

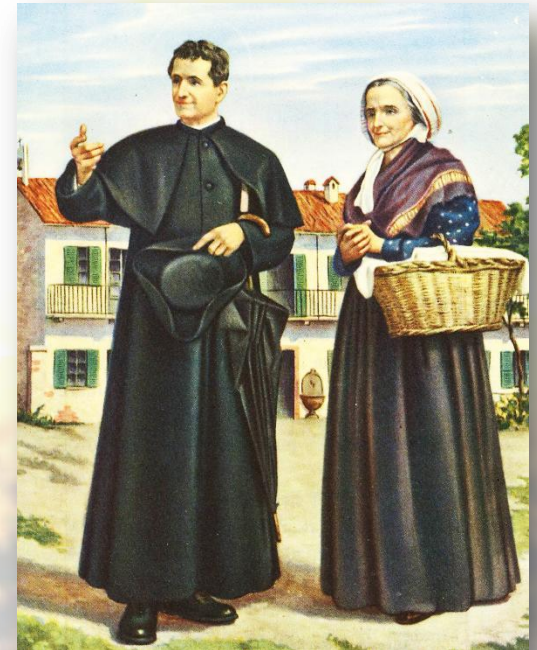


Bicentenary of Don Bosco's Birth (1815-2015) (2012 <His Pedagogy> 2013)

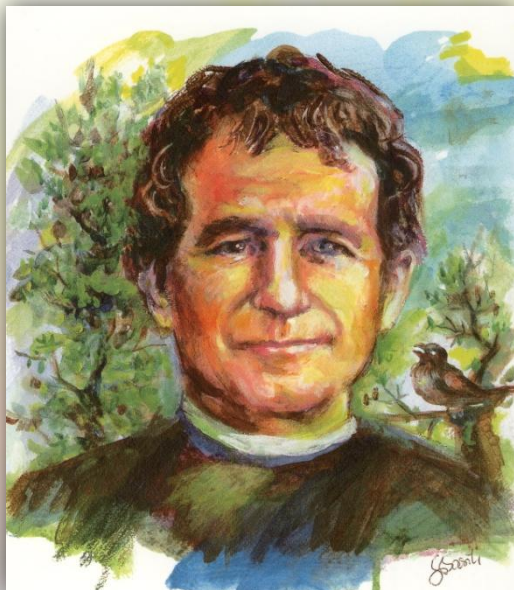
FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF DON BOSCO

By John Baptist Thanad, SDB

*(Mama Margherita With Her Son,
San Giovanni Bosco)*



Good morning! I'm delighted to be here with all of you. We attend this meeting to hear for ourselves and confirm what we have already learned and known about Don Bosco. I am sure all of us, both Salesian Brothers and Priests, are experienced educators in Don Bosco's pedagogy. Today, we will share and compare ideas about what we already know and what we will hear. There will be many common elements that we all share, but probably also some different opinions. I do hope that what we will hear and share can add on to our understanding and would be practical in carrying out our work for the young.



We know that we are moving towards the bicentennial celebration of Saint John Bosco's birth. On this blessed and joyful day of our beloved father and founder of our Congregation, I believe it is the right time to refresh our understanding of his pedagogy, which is our method of educating and evangelizing the young.

Don Bosco spent every minute of his life studying and working for his children from all walks of life. It was clear as Don Bosco once said: "For you I study. For you I work. For you I live," and "That you are young is enough to make me love you very much."

Regarding his teaching and educational approach to the young, Don Bosco himself said: "They ask me how I educate the boys. I bring them up as my mother brought me up in the family. I don't know any other way." (AGC 415)



Mamma Margaret was Don Bosco's first and best educator. Having been left a widow she knew how to show her sons the demanding love of a father and the gentle and selfless love of a mother. From her Don Bosco learned those values and attitudes that he used with his boys. As the years passed, they became the foundation of his pedagogy left as a legacy to his Salesians.

My presentation will focus on what Don Bosco taught and did in his time. We will share ideas on some input this morning. Group discussion will be done in the afternoon.



Perspectives of D.B.'s Pedagogy



- ❖ Our pedagogy is not learnt from a professional chair as a scientific treatise. Our treatise is practical life and its pages are the playground, the classroom, the refectory, the church and the dormitory. (Don Rinaldi)
- ❖ Don Bosco's pedagogy is a pedagogy of love and hence it is also a pedagogy of solicitous care, counseling, even corrections, and other aids to improve the behavior of the students and prevent them from falling into whatever is harmful to body and soul.
 - ❖ D.B. says : “ We must give the students time to express themselves freely, but we must be attentive enough to rectify and correct their expressions, their words and actions which may not conform to Christian principles”
- ❖ Education is a matter of the heart of which God alone is the master (BM XVI, 376)



❖ In the first place, the spiritual guide of Don Bosco, St. Joseph Cafasso, had this to say: “Do you know who Don Bosco is? As for me, the more I study him the less I understand him. I see him simple and understanding, humble and great, poor and involved in great plans, apparently impossible to realize. For me, Don Bosco is a mystery. Nevertheless I am sure that he works for the glory of God, that God alone guides him and that God alone is the scope of all his actions” (Memorie Biografiche, 4, 588)



❖ The Preventive System is a spiritual and educational experience which is based on reason, religion and loving kindness.

- ❖ The Preventive System in the education of the young, the Letter from Rome, The Lives of Dominic Savio., Michael Magone, Francis Besucco, are all writings of Don Bosco which illustrate well both his experience and the choice of his educational method.



- ❖ Don Bosco's booklet "the Preventive System in the Education of the young" is not a scientific or scholarly work of education, but rather it is a succinct statement of some of the educational principles he evolved from his experience with youth.

- ❖ The Preventive System as "an organic whole of convictions, attitudes, actions, presence, means, methods and structures which have progressively established a certain personal and community manner of the existence and action of Don Bosco, of each Salesian and member of the Salesian Family" (Fr. Egidio Vigano')

❖ A French writer has said, “Don Bosco was the one most alive with love for abandoned boys”

❖ This System is based entirely on reason, religion and loving kindness : instead of constraint, it appeals to the resources of intelligence, love and the desire for God, which everyone has in the depths of his being (C 38)



❖ Sent to young people by the God who is “all charity”, the Salesian is open and cordial, ready to make the first approach and welcomes others with unfailing kindness, respect and patience. His love is that of a father, brother and friend, able to draw out friendship in return. (C 15)

Apostolic Work of Salesian Brothers in various roles

Schools and
Hostels

Technical
Schools and
Universities

Training
Centres

Oratories and
Youth Centres

Formation
Houses
(seminaries)

Retreat
Houses

Parish Services

Councilors at all
Congregation
levels

Other
Congregation
Services

Missions

Presences in lay
Organizations

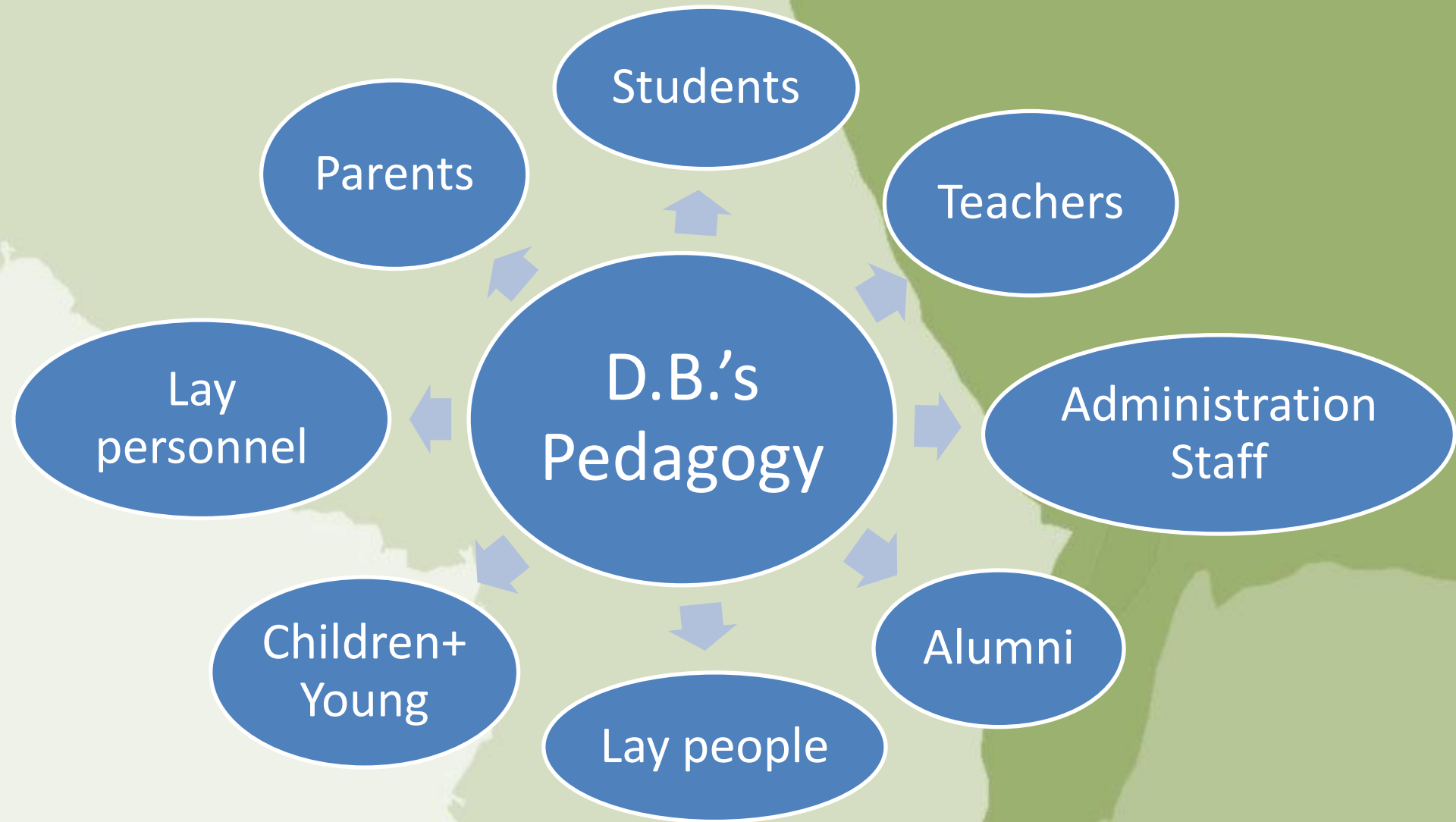
A Consecrated Lay Salesian (consecrated person)

☐ What does a Salesian Brother do?

☐ What can a Salesian Brother do?

The following are the most common roles of the Salesian Brother: school principal, school administrator, head of department, group animator, counselor, teacher, assistant, professor, spiritual counselor, retreat spiritual animator, provincial councilor, provincial economer, in charge of provincial services, youth center director, technical director, farm manager, formator, in charge of house services, parish services, member of the General Council...etc.

The educational Impact of the Salesian Brothers on the people they come in contact with.



An Over-all Picture of D.B.'s Pedagogy

Aim/Objectives

<Salvation of souls>

The forming of <good Christians and upright citizens> is the aim often expressed by Don Bosco to indicate *everything of which the young stand in need* in order to live fully their human and Christian lives: clothes, food, lodging, work, study, free time; joy, friendship; active faith, the grace of God, the way to holiness; participation, dynamism, a place in society and in the Church. (AGC 415)

Method

Preventive System

<<reason/religion/loving kindness>>

- **Family spirit and social dimension**
understanding/sharing/self-giving/open-mindedness and commitment in public life
- **Educational dimension**
academic studies/the field of vocational and technical training/...
- **Religious dimension**
sacraments: Holy Mass/confession/prayers/spiritual direction/Marian devotion/moral values/...
- **Culture and family environment**
assistance/good-night and good-morning talks/counseling/group activities/educational outings/games/sports/theatre/music/songs...etc.



The use of
Don Bosco's pedagogy
in our/your own
cultural and
educational context.

1. Greet Children and Teenagers by Calling Them by Their Names



The young ones are happy and have a good impression when they are greeted and called by their names. For each and every one of them, his or her name is the best thing in the world. No matter what the reasons are, call them by their names. We want to capture the hearts of the young, don't we? Do as Don Bosco told us, "Greet and call children and teenagers by their names."

Don Bosco said, "The most wonderful joy of the young is to know that they are loved. God loves children and delights in them."

For Our Reflection

- What should we do when we hear students or teachers joke about names, features, or learning abilities of other students?
- What should we do when we hear students or teachers scold other students by using bad words?



2. Building Friendship with the Young

In educating and evangelizing children and teenagers in our schools, trades training centers, youth centers, and so on, Salesians and teachers play various roles on different occasions; they are teachers in the classroom, friends in the playground, fathers and mothers always, etc..



Telling creative jokes or short stories is one of a number of approaches Don Bosco used in building good relationships and making friends with the young.

Don Bosco taught us, educators and teachers, that to go into the heart of children and teenagers is something likely to happen naturally without even realizing it. To show familiarity with the young is the best way of approaching them. Love children without becoming childish. Behaving like strangers will lead them to close themselves and stay away from us. Their external behavior of doing, obeying, may not reflect their real selves.

When children and teenagers realize that we are friendly to them, they will open themselves up to us, and we will know their strengths and weaknesses. We will also know whether their pace of learning is normal or fast, their gifts and motivations as well as their will to master themselves and in succeeding in doing something. When our children and teenagers trust us, they will have courage to learn, experiment creatively valuable and virtuous things; they will express themselves utilizing critical, strategic, creative, applicative, analytical, synthetic, and futuristic thinking; and so they will have the opportunity of developing their talents with excellence. They will not be afraid to develop themselves in accordance with their potential. In so doing, they will not miss any important stage of their life growth.

For Our Reflection

- Do we play various roles on different occasions, for example as teachers in the classrooms, friends in the playground, fathers and mothers, to children and teenagers who are under our care? How do we help them to keep a balanced behavior in the classroom, in the playground, in the chapel, etc.,?
- What techniques do we use in building friendships with children and teenagers from all walks of life under our care?



3. Do We Pray for Our Boys and Girls? Do We Teach Them How to Pray?

Don Bosco suggested that "We must find time to talk to God about each child under our care." So, we need to pray for our children, and praying for them will be the best way to know and help them. When asked: "Does this prayer need to take a long time?" Don Bosco replied: "Every day, we should pray for each and every one of our children for a few seconds."



Often Don Bosco told educators: “If anyone of you is shy to introduce the young to religion, you do not deserve to be educators.” He as well added: “When the children love to pray, we as educators have already served in the most important part of our duty. Encouraging the young to appreciate prayer is a more valuable use of time than teaching or making them cheerful.”



For Our Reflection

- How often do we pray for our children and teenagers?
- Do children and teenagers under our care have the opportunity to pray both in the morning, in the evening, in the chapel or in the prayer room?



4. Giving Reasons to Live Well to The Young

When children and teenagers are sure that they are loved by their educators and teachers, such perception will boost their confidence that God always loves them. This confidence in God's love will become their source of happiness and peace of mind. As a matter of fact, the Christian formation of the youth must be like an Hallelujah song raised to God. We must also try to encourage the young to have a closer relationship with the Lord.



The journey to God involves many values and duties of life for children and teenagers to know, do and live by, for example, duty to self, duty to God, and duty to others. The late great guru of human development, Steven Covey suggested: “Life is short, so live, love, learn and leave a legacy. Living means to live what makes life worth living, to discover what’s missing. Loving means to know and to show love. Learning means to learn where the answers are. Learning what needs to be learnt and what needs to be unlearned. Leaving a legacy means to leave something good behind when one passes on to the Lord in heaven.”



For Our Reflection

- What reasons for living do we give to children and teenagers under our care?
- Give examples of how our children and teenagers want to be remembered?



5. Have a Better Understanding of the Young



It is important that educators, teachers and parents try to teach and train their children and teenagers to be self-disciplined persons. Moreover, they need to try to prevent the young from misbehaving by offering them gradually what good they can achieve. These are little things done repeatedly and taught joyfully and warmheartedly. The children and teenagers mature and become responsible persons. Don Bosco once put it this way: “Perfection is acquired through effort and bit by bit.”

If we know each and every one of the young well, we will be able to help them to develop themselves as complete persons according to their real and individual potential.

For Our Reflection

- What issues or difficulties do we think normally bother children and teenagers?
- How often do children and teenagers come to talk to us about problems in their lives?



6. Paying Attention and Giving Great Care to Each Child

The following are three methods of forming an atmosphere of attention.



1. Train children and teenagers to overcome selfishness. By nature, every single person always pays attention and sees the importance of oneself.
2. Train the youth to be patient. Often, in life, in order to receive attention and care, they have to know the word “wait”.
3. Train children and teenagers to open themselves up and express themselves frankly and honestly. It is useless for us to pretend that we are interested and act as if we love and care for them unless we really get involved in solving their problems and easing their difficulties.

For Our Reflection

- How do we know strengths and weaknesses of each boy or girl under our care?
- What measures of assistance do we have to use in order to help the weak and vulnerable children and teenagers under our care?





7. Look after Children and Teenagers at All Times

In educating and training the youth, one of Don Bosco's practical suggestions is that children and teenagers must be properly looked after and assisted at all times. This is also one of the principles of the Preventive System. Once a child is born, he or she has his/her differences from others. Not only are a child's weight, skin color, or face feature unique, but his or her reaction to the surrounding stimuli are also typical. Some children and teenagers are alive, alert, awake and enthusiastic, some are not. Moreover, some of them are slow in learning and doing things.

A skillful educator once said: "each and every one of the young will become a good person if his/her educators, teachers and parents can understand and help him or her all the time in every appropriate opportunity."

Nowadays, many Salesian schools are equipped with closed-circuit televisions (CCTV) to look after the students. The CCTV has some usefulness but cannot substitute our physical presence among the children and teenagers which is more essential and important in our salesian educational system.

When we are among our students, we can sense the moods, what disturbs them, their difficulties and offer them help or talk to them. We need to have our children and teenagers gathered together at least once a day, just as every good family gathers together. Meetings that involve the entire school, morning talks, short interesting stories from the Salesians, need to be practiced in the daily life of our Salesian schools.



As Salesians and teachers, we need to uphold the best practice of the Preventive System. We educate, train and look after them using reason, loving kindness and using the principles of ordinary Christian living. We do our best to ensure that the Preventive System has its full impact in our Salesian schools, trades training centers, youth centers, and so on.



For Our Reflection

- How often do we manage or look after our school by walking around? How do we do it?
- How often do we greet our students in the playground and others people in the different sections of the school, in the trades training centers and in the youth centers that are under our supervision?



8. Punishments Must Be Employed on a Reasonable Basis



Don Bosco used to say: "Punishment is like bad luck that a child has to receive. If possible, we must avoid it. However, when we have to employ punishment, make it a reasonable one. Then, the child will accept it. The guarantee in this regard is talking with the child from heart to heart. However, above all else, do not compromise on the children's wrongdoing because undesirable reactions may occur. Furthermore, it is important not to show anger although it will be one-hundred-percent right for us, as educators and teachers, to do. At the same time, do not pull a wry face or give the young cold facial expressions, not caring about anything. We must be clear about our standpoint towards the mistakes our children and teenagers make." Such expression as, "I was not satisfied with your behavior," would be sufficient punishment. But for those boys and girls who do not know any reason, more **punishment** (patience) is still needed.

For Our Reflection

- How often do we punish children and teenagers under our care?
- What reasons do we give to our students when punishing them?



9. How to Punish and How to Forgive?

Parents, educators and teachers often have a difficult decision to make whether to punish or to forgive. Don Bosco suggested: “A punishment in any form, light or heavy, is still a punishment in the eyes of a child. So, for some children, receiving a wry and unsatisfied glance is more hurtful than getting slapped on their faces. Verbal and non-verbal compliments on their work done are the prizes great enough for children.”



For Our Reflection

- How do we punish children and teenagers under our care?
- How do we forgive the young under our care?





10. Help Children and Teenagers Particularly in Their Transitional Phase of Life

During this transitional period of life aged 12-18 years, the youth are all eager to find someone to understand them well. "They do not want leaders who strive to resolve their problems. Instead, they are thirsty for love and understanding."

Don Bosco said: "Let children and teenagers have freedom to run and jump with such a deafening sound anywhere as they please. And gymnastics, music, drama, the theater, walks are all very helpful means for promoting discipline and are efficacious means for promoting morality and good health. Pay attention to what the young are doing. Even if the game is being played by a few people, always make it like a lively conversation."

For Our Reflection

- Give an example of the help offered to children and teenagers under our care particularly in their transitional stage of life.
- What difficulties or challenges are our students facing in their daily life?



11. Have We Ever Given Compliments to Our Children and Teenagers?



Don Bosco once put it this way: “If one is esteemed all that he does will be taken in good part” On the contrary, “never joke about things dear to the young such as one’s country, clothing, social condition, name and features.”

For children and teenagers, a compliment is paralleled to the sun that makes the vegetation grow. The young must be trained for being with friends by knowing to give compliments. We must avoid giving the blame too seriously, and we must blame our children and teenagers for their faults only in an appropriate time. Why are children thirsty for compliments? There seems to be only a small number of the youth who do not feel or show any excitement when being praised. Normally, when we hear praising words about us, we feel embarrassed and uncomfortable. Yet we are always satisfied with such praises.

For Our Reflection

- How often do we give compliments to the youth under our care? How do we do it?
- When do we compliment children and teenagers under our care?



12. Gentleness Wins the Hearts of People



In providing formation to the young, Don Bosco demands that educators and teachers deliver 3 things: loving kindness, reason and religion.

Psychologists agree that for children and teenagers, next to their parents, educators and teachers are those who influence their characters most.

Don Bosco once said: “May the charity and gentleness of St. Francis de Sales guide me in all I do.” “Gentleness in speaking, acting and counseling will win everything and everyone.” He also added that: “Gentleness can represent our gratitude to those who help us”, which means that kindness and gentleness of the educators and teachers will win the hearts of children and teenagers more easily.

For Our Reflection

- Give an example of gentleness that wins the hearts of people in our mission of educating and evangelizing the young.
- In what forms can we show our gentleness to children and teenagers under our care?





13. Kindle a Spark of Faith in the Young

The more the children and teenagers believe in Don Bosco's teachings, the more they love him. When Don Bosco recalled his happy days and long years of teaching and pastoral formation work for the young, he liked to say that he won the hearts of young people who came for advice by "Cheerfulness, Openness and Piety."

Faith can be transmitted. Children felt more cheerful when they heard Don Bosco speaking about Heaven or Holy Mother Mary. He often told stimulating and inspiring stories. Don Bosco's faith was very simple and supported by his sincere practice. Faith is the condition that causes children to want something. If educators say something in true faith, it is certainly followed and acted on quickly.

For Our Reflection

- Give our views on the Gospel-teaching to the young today.
- How do we tell God's good news to children and teenagers of other religions in our Salesian schools, trades training centers or youth centers?





14. Keep in Mind the Law of Reflection

We can win the hearts of children and teenagers by showing them that we only sincerely hope to see their good deeds. Don Bosco reminds us that, “It is not enough for us to love the young, but children need to know that they are loved.” Children and teenagers need love. They want to know that their fathers and mothers are concerned about them. Nothing will replace the valuable experience of being loved in the hearts of the youth. Children and teenagers who do not receive love and understanding from their parents or educators cannot sincerely practice their religion, nor can they be good citizens.

We do not deny that parents, teachers and educators all love the young under their care. The more children and teenagers receive love from their parents, teachers and educators, the more they will show their gratitude to them. Even though in the long run, children and teenagers will carry on living independently by themselves, they will continue to reflect our love we showed them. Educators should enable children and teenagers to open their eyes to look at goodness and beauty around them and help them to see the love of the Heavenly Father for them in every event of life, even in the most painful ones.



For Our Reflection

- Give examples of the ways to show our loving kindness to our children and teenagers.
- How do you make children and teenagers under your care know that you really care for them and wish them success?



15. Train Children and Teenagers to Listen

It is essential to teach the young to behave well, to listen to everyone, be they teachers, educators, parents or Salesians without showing any sign of boredom. Do not let the young be like a wall that reflects light and sound without perceiving what they listen. Instead, try to train them to be like a sponge which absorbs whatever is taught and/or heard. Another example: teach children and teenagers to be like a theatre which can get the right sound in every corner, no matter how big such a theatre is.



For Our Reflection

- How often do we train children and teenagers under our care to be quiet and listen to the sound of nature including doing meditation?
- How do we train our students to listen?



16. Are the Young Grateful or Not?

Educators, parents and teachers should train the young under their care to show gratitude for any help or good thing they receive and to always say "thank you" for whatever good they receive. These thanking words should be on their lips at all times.



- Teach children to thank God for wonderful days, beautiful flowers and everything that makes their lives happy. Their gratitude should be spontaneous and they should really mean what they say.

- Teach children to listen carefully even if what they are hearing is not interesting. They should know to act against their natural tendency to do only what they like to do.
- Occasionally, teach children and teenagers to write a thank you letter or send an e-mail to their parents. In this case, the parents should encourage their children to write diligently and politely.
- Teach children and teenagers to thank God in the morning, evening and mealtime. It will be ideal if everyday, all the members of the family join together to listen to a short reading from the Bible.

Promoting volunteer work in school is another way to encourage the young to be grateful. Through such activities, they can learn and do good to other people. In the Salesian schools and youth centers, volunteering clubs should be established. Also notice boards on students' activities, for example, tutoring timetables of various subjects, such as mathematics, science, English, morals, meetings of senior and junior students, timetables for other students' activities should be set up.

For Our Reflection

- What makes us know that children and teenagers under our care are grateful?
- How do we train our children and teenagers to be grateful?



17. Encourage Children and Teenagers To Be Cheerful

We all want our children and teenagers to be happy in their families. Cheerfulness will naturally grow in the hearts of all the young when they receive love and warmth from their families. The young will be happier in the celebrations of special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, and family reunions. Stevenson, a world famous novelist said, "without cheerfulness, everything else is missing." Having a joyful plowing will improve the barren soil.



For Our Reflection

- What daily extracurricular activities do we provide for our children and teenagers?
- Give examples of the integration of the spirit of cheerfulness in the learning activities of our students?



18. How Do Educators and Teachers Talk About Children and Teenagers?

One technique that Don Bosco utilized in contacting with children and teenagers from all walks of life was ensuring "the harmony of the interests of both parties with love."

- Remember that the young are not lifeless objects. We have to train them as persons.
- Do not be passive about the well-being of your children and teenagers. The youth will feel very happy when we give them even the slightest attention.
- Let us not forget that the young are under their responsibility of their parents or guardians. But also the educators and teachers who act on behalf of their parents are responsible for their behavior.



For Our Reflection

- What do we think and talk about children and teenagers from all walks of life under our care?
- Give examples of how we are responsible for the young under our care on behalf of their parents?



19. Children and Teenagers Are Always Watching Us

In any training, how parents or teachers teach their children and teenagers is important. Yet the most important thing is how the parents and teachers live their lives. The parents' honesty in speaking to their children fosters a family atmosphere which contributes to their development. The family atmosphere also gives the sense of safety and security. We also know that the family surroundings play a part in preparing the children to enter adulthood.



Don Bosco said correctly:
“Children are always watching us.”

For Our Reflection

- What do we do to show children and teenagers under our care that we teach them by living examples?
- How do we know that we touch the life of a child or of a youngster?





20. Encourage the Young To Have Patience and Perseverance

Every time, a child experiences difficulty and overcomes it, his or her wings become stronger. Every time, a child has to decide, or do any activity that requires rational deliberation, he or she is at war with himself/herself, thus growing in courage and also in skill.

Joseph Verdi once said, "Genius is a long time practice with perseverance." This is consistent with what Jane Ellice Hopkins wrote in her book "Work Amongst Working Men": "I often think, a gift, like genius, only means an infinite capacity for taking pains." In other words, "Genius is nothing but a greater natural ability for patience." Those statements have been proven to be true. A secret of success in life which Don Bosco often inculcated in his children and teenagers is to deal with problems and difficulties with patience and diligence.

For Our Reflection

- How do we know that children and teenagers under our care have patience and perseverance in life?
- How do we train or encourage the young to have patience and perseverance?



21. Make Each Holiday of the Youth Filled with Joy

Educators and teachers should encourage their children and teenagers to spend their holidays with full joy and cheerfulness.

Don Bosco introduced his children to spend their holiday time for the benefit of others. He told one of his children: “You may not be able to imagine the joy I have when I hear that you have helped people around you all the time during your semestral break.”



All scouts and youth leaders should know well about doing good for public benefit. In fact, children and teenagers are asked to perform good volunteering activities everyday. If the young volunteer to do something for public benefits or help other people selflessly without expecting any return, it means they are making every effort to be better. Then, Our Heavenly Father who sees even what is invisible will reward their kindness.



For Our Reflection

- What do we suggest children and teenagers under our care to do on their holidays?
- Are there volunteering activities that the young under our care do on holidays?





22. Build a Correct and Responsible Attitude Towards Parents in Children and Teenagers

It is essential that educators and teachers inculcate in children and teenagers the sense of gratitude towards their parents. A child must not forget that his/her parents are everything to him/her, their powerful and supporting hands protecting him/her. A child may not be able to imagine the unconditional love of his/her parents. He/she is the center of his/her parents' thoughts and deeds. All fathers and mothers unanimously say: "Everything we do, we do it for our children."

Children and teenagers need to be taught and trained to accept responsibilities as sons and daughters towards their parents, especially when they are old, in times of difficulty, poverty and sickness.

For Our Reflection

- What do our children and teenagers do to help their parents?
- What do our children and teenagers know about their duty towards their parents?



23. Establish Youth Movements in Churches, Youth Centers or Schools

For Don Bosco, forming and educating children is a good preparation for them to live with others in society. From his perspective, in order to live well in society, the young must first be well-rooted in religious principles, then, they will also be good citizens of this temporary world. He molded many of his students into saints and leaders who were as flowers of morality among their neighbors and the people surrounding them.



Under Don Bosco's guidance and teaching, nowadays, there are countless numbers of children and teenagers dedicating themselves to promote Christianity and the word of God in their neighborhood as well as in society.

These are the established activities for the youth today: music, arts, acting, athletics, choirs, scouting, knights of the altar, volunteers, environmentalists, Savio's friends, Don Bosco's friends, student council, etc...



For Our Reflection

- Give examples of youth movements which already exist in our churches, youth centers and schools.
- What other forms of youth movements can we set up in our churches, youth centers and schools?





24. Helping the Young through Education

In addition to offering the young standard education and helping them with learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be as promoted by UNESCO, Catholic schools have a duty to focus on providing the youth with pastoral formation. That is to say, Catholic schools need to present to Catholic children and teenagers the Lord Jesus Christ, human and divine, offering Him as a role-model to them. This is because in the Lord Jesus Christ, all true values of the human race are perfectly and harmoniously revealed. Therefore, all Catholic schools should aim to foster the development of virtuous activities for the young that lead to being good Christians and living witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time, the children and teenagers will also help build the Kingdom of God. Also non-Catholic students in our schools and youth centers should be formed according to our Catholic values which are valid for all men of all races.

Don Bosco spent a lot of time writing letters asking for educational partnerships, help and support for his children and teenagers of all walks of life from their parents, his past pupils and other people.

In participative education, all parties concerned regularly talk together in order to provide quality education. Students should have the opportunity to talk to the Salesian educators and teachers collectively and personally. Teachers can talk to their Salesian superior during personal, departmental and school's monthly meetings. Salesians, parents and teachers also should have the opportunity to meet and talk together. The same also for the Salesians and teachers with their alumni. In so doing, voices of diversity can be heard and problems can be solved.



The 21st century skills should also be taught to students.

The have to learn the 3Rs.

- 'reading (Reading)
- 'riting (Writing)
- 'rithmetic (Arithmetic))

And the 7 Cs

- Critical Thinking (Be a Critical Thinker)
- Creativity (Be Creative)
- Collaboration (Be Collaborative)
- Cross-Cultural (Be Culturally Tolerant)
- Communication (Be Communicative)
- Computing (Computer Literate)
- Careers (Be Career-Savvy)



We all here have the duty to ensure that the education, training and evangelization provided will help increase the potentials of all our children and teenagers from all walks of life based on the principles of the Preventive System that enable physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, ethical and moral development in them.

Equally important, we need to ensure that the education, training and evangelization given will enable our children and teenagers to have moral values, a sense of virtue, ethics in work, and perseverance in the way of life as these qualities will give them the guarantee of positive adaptation to changes.



For Our Reflection

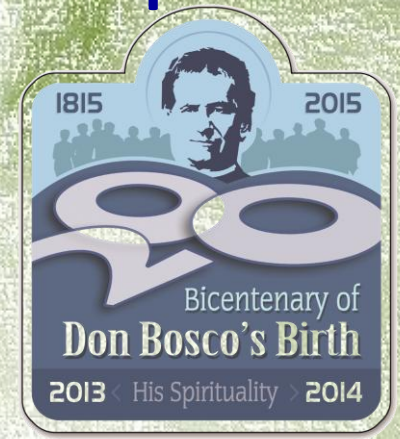
- What do we do every day to educate children and teenagers from all walks of life under our care to be moral, learned and capable persons?
- What are the important skills our children and teenagers needs to know in today's world?



Summary

From my personal experience as a school principal and manager, I would like to conclude saying that children and teenagers are unique individuals. Each and every one has his or her own characteristics, idiosyncrasies, abilities and potentials. However, based on God's love and Don Bosco's spirit, in the environment of reason, Christian living and loving kindness together with the atmosphere of care, trust, and mutual respect, the young will be willing to open themselves up to learning and experimenting creatively valuable virtuous things, express themselves, illustrate their gifts, talents and excellence.

They will voluntarily develop themselves physically, intellectually, spiritually and socially, as complete persons. As is well-known, today's children and teenagers from all walks of life will become our future priests, religious people, doctors, nurses, scientists, inventors, architects, engineers, government officials, business people, lawyers, teachers, farmers, musicians, sportsmen and so on, and so forth. They will contribute their valuable work outcome to human enterprise in order to help make this world a better place to live in.



THANK YOU





Questions for Group Discussions

1. The Moral Values We Can Learn from Don Bosco.
2. Does the Preventive System have its full impact in our schools, trades training centers and youth centers today?
3. The strengths and weaknesses of our youth today.

4. How do we encourage and train our children and teenagers to be grateful and love their schools or institutions? What factors influence their behavior in this respect?

5. What can we do to promote volunteering spirit, public-mindedness and international mindedness among our children and teenagers?

6. What challenges of children and teenagers do we need to keep in mind and do our best to solve them?

