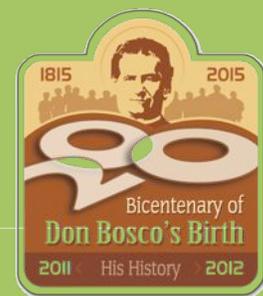


Salesian Core Values

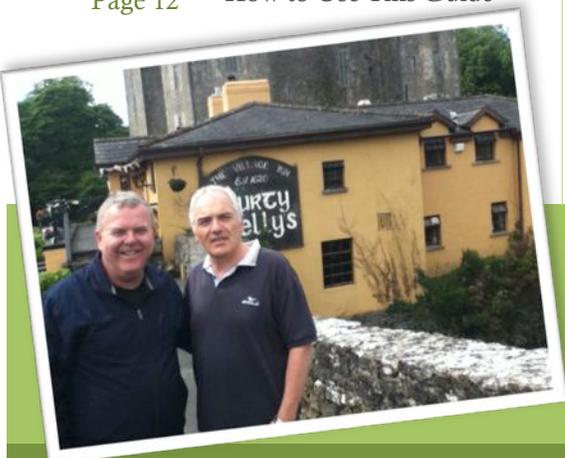


Concluding a year of examining Don Bosco as a man of his times, we consider the core values of his life.

Don Bosco Study Guide

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Salesian House, Milford Grange, Castleroy in Limerick, Ireland conducts retreats and provides housing for college students at the University of Limerick.

Study guide produced by Institute of Salesian Studies,

John Roche, SDB, editor

An Irish Retreat

At the invitation of Fr. Michael Casey, the Provincial of the Irish Salesian Province, I enjoyed a week of retreat direction with the confreres in June. My ten days with these hopeful and joyful Salesians was a shot in the arm for me and provided a perfect setting for sharing some reflections as we moved closer to the end of our first year of studying Don Bosco and his place in history.

As part of the retreat, the Salesians went on pilgrimage to their founding house in nearby Pallaskenry. There we shared some ideas regarding values we would consider to be core values and a facilitated discussion invited the Salesians to bring their own lived experience to the values. This led to a lively discussion filled with hope as the values were examined as concrete applications of our Salesian commitment and consecration.

My contributions to the discussion was the identification of 14 values as gathered by a recorded conference with the late Fr. Juan Vecchi.

At Banratty Castle

Fr. Michael Casey, provincial of Ireland, treated me to a final pint at a famous pub outside of Banratty's Castle., Durty Nelly's.



Saleians on retreat gathered at the front entrance to the School at Pallaskenry, the founding house in Ireland

Fr. Juan Vecchi's Insight...

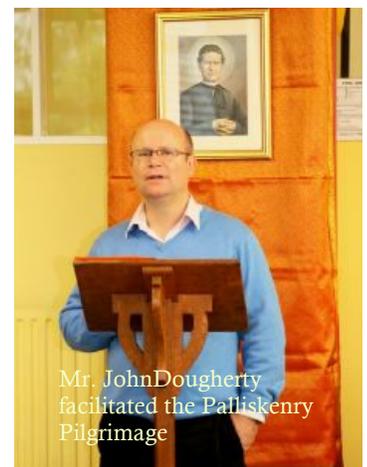
In a conference transcribed in 2001, Fr. Vecchi highlighted fourteen themes of Don Bosco's life

The 14 themes of Don Bosco's life and spirituality discussed by Fr. Juan Vecchi has been largely unknown except to a small Italian audience and to those few persons who have discovered the small book created later from a transcription of the conferences. The content is not entirely new, certainly, but given the perspective of Fr. Vecchi, his words and the organization of these thoughts takes on a special significance. Toward the end of Fr. Vecchi's life we witnessed a man with a driving passion to see the Salesian Charism applied to the difficult tasks of evangelization in a post-modern context fraught with confusion and

complexity. In fact, Fr. Vecchi referred to this context as the complicated and complex Voldocco challenged by the dangers of a reckless globalization. He was particularly moved and disheartened by the militarization of youth. This direct attack upon some of the most poor and innocent young people on the planet obsessed Fr. Vecchi. This was, for him, just one of those signs of the times calling for a new style of Salesian presence and a new pastoral mentality.

Fr. Chavez has picked up this same theme calling the Salesian world to be aware of the conditions so affecting

young people today. Both Fr. Chavez and Fr. Vecchi have called for a new Pentecost and to start afresh from the Spirit of God.



Mr. John Dougherty facilitated the Pallaskenry Pilgrimage

Life in the Spirit

Don Bosco's starting point for his mission and for the discovery of his place in God's plan began with the careful nurturing of a life in the Spirit. Don Bosco himself recorded every event, every key person, and every challenge which shaped him for his mission seeing the hand of God in the smallest detail. The Salesian world has been invited to return to the consideration of each

persons' individual call to holiness and the communal consecration offered on behalf of young people and their families in these difficult times.

It is not surprising, then, that Fr. Vecchi's reflections upon Don Bosco's identity, and character begins with an insistence upon the action of the Spirit of God in Don Bosco's life and in the lives of young. This,

more than any other factor, lays out the path ahead for a mission that has affected youth and their families for centuries.



Life in the Spirit



For a Salesian the mission is a threefold path of spiritual life...
 ...The access offered everyday for achieving perfection; moving from a personal to a communal identity; within the Spirit of God, the Salesian has a new light for seeing the young whom he approaches...

The work of Don Vecchi uncovers a link to the study made by Don Raimondo Frattalone, one of the contemporaries who has written much about Salesian spirituality, spiritual direction, and formation. In referring to Don Bosco and in the effort to distill to its essence the spiritual and educative mission of the Salesians, Don Frattalone makes this synthesis: for a Salesian the mission is a threefold path of spiritual life. It begins as *the* access offered every day for achieving perfection; this access is permitted the Salesian to move from his personal identity into the identity of the community where the Spirit of God is the source of peace and the understanding of participation as children of God.¹ This position within the Spirit of God gives the Salesian a “new light” for seeing the young to whom the Salesian makes approach. This is a place of solitude in

which the Salesian receives the gifts of joy and peace which is passed on, by vocation, to the young in his care.

This place of solitude creates a safe harbor for the young, especially for those most timid. Welcomed by the Salesian, the young person finds a space where love and peace are created, as they were in the experience of Don Bosco. This welcome becomes the invitation to journey along the road to Life by bringing the young immediately to Christ. In this way, our meeting with the young becomes a meeting for them with the true God, the God of salvation. The task of the Salesian educator, then, becomes the task of touching the heart of the young and manifesting for them the life of God in their longing

hearts.

Don Vecchi embellished these ideas in his treatment of this theme of life in the Spirit as the starting point and foundation of all spiritual



An experience of God begins with the Spirit of God...

experience and encounter with God. The contribution that Don Vecchi made to this treatment is vital, for he situates this life and action of the Spirit in the gritty, post-modern world of the young, 3

Continued

deeply affected by the coldness of scientific analysis. Don Vecchi recognized that religious and traditional institutions have lost their absolute authority and religious experience has been pushed to the margins of society. To allow one to see the Spirit of God, a Spirit which breathes and moves within this concrete reality, the minister to the young must be the one who recognizes the long view of God for humanity and becomes inspired to live a witness of charity testifying to the importance and value of human existence.

An experience of God begins with the Spirit of God. Don Vecchi sees the Spirit as the gift of fine-tuning which enables one to perceive God in the experiences of life. Such a fine-tuning neither negates the real world nor sees it apart from God. Instead, the Spirit allows one

to see the relationship of God, humanity, and the world with each other. This fine-tuning, suggested Don Vecchi is important for the Salesian and the educator to discover the Word of God within culture itself and to find a path to salvation in the realities of life in the present moment.

Lines of Action

Salvation history consistently and persistently revealed that God manifested his name as Relationship. His plan for humanity is based on his identity as *their* God and their identity as *his* people.

Therefore, it is within human development, and not simply or preferentially according to technical development, that humanity's progress and fulfillment are found.

Beyond mere logic and reason, this God has manifested again and again the desire for humanity to know and embrace this relationship. Even the intelligence which has gifted

humanity and led to scientific knowledge is incapable of embracing this mystery of relationship. Instead, the Spirit makes possible for humanity to know this God by entering into the human heart and making transformation and faith possible.

Don Vecchi described three lines of action by the Spirit of God which enables that power to move the human heart: the *messianic* or saving line, which pushes people to seek freedom; the *prophetic* line, which operates in the enlightening and teaching of others to maintain hope in all the circumstances of history; and the *priestly* line of action, in which the Spirit empowers one to live in the world sustained by religious experience, ritual, prayer, and service. All of these actions empower humanity to live an authentic spiritual existence.

(Continued on page 5)

Accompany or Abandon

The Sacred Heart Sisters at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, who cared for Fr. Juan Vecchi in his last days, recall his courage, his faith, and his desire to reach out to his fellow ailing Salesians.

An important detail in their collective memory is the preoccupation they witnessed in the heart of Fr. Vecchi. He

had a particular concern for the plight of young people facing newer and more complicated threats to their well-being and purpose. Especially troubling for him was the plight of young people caught in the horrible web of militarization. In so many places, children are stolen from their families, drugged, and forced into murderous activities for the

sole purpose of advancing the goals of some madmen or rebel forces unconcerned about justice or peace for such countries.

Fr. Vecchi begged the Salesian world to find new ways to be present to such young people. In his mind, if we do not accompany such desperate youth, we abandon them.

The Continual Action of the Spirit

The peak of the experience of the Spirit of God is found in Christ. Jesus invited his companions to live by the Spirit and not by the flesh. Even before the birth of Christ, the Spirit of God moved through the creating Word. All of the events of the Old Testament led to the revelation of the Word at work in the world. Now, made flesh, the Word is revealed by the Spirit of God speaking in Jesus, descends upon Jesus as the sign of his favor with the Father, sustains and guides Jesus beyond temptation into the act of immolation for the salvation of the world. This is the Spirit that raises Jesus from the dead and who descends upon the disciples to carry the Gospel to the whole world.

Don Vecchi, in this written work, makes a bridge between the early Church encounters of the Spirit of God with the encounters of our times, seeing in them the continual action of the Spirit. This action is found in the teaching of the Church, through Vatican II, and by other means. Always the same action leads to the same conclusion: for the people of God to see themselves as united to the bridegroom of Christ.

The God or Relationship as the Spirit Moving in the Educator

It is that the gift of the Spirit which moves in the heart of

the educator and Salesian to live according to this God of relationship. God continues to be *their God* and they continue to be *God's people*. From the dawn of creation, God's action is one of accompaniment and relationship. The duty of the minister to the young is to live by this Spirit and to welcome the young into the knowledge and experience of their own lives as places of revelation and action of the Spirit of God. It is an invitation into mystery and not something that can be justified by scientific evidence. Yet, the mystery is not a poetic reading of reality. The mystery is the action of the Spirit enabling both the educator and the student to see the living and acting presence of God in their lives. Don Vecchi calls this a "new language" in which the Spirit of God speaks to the heart of the believer and by which the believer communicates this reality in life. This, he claims, is the recreation of an entirely new inner structure within a person giving that person the ability to work in the world according to the way of the Beatitudes.

At this point in the discussion, we come to familiar terms from the life of Don Bosco. This growth in the Spirit leads one to "an adherence to the truth."¹ This adherence to the truth is an adherence to Christ, who is, himself, the way, the truth, and the life. This is the ongoing call to the believer to conform all things to Christ: to love as he has loved, to live in communion with the Father, to put on the new spiritual person. This is the transformation of the heart that comes from the Spirit in the meeting of believers. This is the transformation of the

heart that comes from the Spirit in the meeting between educator and student, between spiritual guide and pilgrim. Don Vecchi saw implicit in this meeting the *priority of human development* as not only steps in human progress but *as steps toward communion with God*.

The Reality of Sin and the Spirit Enabling Transformation

There is, however, another reality that enters into this meeting, just as this same reality often loomed over the meetings with God throughout the history of salvation—the *reality of sin*. The mystery of the gift of the Spirit that enables humanity to live in a new way is not parallel to or distinct from this corrupted world of sin. This, in fact, was perhaps the greatest motivation for Don Bosco to reach out to the young. He was convinced that outside of religion, there was no hope for humanity. Jacques Schepens underlines this conviction of Don Bosco:

For Don Bosco ideal humanity cannot be found either in human existence itself or in its specific dimension, nor even in the task of education or any other purely earthly concerns. Man cannot be fully understood on the basis of his engagement in this world. The one essential dimension is to live one's life in friendship and peace with God and to practice one's religion and the Commandments. To Don Bosco's way of thinking, a human being without God and without religion is a stunted or a crippled being eternally unhappy. His social and educative enterprise seems to have been entirely aimed at this goal i.e. that good people might

serve God in a joyful manner, to avoid sin in thought, word, and deed and that they should order, direct, and measure and control their actions towards enhancing the most fundamental dimension of their existence.

Guido Gatti puts side by side the reality of sin and the reality of the presence of the Spirit of God and describes the task of discerning from both of these realities. Like St. Paul, this is the arena of flesh and spirit, the letter of the law versus the spirit of the law in the moral development of the person. The goal of the Salesian educator in the face of this reality, and as moved by the Spirit of God in the Salesian's own life, is to *move the young person from a point of view of life and its choices from the third person to the first person*. In this journey, the young person is invited to move from fear to intimacy, from the traps and pitfalls of life and sinfulness to the freedom that is offered in the experience of the love of God. Gatti calls this task for the Salesian the task of interpreting the Spirit of God in the lives of the young. So it is that the one who accompanies begins

first from his/her own experience of God initiated by God's Spirit and leads to a shared journey of human and spiritual discernment and growth in the lives of the young person in need of accompaniment. The act of sharing reveals the mystery of the presence of Christ and enables the young person to make choices and perceive a reality beyond the mere physical and concrete situations of life. These choices and this perception, however, are integrated into the ingredients of everyday life *making spiritual growth human growth, and vice versa*. The realities of sin and corruption are ever present and demand a sober awareness of human nature that is always balanced by the concurrent reality and conviction that both the one who accompanies and the one in need of direction are truly children of God.



Don Bosco as Type & Model

Don Bosco as Type and Model of Salesian Spirituality

Don Vecchi's text moves from the action of the Spirit to the heart of Salesian patrimony by invoking the model of Don Bosco for Salesian spirituality. Because we have spent much of this effort to underline elements in Don Bosco's lived experience and highlighted the legacy that has come down to us by the witnesses of hearts transformed by a meeting with the Founder, we mention this theme in Don Vecchi's text as an affirmation of this examination. Still, Don Vecchi offers *special insight*

into some of the details we have already treated at length. They bear mentioning in this text. In fact, Don Vecchi alerted his Salesians to find their "*genetic code*" in Don Bosco and to participate in personal development of holiness according to that code.

Don Bosco as "Father" and "Teacher"

Immediately, Don Vecchi took up the title given to Don Bosco as "Father." As familiar as it is, he wanted to free the term from any sentimental or nostalgic entrapment. Instead, this word signals for the Salesian

the one who carries the same way that Jesus referred to Abba, Father—the One who sent Jesus in mission. The title also evokes a memory of paternal guidance, a privileged place of authority that is ruled by loving kindness, an education of the heart.

From "Father," Don Vecchi moved to the title always paired with it, "Teacher." He explained the importance of the "heart" in this image of Don Bosco:

Continued

Accordingly, the accent upon the Father is understood as “Master.” Above all doctrinal authority is the higher place of the art of teaching, of helping others to understand, to speak with the language of the heart, of communicating lively. Don Bosco mentions the fact that we have to allow play to follow their experience and, through this, to encourage them to follow Jesus. The teaching authority is a pattern or theme which recurs often in Don Bosco’s writings. In his first dream, Jesus appears as the Master. In the Old Testament, Jesus is alluded to as our teacher and guide and model. This is gathered into the wisdom themes which are central to his teaching, to his mind, and in his spiritual life.

The context for invoking these familiar titles, besides elaborating on their meaning, was for Don Vecchi to keep alive the living connection between Don Bosco and the present generations. He feared the loss of connection with the distance of time. The flood of interpretative images of Don Bosco could, he warned, lessen the centrality of God’s unique gift in the Founder. In the same breath, however, he stood squarely on the conviction that the best transmission of Don Bosco was indeed alive in the “Salesian culture” carefully preserved in Don Bosco’s wide religious family and particularly in the continued traditions of the Salesians of Don Bosco and the

Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

Seeing with a Father’s Eyes

Referring to the “splendid accord of nature and grace” found in Don Bosco, Don Vecchi asserts that, like the great saintly figures before him, Don Bosco deserves to be studied. Found in Don Bosco are amazing balances between austerity and gentleness, intelligence and practicality, holiness and an easy disposition in the world. Don Bosco found signs of God’s intimate friendship in his celebration of friendship and relationship with others on many levels. Many dimensions of the personality of Don

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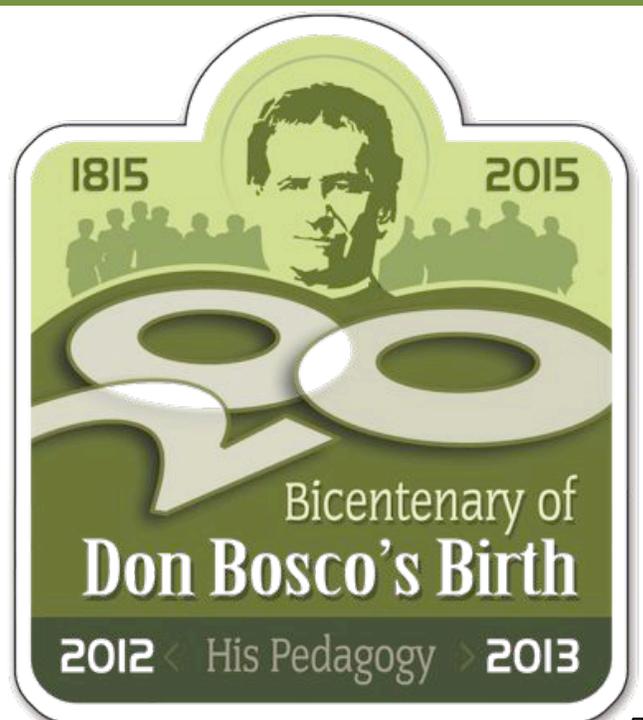
Preparing for 2012-2013

With the birthday of Don Bosco, August 16, the Salesian World closes its first year of study focusing on the historical figure of Don Bosco and moves into the next phase of study: The Pedagogy of Don Bosco.

The San Francisco Province will continue to offer study guides through The Institute of Salesian Studies and will collaborate with the insights and study of Irish Salesian and Scholar, Fr. Jack Finnigan. As in the first year, these guides will begin in October and carry through to August 2013.

As always, questions or requests for source material are happily welcomed and the best site for all inquiries will continue to be at donboscohallCA@gmail.com.

The Salesians at Don Bosco Hall and the team here are hoping to meet you at some future opportunity for further study and renewal. Many blessings to the Salesian Family!



Bosco fell under scrutiny at this point in the text. It is here that Don Vecchi also turned to the testimony of Don Albera who exclaimed so enthusiastically his singularly special experience of Don Bosco. In similar fashion, Don Vecchi's beloved director during his theological studies at the Corcetta, Don Pietro Brocardo resonated with similar affection and praise, especially when considering the deterioration of the idea of a "father" in modern days. As a father according to the model of Don Bosco, one is able to recognize in the children their beauty and importance:

The ideologies of our time, which have put heavy burdens on the father figure, are now in trouble. We are witnessing a return to the father, no longer as figure to be feared, but as the central figure needed for balanced growth, for balanced children, albeit with new forms and modes of presence, which seems to have been provoked by a crisis in the classic roles of the father.

A father must be more authoritarian than an authority, closer to the model of the law, as friend and brother figure. From this point of view, Don Bosco, in more than one respect is revealed as a contemporary of our time, more in tune with modern ideals. He urged his directors: "More than anything, you are fathers, brothers, friends." No doubt his being a father is his most important reason to refer to fatherhood in faith, as is often mentioned by St. Paul (1 Thess 2,7-8.10-11). A fatherliness, however, where humanity shines forth.

A contemporary bishop described

Don Bosco's will as void of the word, "impossible." Don Bosco was not, however, impulsive. This same remembrance records Don Bosco's care in making decisions. While he was always very practical he made many decisions by making recourse to deep and trusting supernatural principles.

A Father's Balance of Love and Discipline

To love and to uphold discipline is a tough balancing act. This is the second characteristic offered by Don Brocardo. He recalls the words of Don Albera and Don Rinaldi as they wrote lovingly of the family Don Bosco created. Don Bosco's power of attraction resided in his authentic kindness and welcome, but coupled with that was "intransigence" when it came to certain principles:

"A father always," Don Bosco was never cowardly but always forgiving; he was never dismissive of his responsibilities leaving the unpleasant tasks to others; but he was always uncompromising and firm, especially in cases of theft, blasphemy or scandal.

Despite his ability to be unbending in certain areas, this did not distance the young people from him nor diminish their love for him. They perceived in this father a care that reached deeply into every part of their lives. To disappoint Don Bosco was, in itself, enough of a punishment for any one of these students.

The Sensitivity of a Father

Don Bosco's third fatherly characteristic, according to Don Brocardo, was his ability to be

both forceful and sensible. He compares Don Bosco's sensitivity and sensible character to Mamma Margherita and, by way of association, to the Most Holy Mother of God. His strength was, in fact, his sensitive nature. He was sensitive to the needs of the young, to the dangers of their souls, to the strength of their gifts and potentials. Don Brocardo cites the recollections of Don Rua and Don Cagliero remembering how easily tears would come to Don Bosco's eyes. In the end, suggests Don Brocardo, without this profound sensitivity, there would be no talk of the powerful "loving kindness" of Don Bosco's preventive system, his unique "amorevolezza."

The Hidden Quality of Holiness

Moving to other dimensions of Don Bosco's personality, Don Vecchi, recognized the cultural and religious strength characteristic of his Piedmontese roots. Don Vecchi insisted that beyond these traits, his rich humanity with its sensitivity and down-to-earth practicality had the ability to mix with the problems of his day and was evidence of Don Bosco's generous response to God's grace. Unlike the "story of the soul" left by St. Therese d'Lisieux or Blessed John XXXIII, Don Bosco's story had a hidden quality of holiness. Though hidden, it was profound and

manifested itself in a style of action. So profound was Don Bosco's faith in God that he lived as though the invisible were visible to him (in this, Don Vecchi recalls the reading from the Letter to the Hebrews, 11, 27). Important to this trait, Don Bosco's response to grace was translated into a movement out to others, always. His encounter in faith brought him to a project of life. Inspired by this, Don Vecchi urged his Salesians:

The Salesian Constitutions tell us that our consecration is understood simultaneously as communal life, the following of Christ, and the mission to youth. But this is given for all of life in its concrete context, distinguishing us and shaping us. This is the place where Salesian virtues are written and encribed on our hearts, where we are obliged to come to the splendid union between what is human and what is divine.

The Grace and Mystery of Salesian Identity

In the end, Don Vecchi called the Salesian world to the model of Don Bosco for motives much deeper than academics and study, though one of Don Vecchi's preoccupations had certainly been to foster ongoing formation and a deepening of Salesian study. In his last circular letter, ACG 375, he concluded a moving discourse on the virtue of Salesian obedience with this call to return to Don Bosco as the foundation for a particular grace and mystery that is Salesianity:

It was not difficult to detect in recent General Chapters an increased effort on the part of the Congregation to better understand its Founder and his place in God's plan. And this is not for reasons of theological academics, but to clarify the *grace and mystery* of our identity.

Meditating once again in the light of the Spirit on the whole story of Don Bosco, we find it to be a salvation event in which we too are involved, and that "for this reason his story is our story also". "The relationship of sons and disciples that Salesians live with regard to Don Bosco" is a true and enduring grace.

We recognize in Don Bosco the guide molded by the Risen Christ to point out to us – educators and young people together – a Gospel way of missionary and youthful sanctification.

For this reason it is a good thing that we should continue to love and sing, in the Salesian world, that old hymn of the beatification "Don Bosco ritorna", which well expresses our continuing commitment to "bring Don Bosco to life again in ourselves" (M. Rua).



...he lived as though the invisible were visible to him...

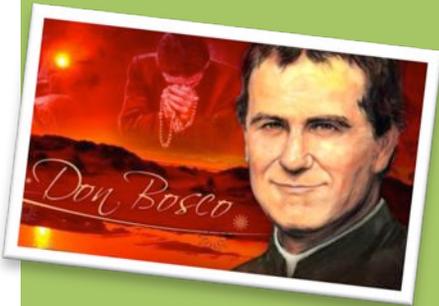
Don Bosco's response to grace was translated into a movement out to others, always. His encounter in faith brought him to a project of life!



The whole story of Don Bosco [is] a salvation event in which we, too, are involved...

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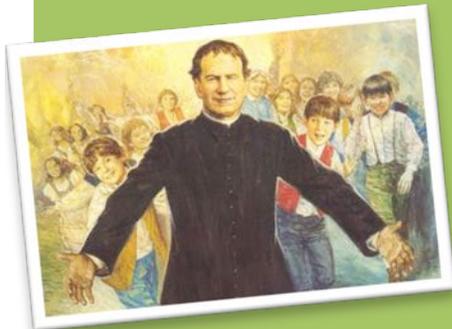
Salesian Pastoral Charity



A response
to God's call is a
response made by the
action of the Spirit

Salesian charity is the
preventive system...which was a
charity "without limits or
borders..."

This is a charity of a "Father
and Teacher."



The experience of
love arises from the
experience of the
love of God passed
down to the young...

The mark of this charity is
kindness and gentleness
demonstrated by an intimate
heart that readily adapts to the
needs of others even before a
word or gesture is made...

In looking at pastoral charity, Don Vecchi made three passes. First, he examined charity as presented in the Gospels. Secondly, he examined charity according to "pastoral specifications." And finally, he turned his attention to Salesian pastoral charity. A repeat of this process is not necessary. It has been clearly stressed that the response to God's call is a response made by the action of the Holy Spirit which is exemplified most completely in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and which is always directed outward into service. Thus summarized, we look at the nuances Don Vecchi offers for a specific Salesian pastoral charity.

Charity without Limits or Borders

In brief, Salesian charity is the preventive system. (A more thorough explanation and application of the preventive system will be treated in 1.4.7. in this treatment.) Don Fratallone offers a succinct definition. He reports that Salesian charity is the charity of Don Bosco, which was a charity "without limits or borders." This charity has been incarnated across many cultures in the 120 years since Don Bosco's death and has been characterized by Don Bosco's own words, "It is enough that you are young for me to love you."

This is a charity of a "Father and Teacher." The Salesian accompanying a young person welcomes him or her with a desire to help them understand their past, present and to enter the future with them to help them find order in the midst of their problems. As a teacher, the Salesian is patient and attentive looking for the right moment to intervene in the young person's life with aids for understanding. Such patience is perceived as hope, never abandoning the young person or giving up on their situation. Like a pregnant mother, this patience nurtures and slowly brings to birth the full person in their care.

Charity of Kindness and Gentleness

The mark of this charity is *kindness* and *gentleness* demonstrated by an intimate heart that readily adapts to the needs of others, even before a word or gesture is made.¹ It enters into the dialogue of growth and maturity to offer encouragement and a climate of attentive listening. Such a charity reflects a profoundly supernatural charity that is, in fact, a movement of the Spirit to enter into a true interpersonal communion with the young. The experience of love arises from the experience of the love of God passed down to the young.

Salesian Charity as Apostolic Charity

Don Vecchi summarized the specific character of Salesian charity stating that it is an *apostolic charity*. As such, it expresses itself and grows in pastoral ministry. It is an action that needs a soul or it will burn out quickly. With a soul, it can thrive easily with trust and joy in the pastoral work at hand. The tensions that militate against Salesian life—tensions between action and prayer, between community life and mission, between education and ministry, between professionalism and apostolic availability—find unity in this

charity. Every challenge in this pastoral ministry is buoyed and spurred on by the command of Jesus to love as he has loved.¹

encouragement and a climate of attentive listening. Such a charity reflects a profoundly supernatural charity that is, in fact, a movement of the Spirit to enter into a true interpersonal communion with the young. The experience of love arises from the experience of the love of God passed down to the young.

Salesian Charity as Apostolic Charity

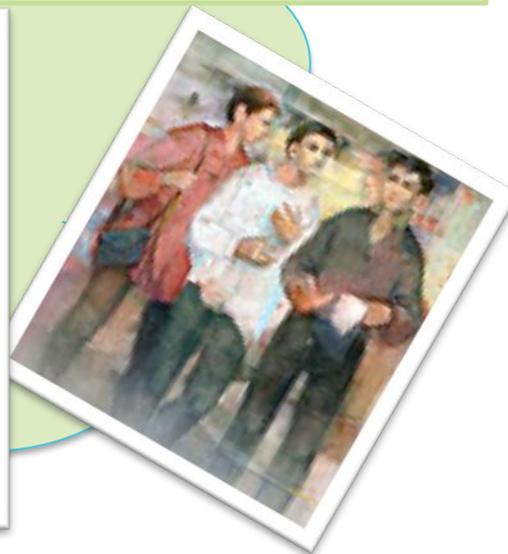
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The Fourteen Themes

All fourteen themes can be found in the one text which has transcribed this conference of Fr. Vecchi. That text is entitled: Vecchi, Juan “*Andate Oltre!*” *Temi di Spiritualità Giovanile*, a cura di Maurizio Spreafico, Leumann (TO), Elledici, 2002.

1. **Life in the Spirit**
2. **Don Bosco is our type and model of our spirituality**
3. **We are consecrated by the Lord with the gift of the Spirit**
4. **The Community is the place, sign, and school of Salesian Spirituality**
5. **Salesian Spirituality is a daily spirituality that is living and active**
6. **The Pastoral Praxis of Salesian Spirituality is the Preventive System**
7. **Salesians are educators for the experience of God**
8. **Salesian pastoral charity compels evangelization; evangelization and the present times mold our spirituality**
9. **We educate to the Sacraments where Christ is the mediator of reconciliation**
10. **The mature expression of pastoral charity is our special Salesian inheritance and focus: the Fatherliness of Don Bosco**
11. **Our Mission is of Service and not of Authority—We are called to be good servants of Christ who served people, not problems**
12. **Salesian Spirituality is marked by distinctive Gospel icons of Mary, the Mother of God**
13. **Our consecration is a synthesis of the titles by which we invoke Mary: Immaculate, and Helper**
14. **Accompaniment as Various Forms of Presence**



Suggestions for Use of this Guide...

Community Days

Preparing for 2012-2013

- Check the community library for the works of Fr. Pietro Braido whose life has been dedicated primarily to the study and historical critique of Don Bosco's Educational Methodologies.
- Prepare monthly sessions reviewing the Preventive System and work together for opportunities to rework it for this time and your specific mission.
- Invite members of the Salesian Family to these discussions.

With the Young

Young people are starving for "life in the Spirit" and for a sense of meaning and purpose. They discover this life best in the experience of charity

- Invite young people to become involved in campaigns for living charitably at the Salesian Mission where they are involved
- Take on the issue of bullying, for example. Challenge them to collaborate on plans to reach out to the abused and cast off members of their peer groups.
- Perhaps a sodality for justice can be established to meet on a regular basis to bring awareness to peers and adults to the threat of bullying and its consequences.

Cooperators

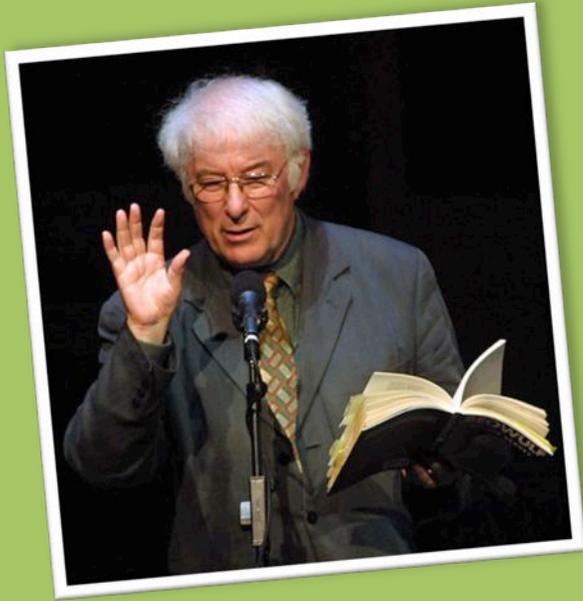
Cooperators have a wonderful opportunity in the coming new year of study to share with their families, their parishes, and their colleagues the insight brought to the raising of children and the catechizing of families by means of the Preventive System of Don Bosco.

As for this last study guide for 2011-2012, examine the fourteen themes of Fr. Vecchi and find applications to your own spirituality as Cooperators of Don Bosco.

Colleagues

Working together as professionals, we can become lost in the tasks of the day and forget the spiritual foundations of our lives, our works, and our mission.

- Encourage moments of prayer and reflection.
- Make use of the "Lectio Divina" resources at sdb.org.
- Invite colleagues to brief moments of prayer before and after any task
- Invoke the Spirit of God into every shared moment of ministry.



Seamus Heaney recites poetry in a recent celebration of his work.

Among sky-born and royal:
He may well throw me and
renew my birth...Antaeus 1966

During the Irish Retreat, we framed our days of reflection with the poetic musings of their favorite Son and Poet Laureate, Seamus Heaney.

Beginning with the image of being lifted out of our comfort to discover new possibilities beyond familiar ground, we concluded with the invitation to allow the Spirit of God to surprise us and lead us to new visions.

“Catch the heart off guard and blow
it open...”
Post Script 1999

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