



## TUGBOATS

*...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 times.*

## LIVING BOSCOS



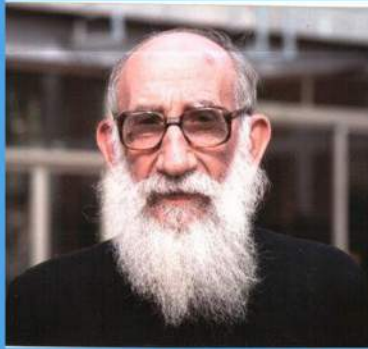
None of us alive today have had the fortune of seeing Don Bosco face to face, in person. Yet we proudly claim to be his sons, daughters and friends. This is made possible because someone in our own lives has been a BOSCO to us - a pillar of strength and source of inspiration.

This issue is dedicated to a few of those who, by their life and deeds, have shown us who and what Don Bosco was in his own life time.



## FR ANTONIO ALESSI

Fr Antonio Alessi was a great Salesian with the heart of St John Bosco and was for me another Don Bosco.



Whenever I remember him, some incidents stand out: While as a missionary in Mandalay, Myanmar for 13 years a bomb fell in front of him in his office during the World War II. He had a miraculous escape.

About 30 years before his death, in 1995, he had a serious injury in his legs with many broken bones joined with steel rods. But he never used any walking stick. At times the wounds used to ooze out blood and wet the cassock. As the Provincial of the North-Eastern Region of India for 13 long years he laid the foundation to the Salesian Missions, with a great foresight.

As rector of our aspirantate at Lonavla (Mumbai Province) He used to give special talks on Don Bosco and the Salesian Missions every Sunday evening and practically during every good night. He used to be with the aspirants during the recreation and at any free time. He was always available to us and would receive us with a smile. He used to quite often remind us of the quote of Don Bosco: "A pure boy is a saintly boy." We never saw him without his cassock.

He was the spiritual guide and model for quite a few of us Salesians. He served at the Shrine of Don Bosco's Madonna, Mumbai till his death and was also the Vocation Promoter practically till his death.

Fr John Samala sdb

## FR OLDRICH MED

Fr Oldrich Med was the senior brother of the 'India-wide-famous' Fr John Med (+2011) long term missionary in India, from Tamil Nadu, up in the North-East. Fr Oldrich was one of my three novice-masters (something necessitated because



of the underground Salesian life and formation during the communist times in Czechoslovakia between 1950-1990). Although he spent years in prison, he never lost his joy and optimism.

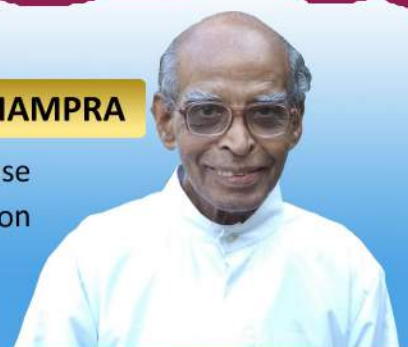
Like his brother John Med, he was very charismatic as a catechist (published series of Catechism texts, widely used until now), as formator (for the SDB, FMA, VDB and Salesian Cooperators), as writer and translator (translated into Czech language some 12 volumes of the *Biographical Memoirs* of Don Bosco), as educator, pastor (parish priest in a small village, some kind of exile) and charismatic point of reference for the whole province of Prague (200+ Salesians during the hard communist times). Thanks to God for those pioneers whose life reflected Jesus and Don Bosco!

Fr Vaclav Klement sdb

## FR ANTHONY MAMPRA

I marvel at Fr Anthony Mampira for his simplicity and affection for all. His sense of determination, especially in doing things, his loyalty and fidelity to Don Bosco and the young have always amazed and inspired me.

Mr Vinod Arun





## BR GIUSEPPE BERTORELLO



Giuseppe Bertorello is a Salesian Brother who works in the small Printing Press in the basement of the Salesian Pontifical University (UPS) in Rome. He has been running this centre for over forty years where students and professors and some people in the locality go for photocopying, book-binding, small scale printing jobs, etc. He is one of those Salesians who truly reminds me of Don Bosco. He has a deep serenity about him which reminds me of Don Bosco's constant and

profound union with God. He is hard working and makes of his workplace the altar on which his life is offered to the Lord at the service of others. He lives a very simple life, is joyful, and respectful of others – true signs of holiness in a religious person. He is very close to young people. In fact, he is one of the Salesians most sought after in the campus by young students, who go to him especially in moments of difficulties. They find in him a true father, like Don Bosco, willing to listen to them and accompany them. I thank the Lord for Salesians like him and pray that their tribe may flourish!

Fr Joshtrom Isaac sdb

## BR SELLAM ARULAPPA



My sharing takes me back to my missionary adventure in Nigeria. During my stay in Nigeria I was fascinated by Br Sellam Arulappa. I observed his regular presence in the oratory every day after the classes. His simple presence in the oratory gathered several children around him. Even today his charming presence reminds everyone of Don Bosco among his children. His commitment to his work is worth mentioning. He gives his 100 percent in whatever he does.

He has a very disciplined life. His punctuality, be it at moments of prayer or any other function is also very inspiring.

Fr Tom Chowaran sdb

## Know Don Bosco

1. Who was the youngest provincial to take charge in Salesian India?
2. Who was the longest serving Novice Master in India?
3. Name the first Salesian who died in India? When?
4. Who was the first native to be elected as the provincial in India and of which province?
5. Name the Indian Salesians appointed /elected as provincials outside South Asia?

*(Names of those who send the right answers will be published in the next issue. Please send your answers to [manunsdb@yahoo.com](mailto:manunsdb@yahoo.com))*

## Answers for the November 2014 Issue

1. Who started the VDBs?

Blessed Philip Rinaldi, Turin, 20 May 1917

2. When was the national federation for past pupils found?

1962

3. What is the full form of ADMA?

Association of Mary Help of Christians

4. Disciples were founded by whom, and when?

Fr Joseph D'Souza in 1973 (India)

5. How many groups are there in the Salesian family?

30 officially recognized groups



### FR VAYALIPPARA (VT) SEBASTIAN



Fr Sebastian Vayalippara was my first Salesian Headmaster in Varadarajanpet, Tamilnadu. He was constantly and lovingly present among the young. He was simple, poor and lived a frugal life. He was not bound to the institution, but would walk through the streets,

meeting the parents of his students, wishing, informing himself and encouraging everyone. We knew that he loved us. I was young and impressionable. He inspired me to become a Salesian. His past pupils have erected a statue for him in front of the school in the village. Great Salesian, without glamour, but a true Salesian heart.

Fr Maria Arokiam sdb

### FR REIHNARD GESING



I came in touch with Fr Reihnard Gesing when I came to Germany for my Practical training and Priestly studies. He came across to me as a very simple Priest and a very loving one too. Since the time I met and interacted with him, I have been truly inspired by his very person

and his ways of doing things. His passion for Don Bosco is evident in his work for the youth. He comes across to me as one constantly deepening his Salesian Spirituality according to the signs of the times. He is very tender in his accompanying the young. He has a unique way of leading people to Christ in the way of Don Bosco through his various talks, and personal guidance.

Dc. Gaddam Carlo sdb

### BR GEORGE SUNGMUR



Br George Sungmur was a very simple and ordinary man, who knew how to keep others happy. He was a good motor mechanic. He had his violin within reach always and used it to entertain people at any gathering. He enjoyed the ordinary things of life and was not ashamed to invite youngsters to follow Christ, especially as Salesians. In fact so many Sisters consider him as their spiritual father. I lived with him in the novitiate and later on

at Don Bosco Technical School, Shillong. His simple ways always attracted me. He was a very cheerful Salesian and made sure others were happy too.

Br Dianetious Fernandez sdb

### FR CAMILLUS FERNANDES



Fr Camillus Fernandes always attracts me with his simplicity and joyfulness. It makes me wonder how he is so constant with these qualities.

Mr Arockia Raj





### FR MAURO CASAROTTI

I knew Fr Mauro Casarotti, as a young Salesian while studying Philosophy at Divyadaan, Nashik. In those years (last part of the 1990s) he was already quite aged. However, his spirit was

very young and lively. As young Salesians we always looked forward to spending time with him. Even though he had walked the corridors of fame and great responsibility (he was Provincial of Mumbai and in the North-East as well) he remained a very simple and humble Salesian all along. Even towards the end of his life, he was very serene and outgoing.

Fr Maria Arul Anthuvan sdb



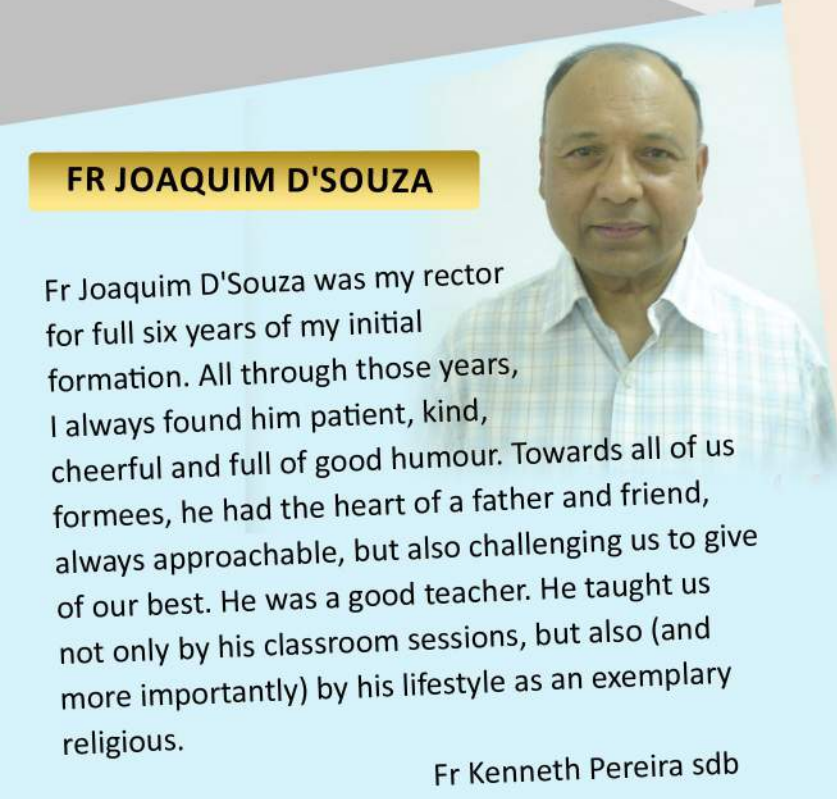
### FR KANNADIPARA (KP) MATHEW

I met many Salesians in my work place.

Among them all, I cannot forget Fr Kannadipara (KP) Mathew, a former Rector of the technical institute in Ongole Town (Andhra Pradesh). He used to toil and go around the villages surrounding the town, all along the sea coast, educating and encouraging parents about the technical institute and asking them to come forward to enroll their children into the technical education programme. During the mobilization drive, Fr K. P. Mathew's day would begin as early as 7 am. By this time he would hit the road in a worn out old jeep driving through the narrow coastal roads accompanied by a few others. During the day, men folk of the fishing communities would be at sea. Sometimes, even the women folk would be involved in ancillary fishing activities.

Fr Mathew, and his mini-entourage, would plan his visits accordingly. His pleasing manners really attracted the children and their parents as well and he would have his way!

Mr Pradeep Gara



### FR JOAQUIM D'SOUZA

Fr Joaquim D'Souza was my rector for full six years of my initial formation. All through those years, I always found him patient, kind, cheerful and full of good humour. Towards all of us formees, he had the heart of a father and friend, always approachable, but also challenging us to give of our best. He was a good teacher. He taught us not only by his classroom sessions, but also (and more importantly) by his lifestyle as an exemplary religious.

Fr Kenneth Pereira sdb



### FR CHINNAPPAN THOMAS

I very dearly admire Fr Chinnappan Thomas. Among the many things that

I appreciate in him, what stands out most is his love for the poor. He not only did charity, but was personally so involved in it, that even when he could not offer anything material, people loved him. Besides, he is a very very humble man. He continues to teach me with this exemplary life what it truly means to reach out to the poor and abandoned youth, with a human touch.

Fr Yerramaneni Baly sdb



### FR JOE MANNATH

I am happy I met and lived with Fr Joe Mannath during my initial years of formation. I knew him from the first years of my Salesian life (1968-69). He was honest, unassuming and warm with every one. As our Assistant in the Philosophate, with a Doctorate in Philosophy, one of the only two Clerics, who had doctorates in our province, he showed he could do manual work with us, think high and live a very simple and unassuming life. His life inspires me still!

Fr Kuthanapallil Sebastian sdb

### FR JOHN LENS

From the time of Don Bosco, starting with his own boys right up to this day so many people have imitated Don Bosco and achieved their holiness and became models for us. Among such great people I would like to place Rev. Fr John Lens. I came to know Fr Lens only from 1975 when he became the parish priest of St Theresa's Church, Hyderabad, till his death on November 28, 2014. Like Don Bosco, Fr Lens was truly a man of God and God's Blessings. He was very strict with himself be it in his prayer life or in the practice of vows which helped him to come closer to Jesus Christ. He was regular for personal prayer and he expected the same from others. He spent time in knowing Don Bosco, by reading books which were mostly in Italian and French and he spent time translating them into English so that his confreres too may learn and come closer to Don Bosco. He was pained to see that sometimes his younger confreres did not know Don Bosco well and consequently not follow him.

Fr Lens was a man for others especially the poor. Wherever he worked he loved the poor and had a soft corner for them. He would arrange for work for the poor ladies, even when there was no real work, so that he could pay them and with which they may look after their families. For many years he was a formator and he tried to inculcate the values of Don Bosco in his formees especially by living those values himself. He was gentle and kind but at the same time demanded when it was expected of him. At the end of his life as confessor in the formation houses he was an exemplary Salesian who taught Salesiana which he dearly loved.

Fr Medabalimi Balaswamy sdb

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