagement with the culture that they regard as normal. Only if our Church enters that world and listens to the honest hungers of young people can we break open the treasures of the Gospel and Sacraments for a starved and sometimes superficial world.

The final preparatory stage for the synod was the production of a working document that was drawn up with young people from across the world. This is the content of the synod from which I would like to offer my top ten points from this world view of young people:

1. young people are major seekers of meaning;
2. religion is now not the preferred gateway to the meaning of life;
3. music is a fundamental language for young people;
4. it is a great problem that women are still not given an equal place;
5. religion needs to be less institutionalised and more 'liquid';
6. homilies are inadequate;
7. young people rage in the face of rampant Church corruption;
8. young people are asking for effective and reliable mentors;
9. vocation is like a hub integrating all the dimensions of a person, making them fruitful;
10. young people are more sensitive to experiences rather than concepts.

When I read through these statements, I wonder who is evangelising whom. At times it seems that young people are challenging the Church to be faithful to the Gospel, to avoid corruption, to establish relationships based on loving kindness and build the kind of Church envisaged by the apostles. A Church that does not adapt its approach to changes in culture becomes a fossil, and its churches become museums with the parishioners as curators. The synod offers the Church a gateway to renewal, a source of energy for change and, above all, an invitation to a new relationship with the people of God.

The final synod meeting on young people took place in October and included bishops from all over the world. Each of them has discussed and will vote on the working document advising Pope Francis on how to move forward. Early in 2019, Pope Francis will publish an apostolic exhortation summing up the outcomes of the synod and suggesting some ways forward for the whole Church. It is important that we keep this synod process in our prayers because it is not complete until the document is received, reflected upon and then implemented in our own Church in England and Wales as well as our Church in Scotland.

The theme of listening must not be lost because it is the life-blood of healthy relationships. Listening outwards to the world around us and listening within, to the heart, is the core of a discerning life and a vital missing element from some aspects of Church life. As Don Bosco used to say: "Young people need to know that they are loved." It is that love that breaks down barriers between people



and establishes the heart-to-heart conversation that is never far from the Gospel and from Jesus' presence in our lives. That is why Pope Francis has been so insistent on listening, as highlighted with his words from World Youth Day in 2017.

Every young person has something to say to others. He or she has something to say to adults, something to say to priests, something to say to bishops and even the Pope. All of us need to listen to you!

**David O'Malley SDB**



# What's in a *Name*?

*We're called to a name change.*

We're all familiar with the incident in the bible where God changes the name of *Abram* to *Abraham*. The change seems so small that often it isn't even picked up by those reading that text. What's the difference between *Abram* and *Abraham*?

**T**he name *Abram*, meaning 'exalted father', is the name given the great patriarch to whom God made the promise that one day he would be the father of all the descendants of the nation of Judaism. But later, when God promises this same man that he is to be the father of all nations everywhere as well, God changes his name to *Abraham*: "You will no longer be called *Abram*; your name will be *Abraham*, for I have made you a father of many nations" (Gen 17:5).

What is implied in this change? The name, *Abraham*, in its very etymology, connotes a stretching to become something larger; he's now to be the father of **all** nations. *Abram*, the father of one nation, now becomes *Abraham* (in Hebrew, *Abrahamon goyim*) the father of all the other nations, the *goyim*.

That change doesn't just stretch a word; it stretches Abraham, a Jew, and redefines his understanding of himself and his mission. He's no longer to understand himself as the patriarch of just one nation, his own, his ethnic and religious family, but he's to see himself and the faith he is entrusted with as someone and something for all nations. He's no longer to think of himself as the patriarch of one particular tribe, since God is not a tribal God. As well, he's no longer to think of just his own tribe as his family but to think of all others, irrespective of ethnicity or faith, as also his children.

What does that mean for us? T.S. Eliot might answer that by saying: "Home is where one starts from" (*Four Quartets*, Part II: East Coker). Our particular ethnic, religious, cultural and civic roots are precious and important, but they're not the fully mature tree into which we're meant to grow. Our roots are where we start from.

I grew up a very sheltered child, in a very close family, in a very enclosed rural environment. We were all of one kind: our neighbours; my classmates; everyone I knew; all of

us shared a common history, ethnicity, religion, cultural background, set of values, and lived in a young country, Canada, that for the most part looked exactly like we did. I value those roots. They're a great gift. Those roots have given me a stability that has freed me up for the rest of my life. But they're only my roots; they are precious but merely the place where I start from.

And it's the same for all of us. We take root inside a particular family, an ethnicity, a neighbourhood, a country and a faith, with a particular slant on the world and, with that, some people constitute our tribe and others don't. But that's where we start from. We grow, change, move, meet new people and live and work with others who don't share our background, nationality, ethnicity, skin colour, religion or particular slant on life.

And so today we share our countries, cities, neighbourhoods and churches with the '*goyim*', the people of other tribes, and that makes for the long struggle, hopefully successful, to eventually see that those others who are different from us share the same God, are also our brothers and sisters and have lives that are just as real, important and precious as those of our own biological, national and religious families. Like Abraham, we need a name change so that we don't make idolatry out of our youthful patriotism, which has us believe that our own tribe is special and that our own country, skin colour, background and religion give us a unique and privileged claim to God.

Our world is globalising at a dizzying pace, and countries, neighbourhoods and churches are becoming ever-more plural and diverse ethnically, linguistically, culturally and religiously. Our countries, neighbourhoods, workplaces and churches are literally taking on a different face. The old sheltered communities that gave us our roots are disappearing and for many of us this is scary, and the temptation is retrench, to go hard to the right, to militantly defend the old boundaries and to claim God and truth more exclusively again for ourselves. That's understandable, but not where we're called to be by what's best inside our humanity and our faith. Like Abraham, we're called to a name change.

We're called to cherish our heritage, country, mother tongue, culture, faith and church because only by being firmly rooted within primary community are we stable and altruistic enough to offer family to those outside of our own. But home is where we start from. From those wonderful families that give us roots, we're called to stretch our hearts religiously, ethnically and culturally so that eventually, everyone is embraced as family. We're called to move from being Abram to becoming Abraham.



Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website: [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com). He is also now on Facebook [www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser](http://www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser)



# SALESIAN BULLETIN

June/July 1892

## LONDON A NEW SALESIAN CHURCH

**T**HE MONTH of June 1892 will ever form a memorable epoch in the history of the Salesian Fathers in England. For in this beautiful month, consecrated to the Sacred Heart, they have laid the foundations of a New Church in honour of this Divine Heart, in the poor and populous mission of West Battersea in the city of London.

Many of our readers will doubtless remember that, in the last year of his life, Don Bosco undertook, out of his Christian zeal and charity, to furnish from the Salesian Congregation a supply of priests for the administration of the church and mission of Battersea. This undertaking grew and prospered under the special protection of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Whom the mission is consecrated; and in a wonderful manner and degree the efforts of our priests have been crowned with success. For if we look back to the winter of 1887, when they first took up their residence there, we find the Mission almost destitute of means, with no boys' school, and, for the clergy, no appointed place of habitation at all. The little Iron Structure which for upwards of eighteen years had served as a church, was tottering to its fall; and though the Fathers lost no time in introducing some important repairs, the state of decay was so advanced, that nothing short of a complete renewal could save it from its doom. Contenting themselves, therefore, with rendering the old building safe from toppling on their heads for the time being, they turned their attention to other equally pressing wants of this poor mission.

In those few years they have been enabled to construct a roomy and substantially built edifice for the schools, to purchase a

block of houses upon the spot, which serve as a residence for themselves, and enable them, at the same time, to admit a certain number of orphan boys, many of whom are receiving a classical education, and give fair promise of ecclesiastical vocations.

But if the Salesian Fathers of West Battersea have been busy in their new mission, Time has not been idle, and week by week, day by day, its influence might be seen on the little iron church, now approaching by rapid stages to a state of complete dilapidation. At last, we understand it was condemned by the City Council, and has had to be removed.

The day has therefore come when the Catholic inhabitants of West Battersea find themselves without even that makeshift of a church; and—a circumstance which certainly does not better the condition of things—almost totally without the means of contributing to the erection of a new one, belonging as they do, for the greater part, to the poorer working-classes. On the other hand, the erection of a new church has ceased to be a mere problematic speculation—it has become an emphatic necessity. The enterprise is worthy of the Christian's noblest energies, for, all who take part in it, concur in building a Tabernacle for the habitation of the Most High, and in placing within easy reach of the poor sons of toil, the sweetest—perhaps the only—consolation they may know on this side of the grave: the possibility of prostrating themselves before the Blessed Sacrament, and imbibing from the Precious Wounds of Jesus the priceless treasures of His Holy Redemption.

To the Salesians and their foundations, the same difficulties are perpetually

renewing themselves. The enterprise is good, and must therefore be achieved; but the means—where are the means to come from? In two things, at least, Don Bosco seemed to know no limits: his love of souls, and his faith in Providence. This faith, or love, or both combined, were continually urging him on to new labours and new sacrifices. But for the economy of all his difficulties one means he had, and one alone, to which he invariably had recourse: that means, it is needless to say, was co-operation. And following Don Bosco's example, his sons now appeal to all lovers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, begging them in the charity of that Divine Heart, to co-operate, according to their ability, in defraying the heavy expenses that must be incurred by the West Battersea Salesian Fathers in this most urgent and, for them, gigantic undertaking. With confidence in the generous assistance of our worthy Co-operators and of all charitable persons, into whose hands this little paper may fall, we look forward to the consecration, on no far distant day, of the New Salesian Church of the Sacred Heart—the first Salesian church in England, and, let us hope, the nucleus from which Don Bosco's Institution is destined to spread all over the kingdom. In the grateful, fervent prayers of hundreds of thousands of poor children, and in the increasing, over flowing love of the Sacred Heart, may all our Co-operators and Benefactors find ample recompense for whatever sacrifices they may be induced to make towards the good work now recommended to their Christian zeal and charity.

Contributions in aid of the above will be gratefully received by:

**DON MICHAEL RUA,**  
Oratorio Salesiano, Turin, Italy:

or by

**The Rev. Father MACEY,**  
64, Orbel Street, Battersea, S.W.  
London

Sacred Heart Church, Battersea  
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Fr Charles Macey SDB  
© Salesians of  
Don Bosco

# SALESIAN BULLETIN

November/December 1893

## LONDON CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART IN WEST BATTERSEA, LONDON

**T**HE CONSECRATION of the first Salesian Church in London signs a gladsome epoch alike in the annals of our Society and the history of Catholicity in England. The solemnities in connection with the Opening Ceremony commenced—as announced in our last issue—on the 14th of October, and continued with special services during the ensuing octave, terminating on Sunday the 22nd inst. Needless to say that our confrères of London looked forward to this 'great day' with the most intense longing and interest: needless to say that their joy was perfect, their hearts overflowing with thankfulness, as they saw their most cherished dreams realised—their fondest hopes accomplished. And what edifying devotion, what unwonted exuberance of spirits characterised the good West Battersea Catholics as they came in crowds to their own beloved Church, and prostrated themselves in adoration and thanksgiving before the Divine Presence in the Most Blessed Sacrament!

The church is illuminated by electricity and heated by warm air tubes. The floors

of the side chapels, baptistery, and part of the sanctuary, are laid with encaustic tiles, all the other floors having solid wood block paving. The exterior is of red brick with some stone cuttings, and the roof is covered with green slates. The church affords sitting accommodation for 700 persons and the cost has been rather over £9,000, exclusive of fittings and decoration.

It was announced that the Bishop of Southwark, the Right Rev. Dr. Butt, would consecrate the new Church of the Sacred Heart. But as his Lordship was only just recovering from a severe attack of illness, he begged to be excused from officiating, urging that his place should be taken by Monsignor Cagliero of the Salesian Society, Bishop of Magida and Vicar-Apostolic of Patagonia, who had arrived in London on the day before the opening ceremony.

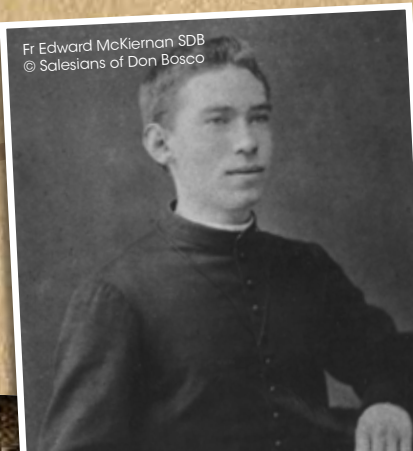
Accordingly, at 8 o'clock on the morning fixed for the solemn rite—October, 14—his Lordship of Magida, Don Albera, Don Barberis, Don Bonavia, and Don Arts, commenced the consecration,

which was performed, according to the Roman *Pontificale*, with great solemnity, both within and without the edifice, notwithstanding the copious downpour of rain which continued all through the morning. But just at the close of the functions in connection with the ceremony of consecration, as Monsignor Cagliero was returning to the Sacristy, and the doors of the church were thrown open to the public thronging without, the sun burst forth in all its glory, splendidly lighting up the House of God.

It was close on noon as our Superior General Don Rua ascended to the high altar and offered up the Holy Sacrifice for the first time in the newly consecrated church in the presence of a large and devout congregation. That first Mass celebrated in the Church of the Sacred Heart, was offered to implore from the Adorable Heart of Jesus the choicest blessings, both temporal and spiritual, upon all friends and Benefactors of the sacred edifice.

At the luncheon which followed, and which several of our worthy Cooperators graced with their presence, Don Rua proposed the health of the HOLY FATHER; and then, successively, of His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan, of their Lordships, Dr. Butt and Mgr. Cagliero, and of all Benefactors of the Salesian Institution. A telegram was also dispatched to His Holiness, announcing the happy event of the day and imploring the Apostolic Benediction upon the Battersea community, their mission, and the Salesian Co-operators.

Fr Edward McKiernan SDB  
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# SALESIAN BULLETIN

November/December 1893



Blessed Michael Rua  
© Salesians of Don Bosco

## LONDON DON RUA IN ENGLAND A CORDIAL RECEPTION

**D**ON RUA wishing to be present at the Solemn Dedication of the new Salesian Church in London, arrived at Battersea on the evening of the 12th of October. It were superfluous to say that he was eagerly awaited and enthusiastically received by the Salesian Community of West Battersea and their pupils. But others besides the Salesian Fathers wished to welcome the Superior-General of the Order, and, thanks to the kind efforts and never-failing zeal of our Catholic population, an entertainment had been prepared in the School Rooms of the Mission, where a large circle of friends assembled to give him a hearty welcome.

The programme was varied, highly entertaining, and well carried out. Besides addresses of welcome read by the boys in Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and English, there were some delightful songs brilliantly rendered by Messrs. Knight, Madden, and others. After the interlude which followed the first part of the *menu*, Mr. Newman, a venerable elder of the Battersea Mission, came forward, and, speaking in the name of the assembly, expressed the great pleasure it gave them to have Don Rua in their midst, and to be able to thank him personally for all he had done for the Mission, especially for providing it with a church. He also spoke in high terms of the work that had been done in the parish, and of the untiring zeal of the Salesian Fathers in their great work for souls, paying a special tribute of praise

to Father Macey, who (Mr. Newman said) had worked so hard and struggled so bravely against the many difficulties that encompassed him on every side from the very beginning of the Salesian mission in England.

On the following day (Oct. 13) Don Rua, accompanied by Father Macey, was accorded a most gracious reception by his Eminence Cardinal Vaughan, who expressed a hope that the work of the Salesians might prosper in England, and that they might soon be enabled to open a House in the Archdiocese of Westminster.

Don Rua also paid his respects to the Right Rev. Dr. Butt, Bishop of Southwark, and one of the warmest supporters of the Salesian Community in London. Visits were also paid to various religious institutions in the city during the ten days that our Superior-General remained in England.

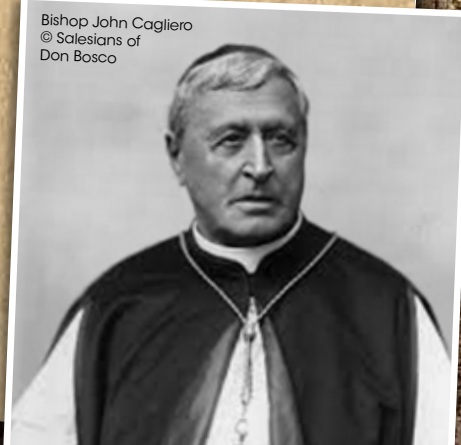
Many of our English Co-operators gladly availed themselves of our Superior-General's presence at Battersea to make his personal acquaintance and bid him welcome to England. The DUKE of NORFOLK also found time to pay him a visit and congratulate him on the completion of the new church. His GRACE, we are proud to say, is among the first of our Co-operators in England, and had been a great admirer of Don Bosco and his works, even when our venerable Father was scarcely known out of Italy.

On Tuesday morning (Oct. 17) an impressive little ceremony was held in the Chapel of the Battersea Salesian Community, when the Superior-General gave the clerical habit to six postulants, and formally admitted four others to the Membership of the Salesian Society.

On Saturday (Oct. 21) Father Macey had made arrangements for a musical and Magic Lantern entertainment for the children of the parish, at which Don Rua presided. Our good friend Mr. Ralph, who spends his time and money in entertaining poor children, had prepared a great number of interesting slides, among which were photos of Don Bosco, Don Rua, Monsignor Cagliero, Father Macey, and of various churches and houses of the Salesian Institution. As conclusion to a most enjoyable evening, Don Rua distributed buns to all the children, who went home enthusiastically delighted with the little *fête* that had been prepared all for themselves.

With the functions of Sunday (Oct. 22) were terminated the special services in connection with the Solemn Consecration and Opening of the Church of the Sacred Heart, and on the following day our Superior-General left for the Salesian Houses of Belgium bringing with him many pleasant souvenirs of his short sojourn among the English people, and full of bright hopes for the future of the Catholic Church in this soil now rife with the over-growth of innumerable contradictory creeds and mis-beliefs.

Bishop John Cagliero  
© Salesians of Don Bosco



# SALESIAN BULLETIN

November/December 1893

## LONDON THE SALESIANS IN LONDON A LOOK BACKWARDS

**S**OME SIXTEEN or seventeen years ago a pious lady, the Countess de Stackpoole—at the instigation of the late Canon Drinkwater, whose labours for the good of Souls in this district have made his name a household word—erected at her own expense a little Iron Church in West Battersea. She resided in its neighbourhood for some years, and was assiduous for all that tended to God's glory within. The Countess was a great admirer of the Salesian Congregation, and when she left our shores and settled down in Rome, she entreated the Holy Father to send these Fathers to West Battersea in order to carry on the work of the mission. Yielding readily to so earnest and practical an appeal, the Pope commanded Don Bosco, the saintly founder of the Congregation, to send priests to England, that they might minister to the wants of the Catholic people in the little Iron Chapel.

As a result, two Fathers came over to Battersea from Turin, where the mother house of the Salesians is established. Some idea of the state of the mission in 1888, when these two priests first set foot in the district, may be gathered from the present Superior's own words—"When we arrived," said he, "we found the church in an advanced stage of dilapidation, and it was afterwards condemned by the County Council. There were no schools beyond a small mixed school, and no priest's house of any description. Our first residence was in a cottage in Trott Street. It was not too lavishly furnished: a couple of iron bedsteads, two chairs, and a *borrowed table*. Our difficulties and hardships during this time were very great, and my colleague sickened and died."



© unknown



© unknown



All photos used © Blisters for Bread



# BLISTERS FOR BREAD 2018

**I**t's not every weekend that I make a round trip of more than 5,000 miles to join in a sponsored charity walk, but then it's not every weekend that a charity walk I helped establish more than fifty years ago celebrates its golden anniversary.

In January 1968, as a very young Salesian, I was asked by Fr George Williams, then the Provincial of the British Province, which at the time included the five Salesian communities in Southern Africa, to travel out to South Africa and join the teaching staff at Savio College, a small Salesian school in Lansdowne, one of the suburbs of Cape Town. I had been at the school only two or three months when I was approached by Norman Freeman, the fundraising organiser of a local charity, the Peninsula School Feeding Association (PSFA), and asked if the boys of the college could raise some much-needed cash to help the PSFA in its work of providing free meals every day for more than 20,000 primary school children. I felt it was a request to which we couldn't turn a deaf ear.



## About PSFA

PSFA is a registered non-profit organisation that addresses hunger in young learners attending primary, secondary and special needs schools as well as Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Centres (OVCs), Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDCs) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVETs) in the Western Province.

Our mission is to combat the prevalence of hunger in children attending schools and other developmental institutions, through school feeding and other developmental initiatives, while they are at school.

Our vision is no more hungry school children.

PSFA's main aims are to reduce short-term hunger, enhance children's ability to learn through school feeding and increase school attendance.

To date, PSFA has provided over 1.6 billion nutritious meals to underprivileged school children thus promoting a sound grounding for education, which is the key to everyone's future.

Hunger and malnutrition prevent the disadvantaged children on our feeding programme from learning. This leads onto a lifetime of damage and continuation of the cycle of poverty—for the child, our society and our nation.





Sponsored charity walks were all the rage in the UK in the 1960s. So I contacted the Salesians in the UK to find out how to organise such a walk. I then shared the information I had received with the students and staff of the college. The proposal that I put to them, that we should organise our own sponsored walk for the PSFA, was accepted with great enthusiasm. We chose May 6, 1968, the feast of Dominic Savio, the patron of the college, as the date for the first 'Big Walk'. I still remember contacting the local police to obtain their approval for the walk. Since it was the first such sponsored charity walk in the Cape Town area, the police authorities were at a loss to know how to classify it. "No," I had to explain, "it wasn't a political demonstration, neither was it a religious procession; it was a charity walk!"

Thankfully, the first 'Big Walk' turned out to be a great success, both socially and financially. All the boys of the college, almost 150 of them and some as young as nine years of age, and most of the staff, walked the twenty miles from Simon's Town on the coast back to the college playing fields, and the grand total of 2,644 South African Rand was raised for the PSFA. The following year, the 'Blisters for Bread Walk', as the 'Big Walk' had been renamed, attracted even more sponsors and brought in even more much-needed funds. The parents of one of the students at the college invited Dr Philip Blaiberg, the second person in the



world to have undergone and successfully survived a heart transplant operation, to start the walk. The plan was that Dr Blaiberg would walk no more than ten to twenty yards. In fact, in his enthusiasm he ended up walking almost a quarter of a mile! Sadly, he died a few days afterwards, but I am convinced he died happy in the knowledge that his participation in the walk had helped raised funds to feed a significant number of hungry children.



A few months after the third very successful Blisters for Bread Walk in May 1970, I had to leave Cape Town and return to the UK to continue my studies there, but the PSFA decided to make the Blisters for Bread Walk an annual fundraiser. And over the years the annual Blisters for Bread Walk became one of the biggest fundraising events in the Cape Town calendar, attracting thousands of sponsored walkers and raising substantial funds each year to support the work of the PSFA.

In May 2018, on the fiftieth anniversary of the first walk, I emailed the PSFA to congratulate them for keeping the dream behind the Blisters for Bread Walk "alive and well".

I received an immediate reply inviting me to take part in the fiftieth walk that was scheduled for the last weekend in August. It was an invitation that I felt I shouldn't refuse. I arrived in Cape Town on Friday August 24, having left Nairobi where I'm currently based the previous afternoon, and having spent Thursday night with the Salesians in Johannesburg.

Unfortunately, the blue skies and warm sunshine that greeted me on my arrival in Cape Town had long disappeared when Sunday August 26, the day of the fiftieth Blisters for Bread Walk, dawned. When I arrived at the grounds of the Green Point Cricket Club for the start of this year's walk there was a bitterly cold wind blowing and the imminent threat of heavy rain showers. Yet, despite the inclement weather, a crowd of four to five thousand walkers had gathered by 7:30 a.m. for the start of the ten kilometres walk. I had the privilege of joining Mrs Helen Zille, the Premier of the Western Cape, and the Western Cape Ministers of Education, and of Cultural Affairs and Sport, in officially starting the 10K walk. Thirty minutes later, another large group of walkers, some in fancy dress despite the cold, gathered for the start of the 5K walk. Among them were four former students of Savio College who had taken part with me in the first walk fifty years earlier. As we followed a well-marshalled route up and down the windswept Sea Point Promenade, we shared our memories of that very first walk from Simon's

Town to Lansdowne. None of us could have imagined that fifty years later we would be walking together again and raising funds for the same charity.

Three days later and safely back in Nairobi, I received an email from the PSFA with the news that despite the cold weather, the fiftieth Blisters for Bread Walk had been a great success. More than 9,000 of the 11,354 individuals who had paid the 60 Rand official entry fee had turned up and taken part in either the 5K or the 10K walks. Altogether the fiftieth walk had raised a total of 681,240 Rand, a sum that would enable the PSFA to provide more than 1,500 hungry elementary school pupils with

a nutritious breakfast and lunch at school for an entire calendar year.

After the finish of the 5K walk, I had the opportunity of speaking with the current Director of the Peninsula School Feeding Association, Ms Petrina Pakeo, a very impressive woman who cares passionately about feeding hungry children. Petrina told me that she had grown up in a very poor family and when she was of school age, she and her siblings had depended on the meals

provided by the PSFA to keep them warm and well-nourished and able to study. She thanked me for having made the decision to organise the first Blisters for Bread Walk fifty years ago. "Though you didn't know it at the time, you and your students probably helped pay for some of the meals that prevented me and my brothers and sisters from going to bed hungry at night." It was a comment that made me feel very grateful for the way the good Lord often chooses us to be instruments of his love and concern—very often without our knowing it!

**Francis Preston SDB**

**Over the years the annual Blisters for Bread Walk became one of the biggest fundraising events in the Cape Town calendar, attracting thousands of sponsored walkers and raising substantial funds each year to support the work of the PSFA.**



# PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrim  
when your ship,  
long moored in harbour,  
gives you the illusion of being a house;  
when your ship begins to put down roots  
in the stagnant water by the quay:  
put out to sea!  
Save your boat's journeying soul,  
and your own pilgrim soul,  
cost what it may.

Hélder Câmara<sup>1</sup>

There is something about life's journey which, at one stage or another, impels us to follow Câmara's advice. The singular insistence to reach out and grow into the uniqueness of who we really are as human beings and children of God manifests itself uniquely in each of us.

It may spring from a dissatisfaction with ourselves, a sense of incompleteness, a sense of emptiness, a sense of unnecessary burdens that my thoughts and feelings are placing on me. My 'pilgrim soul' may be calling me to leave, for a while, the security of the familiar and allow me to look at my life through the unsettling lens of unfamiliar surroundings and see it from a different perspective.

For some that will entail a geographical journey through unfamiliar challenging terrain; for others it will be an internal journey challenging their own comforting certainties and securities and allowing the paradox of

mystery to be. Or as Anita Brookner says, it may simply be the challenge of love: "Real love is a pilgrimage. It happens when there is no strategy, but it is very rare because most people are strategists."<sup>2</sup>

"Give me my scallop shell of quiet"  
Sir Walter Raleigh<sup>3</sup>

I have, with some friends, just experienced walking a section of the Camino de Santiago in northern Spain. On that Camino journey, the symbol of the scallop is everywhere, pointing the way to the ultimate destination—the resting place of the remains of St James the Greater in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Perhaps it was from here that Walter Raleigh got his inspiration for the opening line of his poem about pilgrimage.

### The Scallop Shell

There is recorded evidence dating from 1106 that the scallop shell was very much part and parcel of the Camino de Santiago.<sup>4</sup> But the scallop shell was and is intended to be much more than a signpost on the road.

The symbol of the scallop shell has a long history in Spain predating Christian times. It was associated in pagan Roman times with the god Janus, who was the god of beginnings and endings, transition and transformation. All these human experiences are as valid today as they were then, and they are relevant not only to the Camino but to all life's journeys today.

### The Legend

The legend of St James puts a Christian hue on the symbol of the scallop shell. It is said, that James the Apostle travelled to Spain to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection to the pagans. When he returned to Jerusalem, he was martyred by King Herod for blasphemy. The story goes that his companions returned with his body to Spain. When the boat bringing his body was approaching the coastline of northwest Spain, a knight on horseback happened to be riding along the cliffs. The horse, frightened at the sight of the boat, bolted and together with his rider plunged into the sea. St James, though dead, miraculously intervened and the horse and rider emerged from the sea covered in scallop shells. Maybe that imaginative description of being rescued from the jaws of death spoke powerfully of the Good News of salvation, resurrection, new beginnings and transformation.

### The Camino's Core

The scallop shelled pathways of the Camino de Santiago still attract thousands of pilgrims each year from all over the world. Only each individual knows what the fascination or call of the Camino is for them, what it says to them, and why they continue to make their journey to Compostela with sore feet and tired bodies. The meaning of it is unique and particular to everybody.

The physical and psychological benefits of walking are well catalogued. But there is another dimension apart from these. Peter Millar writes about another great place of pilgrimage—Iona. In his poem about that place, he perhaps sums up the essence of a Christian pilgrimage. In so doing he highlights what makes pilgrimages like the Camino de Santiago so fascinating and attractive for religious seekers:

We need you, Iona  
with your alternative vision,  
with your ever-present questions,  
your often uncomfortable silence.  
For you are a place of prayer,  
of Christ's abiding;  
weaving a rainbow of meaning  
through the endless busyness of our days,  
holding together the frayed threads  
of our fleeting devotion,  
opening a path for healing  
and for peace.  
Not momentary healing  
nor easy faith,  
but struggle, commitment,  
and an ongoing conversion  
are your gifts for  
our broken yet beautiful lives.<sup>5</sup>



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### When the Walking Stops ...

One thing I've learned from doing the Camino is that a pilgrimage doesn't end when the walking stops. The journey of life continues with the questions and insights which surfaced, often unbidden, as one walks for hours through beautiful woodlands and unadorned stony paths in unspoiled countryside. For me to honour and nourish those questions is the gift and the challenge of the Camino.

The Spanish poet Antonio Machado describes how the effects of a pilgrimage transcend the journey:

Wanderer, your footsteps are the road, and nothing more;  
wanderer, there is no road, the road is made by walking.  
By walking one makes the road,  
and upon glancing behind one sees the path that never  
will be trod again.<sup>6</sup>

We each complete our own unique road of life. Nobody else's road is like ours because we've walked it with our own unique gifts, qualities, histories, weaknesses and flaws. We've also walked it with our unique relationships, and our particular view of the world, God and truth. As Machado says, it is "a path that will never be trod again." We define it by who we are as we walk along, and we compose our own story.

John O'Donohue says: "At its heart, the journey of each life is a pilgrimage, through unforeseen sacred places that enlarge and enrich the soul."<sup>7</sup> Hopefully, as we journey life, we will become aware of the blessings and insights of our life's pilgrimage, however, whenever they occur.

### John Horan SDB

(used with kind permission of 'The Salesian Bulletin', Ireland, July–September, 2018)

<sup>1</sup> D.H. Câmara, *A Thousand Reasons For Living* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1981) 40.

<sup>2</sup> O. Kenyon *Women Writers Talk: Interviews with Ten Women Writers* (Oxford: Lennard Books, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> From *The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage* written by Sr Walter Raleigh (1522–1618) while he was in the Tower of London awaiting his execution for treason.

<sup>4</sup> Records contained in the *Codex Calixtinus*, or *Liber Sancti Jacobi*, an exquisite illuminated manuscript attributed to Pope Callixtus II. The book is essentially a spiritual and travel guide that gathers texts related to St James and information on the routes.

<sup>5</sup> P. Millar, *An Iona Prayer Book* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1998) 67–68.

<sup>6</sup> A. Machado, *Fields of Castile/Campos de Castilla: A Dual-Language Book*, Ed. Stanley Appelbaum (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> J. O'Donohue, *Divine Beauty: The Invisible Embrace* (London: Bantam Books, 2004), 38.



# Developing *Creativity*

Bruno Ferrero Ponders A Key Issue in  
Don Bosco's Preventive System of Education

**A**nimals adapt to the environment in which they live. If the environment changes, they perish. Humans do the opposite and change the environment with the tools they manage to invent. Imagination means the ability to survive. But for human beings, the impulse to 'create' is not only caused by necessity. It is above all one of the greatest pleasures of existence.

Children get a kick out of beaver away, becoming a sculptor, jeweller, an inventor of machines. When they build, they learn notions, such as invention, projection, time, effort ... and they do it all by themselves. The pleasure they get out of using their hands to achieve something 'seen' only in their imagination is awesome. So, it follows that the challenge the educator faces is to keep children's intelligence and sensitivity alive.

Unfortunately, schooling leads too quickly to a break with the creative and playful world of childhood; creativity risks becoming 'calcified' and a misunderstood form of intelligence.

The creative person is not some sort of genius, coming up with some surprising intuition or artistic ability. The creative person is the one who in all circumstances, including the most dramatic, is able to guess what to do to reverse or at least to steer away from the probably negative outcome of the situation.

## A Parent's Role

The role of parents is very important and consists in promoting this ability of the child to observe, imagine and create. Parents have a duty to encourage and reassure the essential and precious qualities of their children, because **creativity can be cultivated**. But it is important to remember two convictions that have often guided us in these pages: no one can lead another where they have never been themselves, and children only learn what they live.

## The Family's Role

This means that **the family must be creative itself** and relate in an atmosphere that fosters this vital form of intelligence, able to neutralise the germs that can quickly kill it: jealousy; authoritarianism; not listening and, above all, boredom and routine; the declared enemies of creativity.

The family must be creative from various points of view:

- *perceptually*—being aware of its own signals and those of others that can foretell possible crises;
- *analytically*—able to grasp at once what is not working and not confuse symptoms with causes;
- *decisively*—able to choose the strategy, the novel behaviour best suited to one's own means, values and aspirations;
- *practically*—always getting on with the job and avoiding wishful thinking.

## Talent, Method, Energy

Living in an atmosphere of this kind, it is easy to encourage and educate the creative intelligence of children in its three main dimensions: talent, method and energy. **Talent** is not simply a gift from heaven, but the fruit of different personal characteristics to be conquered and developed with curiosity, a culture that is general, scientific and artistic, because intuition and mental flexibility only grow in the soil of a good, real and passionate knowledge of the school subjects.

We must stop dealing with the child in a compartmentalised way, and promote it in its fullness, holistically—breaking down every barrier between disciplines, using qualitative rather than quantitative assessment, integrating the different dimensions of the child's life.

Creative children and young people are those who continue to learn with pleasure. Only the joy of learning leads to an improvement in concentration and a development of intellectual skills.

Talent is also revealed and grows in the ability to relate with others. This type of education needs genuine communication, from which rivalry is excluded, and real cooperation among students included, something not found too often in today's classes where competition abounds and is too often encouraged.

Care must be taken to ensure a good rounded balance that includes games, sports, outdoor walks. Intuition and the spirit of observation certainly cannot grow in the obsessive repetitiveness of electronic games, with their sometimes-hypnotic effect.

We must also preserve the natural ability to wonder that children have: they know how to look and find what we no longer have. It is the duty of parents to encourage children and perhaps even to follow them, to have a chance to rediscover the intuition of childhood. Einstein said: "Whoever does not know it and can no longer wonder, no longer marvel, is as good as dead."

Talent also needs a **method** that provides it with the objectives and the necessary stages useful in reaching them. Disorder is almost never creative.

And finally, the key factor is **energy**, the willpower to overcome passivity, fear and laziness and move to action. And succeed.

**Bruno Ferrero SDB**





SR AGNES COLLETT FMA

14/01/32–09/06/18

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven (Matt 5:12).

Agnes Collett was born in 1932 into a large Catholic family in Manchester. Her mother and father, Wilfred and Mary Anne Collett were hard working; her father was a newspaper printer in Manchester, while her mother remained at home caring for her large family. Both parents were imbued not only with great faith but with deep love of their faith, which they imparted to their eight children, three boys and five girls. The family lived in the north of England, first at Collyhurst, then at Newton Heath. Things were not easy financially, but these difficult times brought the family closer together, while the strong faith of her parents engendered a great love of the Church. Agnes stayed close to her family right through her life visiting and supporting her sisters as they became ill and in need of help. Her sister, Patricia, also tried her vocation but eventually found that this was not what the Lord wished for her. Agnes always remained very close to her.

It seems that she came to know our Salesian family through her brother, Jim, who became a Salesian priest. He went to Shrigley in May 1940 straight from primary school to begin his long preparation for ordination in 1957. So, Agnes could conceivably have heard of our Salesian family during these long years of his preparation when he returned regularly for his summer holidays. She may even have visited him during his time in Beckford while he was a novice or possibly for his profession in 1947. She remained close to him over the next thirty-nine years till his sudden and unexpected death in 1986. Through him she came to know many Salesians, and in fact whenever possible, always gave whatever help she could to them.

In 1947, at the age of fifteen, she became an Aspirant. She spent her formative years with many of our early missionary sisters who had come from Italy full of knowledge and love of the great development of the congregation at that time. Contact with these sisters gave Agnes first-hand knowledge of the great missionary spirit they brought to the Province. She also felt strong links with the congregation’s centre, which was then based in Turin. She also learnt the value of hard work, coupled with a strong spirit of constant prayer; two values noted by many over the years, as Sr Agnes moved from community to community. Sr Agnes was professed in 1951 in Elmthorpe Cowley, Oxford. Therein began sixty-seven years of dedicated life as a Daughter of Mary Help of Christians. Many of these years, thirty in fact, were spent as bursar in many of the houses of the Province: in Chertsey, Liverpool, Glasgow and Kendal. Sisters comment that she was hard-working in



maintaining the house, very caring in providing for the sisters’ needs and thoughtfully sensitive.

She spent many years in Hastings where the Province had a boarding school. She is affectionately remembered by many past pupils for her quiet, kind goodness. Her time in Chertsey in the two houses that were there at that time, Eastworth Road and Sandgates, were times of intense work and mission.

During her time in Sandgates, she worked closely with Sr Maria Rizzi RIP in the club work that was flourishing at that time. She also helped the many young Salesians who were based in Highfied Road.

Fr John Dickson, a Salesian priest and friend of Sr Agnes over many years sent this tribute:

“I first met Sr Agnes when I came to Chertsey in September 1980 when I came to teach at the Salesian School after my Ordination and PGCE.

“Agnes was part of the Sandgates Sisters’ community with Sr Kathleen Jones who was Superior and Deputy in the Salesian School at the girls’ site.

“Agnes was the community bursar and it was not long till I was a welcome visitor and quickly got to know the kindness and welcome I received there.

“Agnes, over the years, became a great friend of all the Salesians at Chertsey. She was deeply attached to her family and her roots in Manchester and her brother, Fr James Collett, was the Rector of our Salesian Community at Chertsey.

“As I worked with the young people it was not long before I was bringing groups of boys and girls to Sandgates for what were called ‘Think Days’, and Agnes was unfailingly kind and welcoming to these groups of young people, though they naturally could be boisterous and troublesome. She dispensed cordial and biscuits to all and smiled and encouraged, while keeping a watchful eye to see no one had any accidents. That kindness and encouragement always made us feel welcome there.

“Occasionally I did have an accident, like the time that a tray of candles that I had invited the students to light as part of the service of Reconciliation suddenly took fire on the altar, and I was suddenly required to leave confessions to blow out the flames. Agnes smiled and helped clear up the mess.

“When the young Salesian clerics who were attending Digby Stuart College came to Chertsey, Sandgates became a regular Bethany for us. After our Christmas celebrations and dinner at the Salesian community, we would walk up to the convent to greet the sisters and be invited to share their entertainment. The students loved the warmth and kindness that made us feel really at home and part of the family.

“The sudden death of Fr James Collett on the mountains in South Wales and the sickness of other members of her family deeply affected Sr Agnes. The closing of Sandgates and the loss of her dear friend Sr Maria were real trials of Agnes’ faith, but she remained a steadfast friend as I visited the sisters in various communities to which she was sent.

“She will have received a great welcome from her family and dear friends now that she has passed on to eternal life, and we will miss her warmth and kindness.”

This tribute from Fr John in its warmth and simple presentation of some details of Agnes’ way of acting is an insight into the lovely, quiet, gentle and caring person she was. It seems that her Salesian brothers really appreciated her. Another Salesian who knew her well sent these comments:

“It was Agnes’ great kindness, hospitality and down-to-earth, no fuss manner that I found so captivating. She had the great gift of encouraging you. Agnes possessed Salesian ‘family

spirit’ in abundance! Her welcome and generosity extended not only to me, but to my parents, who, whenever they came to visit me in Chertsey, stayed with the sisters in Sandgates. On their first visit both my parents were quite anxious about staying in ‘the convent’, but it was Agnes’ homely welcome especially that helped to put them at their ease. My dad was totally won over when he retired to bed each night to find a very large tumbler of whisky on his bedside cabinet put there by Agnes.

Sandgates was a real home from home for me.”

These insights and recollections are like a snapshot of the goodness that all mention in regard to Sr Agnes over the many years of her religious life.

Another aspect of her life as an FMA that deserves mention is her great mission while working in various parishes. Two such places to mention are Easterhouse and Battersea.

A parish priest who worked with Sr Agnes over several years sent these comments and recollections:

“From a parish priest’s point of view, Agnes could reach people the priest couldn’t ... always quietly, generously, supportive and encouraging.

“From a personal point of view, as time went on during our years at Battersea, Agnes began to call me ‘love’ in a typically Mancunian way, which was very nice.

“As my time in Battersea was drawing to a close, Agnes invited me to the house one day. We sat chatting recognising the gift of our quiet friendship, which had grown through our sharing about religious life and our Mancunian roots. Our conversation went on to acknowledge our mutual respect for the unofficial collaboration of our time at Battersea. I think we both helped each other to live out our vocations!”

One of our sisters notes that many people in Battersea whose relatives were visited by Sr Agnes still ask after her and remember her visits to their homes with gratitude and affection. She was willing to do anything that would help make those who were housebound more comfortable. She spent much time bringing Jesus to them as a Eucharistic Minister, and this was a source of real joy and spiritual comfort to those she helped. In 1989, Sr Agnes was one of the first sisters to open a house in Easterhouse, Glasgow. The parishioners of St Benedict’s speak of her with great affection. They felt she listened to them with great kindness and always promised to pray for their families and those whose health was not good. She could share a joke, too, and as she did the shopping in the local area, was not averse to receiving advice or tips on local bargains!

One sister wrote about her time with Sr Agnes in Easterhouse:

“Sr Agnes was a ray of hope for me, and I learnt so much as we visited the houses where she showed great empathy and became the friend of many. Her gentleness, peace and prayerful spirit were magnetic. She was always drawn to the poor and no sacrifice was too great to undertake for them.”

One of the Salesian priests who worked in the parish also notes:

“Sr Agnes had a wonderful gift for taking Communion to the sick and the housebound. Her very informal style made her welcome in everybody’s home. She quickly learnt of people’s anxieties, fears and worries, and she always promised the support of her prayers. She was deeply respected as a Salesian sister and I would say that Agnes lived a very high degree of ‘everyday holiness’, a profound sharing in the life of God, always accompanied by Mary Help of Christians.”

On a lighter note the same priest tells this story.

“On one occasion, Agnes received a message that one of the parishioners she attended had been admitted to hospital very suddenly. Agnes needed to find her only son to tell him this urgent news. She knew that he was most likely drinking in one of the local pubs, but she didn’t know which one, so she set off on her mission to find him. Opening the door of the first pub she came to, she stood in the door frame, surveying the scene, quite clearly a religious in her habit. Everyone in the pub fell silent, stunned to see a nun at the threshold, ‘I’m looking for a man,’ said Agnes. There was absolute uproar and laughter from all the drinkers inside; ‘a man’ in Glasgow being colloquial for ‘a husband’! Totally embarrassed, Agnes fled the scene back to the parish house and asked me if I would go on the search and find the missing son. I duly obliged.”

These reminiscences help us get a picture of the essence of Agnes. She touched many before illness gradually took her away. In 2012, she became a member of our FMA community in Elmthorpe, Cowley. A sister who was there with her comments:

“Her health was already declining when she arrived to join the community in Elmthorpe. She settled in peacefully and made little or no demands; she was patient and did not push for attention. Gradually, she became unable to receive Holy Communion with the community. At that time she was always very grateful to be given just a tiny fraction of the host after the other sisters left the chapel. It was touching to see the reverence with which she received Jesus. She joined in a few short prayers but needed to be in a quiet place for this. She had a great love for Our Lady and often prayed the rosary.”

Later in 2012, Sr Agnes had a slight stroke from which she did not fully recover. She was cared for by her sisters in the community and by the wonderful care team we are so blessed to have in Elmthorpe. The symptoms Alzheimer’s became increasingly worse, so in her last years she did not seem to recognise or respond very often.

However, when visited by her loving family, especially her niece and her husband, she always seemed conscious of their presence and initially at times managed a few words.

During the time when Agnes was in end-of-life care, she was occasionally able to speak a little to the sisters and the carers who looked after her, even sharing a joke.

As the Salesian priest who gave the final address in the funeral Mass commented:

“Only the meek and gentle aren’t preoccupied with being noticed or being impressive. Meekness, charity and reality sit well together when we remember Agnes. Only the merciful are graced with ‘getting the message’ within their daily actions, that Christ is our Saviour through the ordinary kindness in domestic living.”

This seems a fitting tribute to one who entered on the feast of St Joseph, himself a man who did God’s Will and of whom we know little. Agnes was very much a hidden soul but deeply loved by those who knew her. Maybe the words of the famous English poet, letter-writer and classical scholar, Thomas Gray, are an apt last word:

“Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of oceans bear.”<sup>1</sup>

Pat Devine FMA

<sup>1</sup> T. Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, first published anonymously in 1751.



# FR LVOR NETTO SDB

1941–2017

**Joseph Bertram Ivor Netto, the son of Peter and Phyllis Netto, was born in Madras, India on September 12, 1941. He was baptised**

**and later confirmed at the Salesian parish of Mater Dolorosa, Royapuram. The parish priest there would later write: "I am delighted that Ivor, once our exemplary altar server, has found his vocation to serve in the vineyard of Our Lord. God bless his desire and grant him perseverance." In the summer of 1958, Ivor made the long voyage with his parents and brother, Gerry, to England, and they settled in Exeter. Ivor attended Hele's School, Exeter from 1958 to 1961, leaving the school with excellent grades in physics, chemistry, botany and zoology. It seemed obvious to his form master that a course of university studies was the next logical step to take, but Ivor had other hopes and dreams for his future, as he had felt called to the priesthood and to the religious life as a Salesian of Don Bosco.**

Ivor went to Shrigley Park, near Macclesfield in August 1961, where he studied Latin and assisted with some teaching. He made his novitiate in Burwash. Fr Martin McPake, the Novice Master wrote of him, "Ivor's piety is deep and genuine. He has a lovely disposition, is most pleasant and cheerful and highly refined in manner. He is an accomplished violinist and has good artistic ability. He has given nothing but edification and satisfaction all through this year of his novitiate. His companions all esteem him and are fond of him, He is a very promising Salesian." Ivor was professed as a Salesian of Don Bosco on September 8, 1963. After studying philosophy at Beckford, Ivor gained a Bachelor of Science degree in botany, chemistry and physics. In 1968 Ivor was a member of the teaching staff at Salesian College, Ballinakill, Ireland. He moved to Crumlin, Dublin in 1969, attending St Patrick's College, Maynooth from there. He completed his theological studies in 1973, graduating from the seminary with a Bachelor of Divinity degree.

A note from Fr McQuaid, the Provincial Secretary of the Irish Province, records that as well as receiving the Tonsure and the Minor Orders in Dublin, Ivor was also ordained to the subdiaconate in Maynooth. He was the last Salesian in the province to have received the minor orders, as the reforms of Vatican II regarding the reception of ministries and orders by candidates to the priesthood were implemented in the Church. Five days after becoming a subdeacon, Ivor was ordained to the diaconate in Exeter. He was ordained as a Salesian priest in the Sacred Heart Church, Battersea on March 30, 1973 by Archbishop Cowderoy. As a newly ordained priest Ivor was sent to Rome to study Canon Law at the Salesian Pontifical University, gaining a licentiate 'magna



cum laude' in 1975. He would later recall the look of shock and disbelief on the faces of his professors after they had asked about his future plans, and he had informed them that he would not be studying for his doctorate, but rather that he was being sent by the Provincial to teach physics and RE to teenagers in Bolton! He was to remain as a member of staff at Thornleigh Salesian College, Bolton, until 1988. During those years Ivor also used his canonical expertise by assisting as a Judge in the Salford Diocesan Marriage Tribunal. At weekends, Ivor played his part in helping with the numerous parish supplies around Bolton, frequently at St John's Parish, Bromley Cross where he came to be regarded as an unofficially appointed curate!

There followed three appointments as Rector in Chertsey (1988–1991), Bollington (1991–1993) and Battersea (1993–1995). In 1995 he was appointed parish priest of Our Lady Help of Christians, Cowley, Oxford, remaining there until 2001. Over the next three years, Ivor had several pastoral appointments: chaplain at London University, supply work from the Battersea community and missionary work in Monrovia, Liberia. In 2004 he moved back to Bolton and began assisting in the Missions Office, taking responsibility for the many donations which were sent in support of missionary work in India. Ivor carried out this service to the missions and to the Province with his usual generosity and care. In 2012 Ivor was asked to go to the General House in Rome to assist with the work of translation. However, during that year he had concerns about his health and returned to the UK where he joined the Battersea community. In 2014 Ivor moved to the Farnborough community, once again taking on the coordination of the Indian mission accounts and assisting in parish supply work in the area.

The Farnborough House Chronicle notes that on the morning of June 23, 2017, "As Fr Ivor Netto was starting to vest for Mass, after Morning Prayer, he suffered a severe brain haemorrhage. An ambulance was called, and he was taken to Frimley Park Hospital. A scan revealed that the bleed had caused irreversible damage and no treatment was possible. He was kept on life support in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) while his brother and sister-in-law come to be with him, and he was anointed by Fr John O'Sullivan, the hospital chaplain." Ivor never regained consciousness and died in the evening of June 26, 2017. His mortal remains were brought to Our Lady Help of Christians Parish Church, Farnborough for the Vigil Reception, which was led by the Rector, Fr Des O'Riordan and the Requiem Mass was celebrated the next day on July 19, 2017. Again, the House Chronicle notes, "The funeral of Fr Netto was very well attended by nearly 200 relatives and friends from his various apostolates. Fr Gerry Briody presided and preached at the Mass together with Salesian priests and brothers from Battersea, Chertsey, Cowley and Bolton. There were thirty-three concelebrants in total, including several diocesan priests. The homily captured the talents and generosity of Fr Netto and also hinted gently at some of his more particular characteristics. Fr Heaps led the commendation at the end of Mass and Fr Graham Forristalle conducted the committal at the graveside. In the congregation, Fr Netto's brother Gerry and sister-in-law Muriel were joined by parishioners from Wembley, Weybridge, Cowley, Bolton and Hazelmere. After the burial at Ship Lane Cemetery, more than sixty sat down in (and on the patio of) St John Bosco House for a hot meal prepared by our wonderful team of cooks and helpers."

Ivor was a naturally cheerful and kind man, with a warm smile and a joyful laugh, who enjoyed the company of others. He was a talented violinist and had a fine tenor voice, although

it has to be said that his vocal harmonies were not always as enthusiastically welcomed or appreciated by his brother Salesians as Ivor might have imagined them to be!

Many confrères will recall that during the Holy Week or Easter Week retreats, Ivor would prepare carousels of coloured slides and music which would be synchronised to present beautiful meditations on the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. In the days before PowerPoint, all of this would take him many hours of work. This was a way in which Ivor shared something of his Christian faith and enabled others to pray in a creatively Salesian way. Ivor also organised numerous summer trips to the monastic community in Taizé, France. These trips were an opportunity for the young people who accompanied him to experience something of French

# FR PETER DOOLEY SDB

1931–2018

**Peter was born June 27, 1931, in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, to Brian and Ellen Dooley. He was the eldest of six children. Two of his sisters became religious; one of whom, Bernadette, was present at the funeral with his two brothers, Hugh and Bernie; Ellie, his other sister is based in Australia. His married sister, Maureen, died in 2013, and on his way back from her funeral, Peter suffered an almost fatal heart attack in Dublin Airport. Maureen's children Anne, Mhaire, Helen and Pat, along with their cousins, Mary Ellef, and Mary and John Summers, also attended the funeral.**



Peter's secondary education took place in the Salesian College, Pallaskenry, from where in August 1951 he went to the Novitiate in Burwash, England, making his profession on September 8, 1952. He then pursued his philosophical studies for two years in the recently opened Savio House.

I first met Peter in 1954. I had left Thornleigh, Bolton, for Shrigley, and Peter had begun his three years of practical training in Bolton. I came back for some event, and he welcomed me with a smile. I was struck even then by his kindness and gentleness, qualities which we have all come to know well.

After this Peter went to Melchet Court for his theological studies and was ordained a priest on July 2, 1961. One comment of his Rector at the time states: "A good student, cheerful, obliging, sociable and enterprising." He then did a further year of theology in Rome, obtaining his Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) degree, after which he was assigned to the Novitiate in Burwash as assistant to the novices for a year, before returning to Bolton to teach.

He returned to Ireland to study for a BA degree (1966–69), before spending seven years as a teacher in Bootle, where

culture, something of the life and prayer of the monks of Taizé, sharing something of one's time, friendship and faith with others. Ivor was always surprised and delighted when his past pupils or former parishioners would come and greet him. "How did they recognise me after all this time?" he would ask. His usual response to his own question, with a twinkle in his eye, was "TDH—it's because I'm tall, dark and handsome!"

In the liturgy of Taizé this prayer is chanted: "Bless the Lord my soul and bless his holy name. Bless the Lord my soul who leads me into life." It is our fervent prayer that Ivor now experiences the fulness of God's love in the happiness of heaven; that he has joy with God forever in the fulness of life.

**Kieran Anderson SDB**

he was also Vice-Rector. In 1976 he was asked to be Rector of the Salesian Missionary College, Shrigley. When I was Rector in Ushaw, our community used to come to Shrigley for our Christmas holidays, and Peter, who was Rector there at the time, always welcomed us warmly and was anxious to make sure that we had what we needed and more besides. I don't think his task was easy in Shrigley in those days, as the College was moving towards closure, and he didn't enjoy the best of health.

Peter then moved to Cowley, Oxford, as parish priest and Rector. During my first stint as Provincial, I visited Cowley quite frequently. A new facet which I then became aware of was his deep spirituality. By then he was involved in the charismatic movement, and there was an active prayer group in the parish, and Peter was known for his prayerfulness and healing ministry. It is clear that he was deeply appreciated and loved by the people of the parish, some of whom made the journey to Bolton to attend his funeral; he was their friend, their guide and support, and the same was true for the Salesian cooperators.

After thirteen years Peter moved to our parish in Edinburgh as assistant priest, and then, five years later, to St Dominic's, Huyton, where he fulfilled a similar role for another thirteen years. Again, the people loved him; he was so kind and available and friendly and helpful to anyone in need. It was in Huyton that he and Fr George were ushered into the cupboard under the stairs by burglars: quite an adventure!

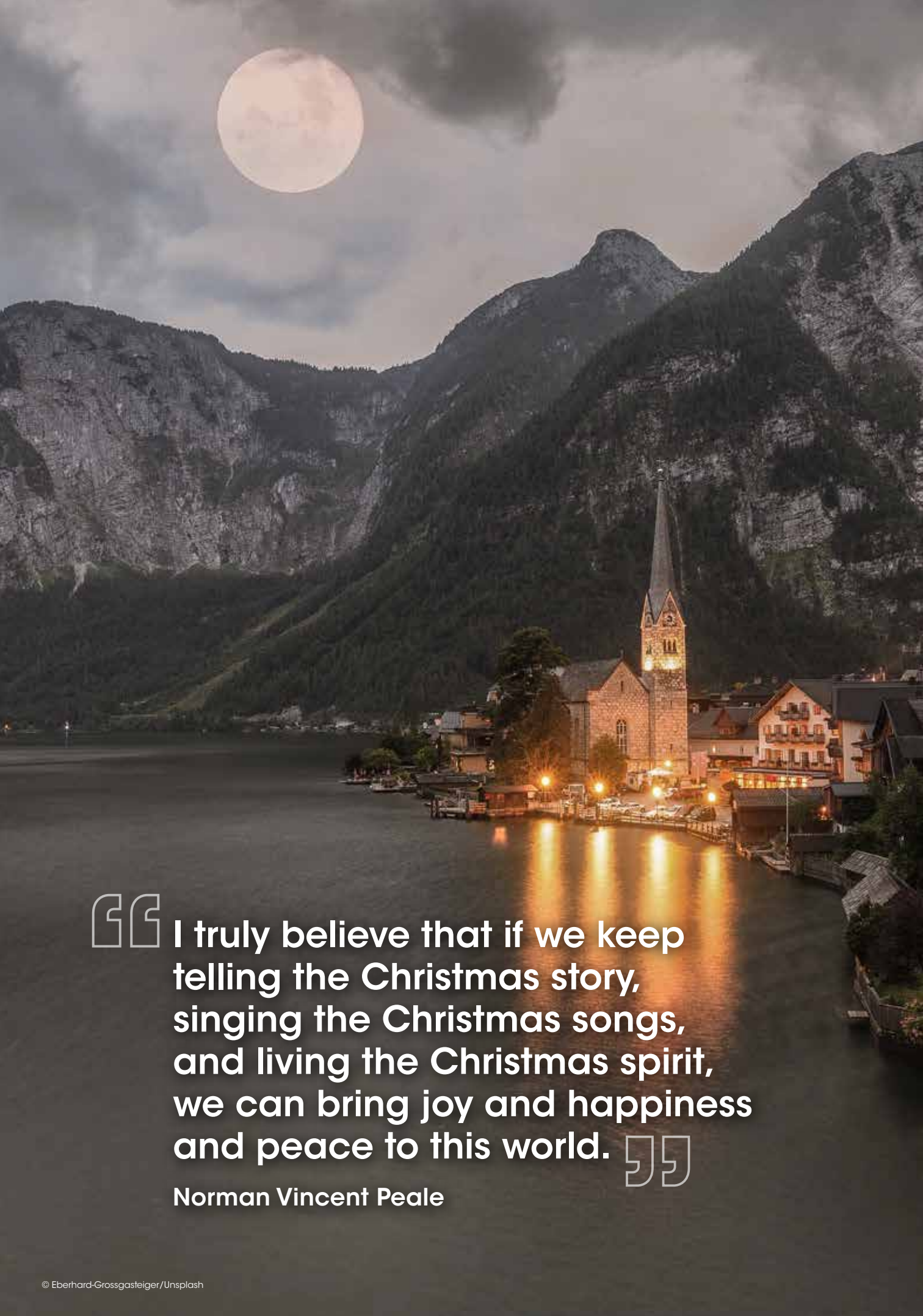
Finally, in 2013, as his health deteriorated, Peter came back to Bolton to reside at St Joseph's, where, as rector of the community, I met him frequently. He had become deaf and had trouble with asthma, and he gradually found it difficult to walk without a stick. I was struck by his patience, gentle humour and acceptance of the difficulties which accompany the ageing process. Eventually, it became necessary for Peter to go to the nursing home of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Manchester, who offered him a newly refurbished room. After only two and a half weeks, however, in the early morning of April 13, Jesus came to take him home to the Father's house.

We thank God for Peter's life among us and his Salesian ministry as an excellent teacher, a wonderful deeply spiritual pastor, a guide and inspiration for many. May he rest in peace.

*"The day is done, its hours have run,  
and thou hast taken count of all"*

**Michael Winstanley SDB**





“ I truly believe that if we keep telling the Christmas story, singing the Christmas songs, and living the Christmas spirit, we can bring joy and happiness and peace to this world. ”

Norman Vincent Peale