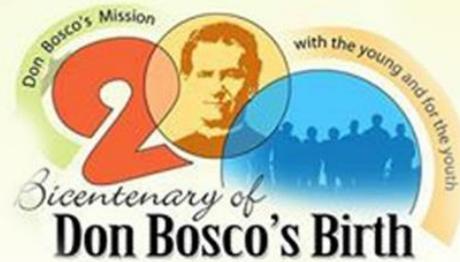


The Saint of the Young turns 200



TUGBOATS

back to the future...

Vol.1 Issue No:1 August 2014

Bi-centenary of the Birth of Don Bosco!

“Why Bicentenary”? Rather, Why not? After all, the birth of John Bosco on 16th August 1815 is indeed, a historical event which deserves a celebration. Don Bosco, the humble country Priest whose life and ministry as a Pastor and a brilliant Educator, made a tremendous impact not only on the lives of marginalized youth and poor people of his time, two centuries ago, continues to inspire and benefit young people and inspire Youth Workers and Educators over the years .

In the field of Education and Spirituality, Don Bosco, remains very relevant today both, as Pastor and Educator. His spiritual message, “God’s will is your holiness” and his educative method based on “Reason, Religion and Loving-kindness” appeal to the young and the old. This legacy of Youth Ministry must live on. Hence, “Why not Bicentenary?”

Rather than Why bi-centenary perhaps the question to be asked is How bi-centenary. In fact, the Salesian Family, over the last three years began a spiritual preparation with the sacred relics of the pilgrim Don Bosco visiting the Salesian world and arousing a greater commitment to the Salesian Charism. Careful to sidestep vain and expensive triumphalism, the emphasis, as clearly indicated by the GC27 has been “to return to Don Bosco.”

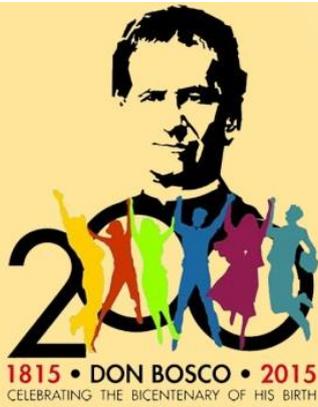
ABOUT THE NAME....

*...an additional help to steer a willing heart and mind into the **harbour of life** or out into the **sea of living**, as did Don Bosco, with and for the thousands of young people of his time.*

Tugboats are strong engine ships with great pulling power and accurate knowledge just where the deep, safe water lies. These are used especially in a harbour. They are adept at guiding large powerful ships into the harbour and likewise lead them out of the port, into the open sea.

This small venture – adventure? – we undertake, aims precisely to do just that 'two-pence' contribution towards the bi-centenary celebrations, and more especially towards our own understanding and love of Don Bosco and our vocation as Salesians. Indeed it is a small effort but we seek to be adept at it!

Br. Vincent Castilino SDB (INH)



“Returning to Don Bosco” as a theme of the bi-centenary obviously suggests that the tone of the celebrations must be less about building monuments, staging performances and multiplying activities but more about the ‘rebirth’ of Don Bosco’s Spirituality in every individual Salesian. The reason for the emphasis on the spiritual tone of the celebrations is clear. Although, over the past two hundred years, on the one hand there has certainly been a positive growth in the Salesian Mission: for example:

- A fundamental option for the poor & the marginalized youth in particular;
- A Return to Evangelization and the Missions (Africa, East Europe, China-Hong Kong; Europe); Openings into the Islamic world (Gulf, Mid-East);
- A Professional approach to youth ministry, opening institutes of higher learning and reaching out more to adolescent youth.

On the other hand, in recent years there has been a growing concern about:

- * A superficial Spiritual life lacking depth;
- * A secularization of religious values and the Vows;
- * A focus on Social activism and worldly success;
- * A neglect of community life and family spirit;
- * A lesser interest in prayer and priestly ministry;
- * A weak assimilation of Salesianity;

And consequently, an increasing vocational frailty, fragility and infidelity.

There could not be a more practical resolve to celebrate the Bi-centenary of the birth of Don Bosco than the determination to redefine the identity of Salesian Family and every individual Salesian as the Union with God.

“Why Bi-centenary”? The answer is clearly written in the “How Bi-centenary” programme of celebrations and the message is “Be Holy, as I am Holy”.

Fr. Tony D’Souza SDB (INB)

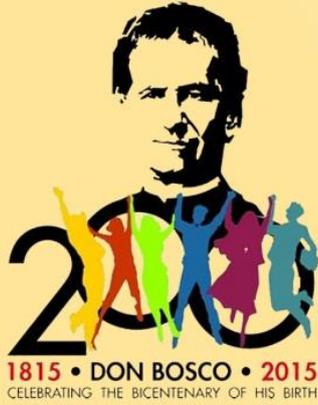
WHY BICENTINARY?

‘Why’ is a question most often we do not like to address. As we are entering into a year of preparations for the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco, I want place this question before each one ‘why bicentenary?’

It is a moment of heartfelt gratitude to the Lord, for all that we are and were able to achieve as a congregation, it is an occasion to relive the memory of the great and valiant Salesians who have gone before us, it’s an opportunity to credit the merit of Don Bosco’s unconditional ‘yes’ to the Lord. It is a time to look to the future with much more hope, optimism and courage – for a heart filled with gratitude can see the guidance of the invisible hand that led Don Bosco. And above all it is a challenge to reinvest ourselves for the young people who are the real source of our ever-green charism.

On the other hand if the bicentenary remains only in programs and events, it is meaningless. Attitude of gratitude, which can guide us to the future, can only justify every part of our celebration.

Cl. Manu Michael SDB (INK)



The Why of Bicentenary

In 1875 Don Bosco was at Varazze recovering from a serious illness. One day feeling worse than usual, he heard a boy cry beneath his window. ‘Please go down and see what is wrong with that poor boy?’ said Don Bosco to Enria who was looking after him those days. The boy was homesick. His mother had paid him a visit and had just left. At the request of Don Bosco some friendly words and sweets cheered up the boy (BM X, 146). Don Bosco was someone with a great amount of goodness of heart. He used to say, “If one is to do good, he must have a little courage, be ready for sacrifice, deal affably with all and never slight anybody” (BM III. 39).

The Salesian congregation is attitudinally restructuring itself in the wake of the bicentenary of Don Bosco’s birth. Why a commemoration of this nature? It is not for the glorification of a person, it is much more than that. Don Bosco has left us a legacy of goodness and kindness especially through his pedagogical style. He has shown us the path of holiness through the simple means of ‘being cheerful’. Of him was told at his funeral that he was a saint because of his devotion to duty.

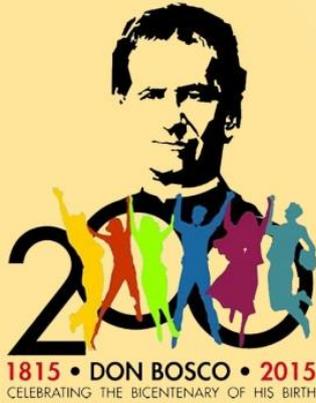
Don HelderCamara says, “Today as yesterday, and as always mankind is carried and supported by Abrahamic minorities who have the courage to hope against hope.” Yes, Don Bosco has a place in history as a saint, as a priest, as an educator, as the friend of youth. In today’s postmodern era too Don Bosco has his place because he had the ability to maintain a wise balance between school, professional training and work. He combined good religious life and responsible citizenship. He encouraged his boys to base their lives on the three attitudes of cheerfulness, study and piety. Above all he gave form to a pedagogy based on reason, religion and loving kindness.

As a priest Don Bosco showed himself capable of picking out his own very individual and original path in the context of a capitalistic world that was emerging in Italy. He was able to create a spirituality which encouraged the virtues of initiatives, responsibility and solidarity. Don Bosco was different because as a priest we see him swim against the current, defying the limitations of his own time in different ways, in his outlook and the nature of his works. The bicentenary would lead us to love, know and imitate Don Bosco and make ourselves relevant for today’s society.

As Fr. Francesco Motto sdb says, ‘It is not enough to speak about Don Bosco rather we must speak like Don Bosco. Commitment and fidelity to the same values and causes of a noble nature guarantee our own path to holiness. ‘Salve, salvando, salvati,’ ‘by saving others save yourself’, Don Bosco used to say. Learn to make yourself loved. This invitation of Don Bosco calls for an attitudinal restructuring. The bicentenary is an aid towards this process. May Don Bosco bless us all.

Fr. Thonikuzhiyil Joyce SDB (INK)

**“Don Bosco is one of the most complete and absolute men the world has ever known”.
(Jorgensen)**



Bi-centenary Celebrations: An Invitation for a God-Talk

The congregation is in the exuberant mood of the celebrations of the bi-centenary of Don Bosco. But in the midst of these celebrations we should not forget the 'why' of the commemoration of this great event. Along with paying homage to our father and founder, it is also an occasion to go back to our roots and prepare 'for a fresh start'. It envisages a return to Don Bosco in order to find the real core of the Salesian vocation which is an invitation to bring God to the lives of the youth - an invitation for a God-talk with the young.

The youth of today live in a world where there is a predominance of the 'death of God philosophy'. Young people find themselves in a kind of spiritual desertification and this is where we Salesians are called to respond. The situation of Turin where Don Bosco found the youth of his days was also one of spiritual aridity. Through his dedication to young people, Don Bosco wanted to give them an experience of God. His works were not mere philanthropy but real pastoral charity. That is why Dominic Savio said, "I understand; here you do business not with money but with souls." Don Bosco offered not only education and a home but above all an opportunity for spiritual growth. Thus at the root of our call there lies the call to evangelize and bring faith to the minds of the young people.

Like Don Bosco, for us too the primacy of God is the cornerstone of our *raison d'être* in the church and in the world. Spirituality is the basis of Salesian youth movement. Constitutions 34 would speak of evangelizing and catechizing as the fundamental characteristics of our mission. We are all called to be educators to the faith at every opportunity. Thus Salesian mission is a mission for a God-talk among the young people. We need a going back to the roots of our vocation for which the bi-centenary celebrations come at the apt time.

Don Bosco teaches that the fruitfulness of our work is the result of the intense spiritual life lived with the young. Let the bi-centenary celebrations be an invitation for a God-talk with the young in the secularized world. This celebration is needed in order not to lose our focus on this specific aspect of our vocation so that it may also bring about a personal conversion for us. Let us keep in mind what our Constitutions tell us; "In a world tempted by atheism and the idolatry of pleasure, possessions and power, our way of life bears witness, especially to the young, that God exists, that his love can fill a life completely." (Constitutions 62)

Cl. PalattyJerin SDB (INK)

Questions to Ponder

- Is this bicentenary celebration (and such similar programmes) an overflow of our love and commitment to God and young people, or a glossy substitute to camouflage the decline of it?
- Is this initiative (and such as this) a genuine expression of our gratitude for Don Bosco and service of the young, or a desperate attempt to enliven our Salesian charism which somehow seems to have lost its sheen, down the ages?

We are like fruit trees. People come to us in search of good fruits. What a shock if they find none. - Vol. 6.p.36

Know Don Bosco

1. Who is the First Member after the Society started ?
2. Who was the first cardinal protector of the Salesian society ?
3. Of the five oratory boys chosen by Don Bosco, how many became Salesians?
4. Who was the superior of the Oratory?
5. Under whose suggestion did Don Bosco change the title 'Congregation' ?

**"St. John Bosco! His name is the embodiment of grace and apostolate! From a little hamlet in Piedmont, he has carried into the farthest corners of the world the conquests of Christ's love.
(John XXIII)**