

Alter Christus

*“As an **alter Christus** (another Christ) the priest is in Christ, for Christ and with Christ... Because he belongs to Christ, the priest is radically at the service of all people: he is the minister of their salvation” (Pope Benedict XVI)*

Monthly bulletin dedicated to all the Priests of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

Seek Souls, Not Wealth, Honor, or Dignity

By Saint John Bosco

[From the book *The Spiritual Writings of Saint John Bosco*]

**Seek Souls, Not Wealth,
Honor, or Dignity**

On the eve of November 11, 1875, a magnificent celebration took place in the Church of Mary Help of Christians in Valdocco in honor of the departure

of the first ten Salesian missionaries (six priests and four Coadjutor Brothers) to Argentina. Each received from Don Bosco a small leaflet with the following mottoes. Here we find Don Bosco main concerns: Ardent zeal, especially for the young and the poor, temperance, detachment, charity and courtesy, fraternal charity, faith, prayer, the sacraments.

November 11, 1875

1. Seek souls, not wealth, honor, or dignity.
2. Treat all with the utmost kindness and courtesy, but avoid conversations and familiarity with women or persons whose conduct is unbecoming.
3. Do not visit people unless out of charity or necessity.
4. Never accept invitations to dinner except for very good reasons, and always take along a companion.
5. Take special care of the sick, the

children, the old and the poor, so that you will obtain the blessing of God and the good will of men.

6. Respect all civil, religious, municipal, or government officials.
7. When meeting someone in authority be sure to greet him respectfully.
8. The above also applies to ecclesiastics and members of religious orders.
9. Shun sloth and arguments. Practice great moderation in eating, drinking, and resting.
10. Love, revere, and respect other

Author: Saint John Bosco

St. John Bosco, (born August 16, 1815 - died January 31, 1888. Canonized April 1, 1934. Feast day January 31), was a Catholic priest who was a pioneer in educating the poor and founded the Salesian order. He felt called to the priesthood but lacked the necessary education. He eventually found a sympathetic priest who helped him with some basic education. Bosco left home at the age of 12 and worked odd jobs as a farm labourer until he came into the care of the future saint Joseph Cafasso, who helped to further his education at the seminary and taught him about the spirituality of St. Francis of Sales.



Bosco was ordained a priest (1841) in Turin and, influenced by Cafasso, began to work to alleviate the plight of poor and neglected boys who came to seek employment in the city. In Turin he and 22 companions founded the Society of St. Francis de Sales (also known as the Salesians of Don Bosco) in 1859. With St. Mary Mazzarello he founded the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco) in 1872, a congregation of nuns dedicated to similar work among girls.

religious orders and always speak well of them so that you may obtain the esteem of all and thereby increase respect for the Congregation.

11. Take care of your health; do not overtax your physical capacity.

12. Let the world see that you are poor by dressing, eating, and living accordingly, so that you may be rich before God and win the hearts of men.

13. Love one another; comfort one another; correct one another; never give way to envy or rancor against one another. Rather, let the benefit of one be the benefit of all, let the sufferings and trials of one be shared by all, and let everyone try to heal, or at least alleviate, the suffering of another.

14. Observe our rules; never forget the monthly Exercise for a Holy Death. Amen.

15. Every morning recommend to God your daily tasks, particularly confessions, classes, catechism, and sermons.

16. Constantly urge devotion to

Mary Help of Christians and to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

17. Recommend frequent Confession and Communion to our boys.

18. In order to promote vocations for the priesthood emphasize love of chastity and dread of the opposite vice, avoidance of bad companions, frequent Communion, and kindness expressed with tokens of tenderness and special benevolence. Amen.

19. In disputes listen to both parties before judging.

20. In toil and suffering do not forget that we have a great reward waiting for us in Heaven. Amen.

Seek souls, not wealth, honor, or dignity.

Do What You Can: God Will Do the Rest

On the eve of sailing from Genoa, Don Bosco put the future cardinal, Father John Cagliero, in charge of the mission with a particular set of recommendations, some of which we quote below:

November 13, 1875 *to Europe. Don Bosco heard of this and sent him the following firm but friendly letter. The lesson struck home.*

Let no one pride himself on what he knows or does; in effect, let each one do his best without ostentation.

Do what you can: God will do the rest. Trust all things to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Help of Christians and you will see what miracles are.

My prayers will be with you, and every morning I shall remember you all at Holy Mass. May God bless you wherever you go. Pray for me and for your mother, the Congregation. Amen.

A Missionary Must Be Able to Endure Some Dislike

Shortly after his arrival in South America, Father Dominic Tomatis, one of the first missionaries, had written to a friend stating that he did not get along too well with a particular confrere and that he would soon return

If a missionary is ready to give his life for the greater glory of God, should he not also be able to deal with a certain amount of dislike for a confrere even though he may have grievous faults?

Fr. John Bosco,

the more so as the letter was read in public.

Listen, my dear Tomatis, if a missionary is ready to give his life for the greater glory of God, should he not also be able to deal with a certain amount of dislike for a confrere even though he may have grievous faults? Listen to what Saint Paul says: “*Bear one another’s burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ (Ga 6:2).*”

Alassio, March 7, 1878

My dear Father Tomatis,

News about you has reached me, and I was very happy to learn that you had a good passage and that you are filled with enthusiasm for your work.

In a letter you sent to Varazze you mentioned that you are not getting along with one of your confreres; this made a bad impression,



Charity is kind, is patient ... endures all things.” (1 Co 13:4.7) “If anyone does not

take care of his own, and especially of his household, he is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Ti 5:8)

My dear Dominic, be so kind, or better, do me this favor, because it is Don Bosco who begs you to let Molinari be your good friend in the future, and if you find it hard to love him because of his shortcomings, love him for the love of God and for the love of men. You will do that, won't you? In every other way I am pleased with you, and I recommend your soul and your work to the Lord every morning in the Holy Mass.

May God bless you, my dear Tomatis. Do not forget to pray for

me, who will always remain in Jesus Christ, Your most loving friend,

Fr. John Bosco

Various Recommendations to a Missionary Priest

Father Thaddeus Remotti was a member of the second missionary expedition (1876). He devoted his pastoral zeal to several Salesian parishes in South America. Don Bosco sent him frequent notes to support and encourage him.

November 11, 1877

My dear Father Remotti,
I have asked Father Bodratto to give you a good pinch, and I am sure he

has done his duty. What do I mean? When the devil comes to annoy you in your work do the same to him with a mortification, an exclamatory prayer, and a good deed for the love of God. I am sending you two helpers, who I hope will satisfy you. Treat them well - with kindness and patience. I am pleased with you, carry on! Practice obedience and encourage it in others because this is the secret of happiness in our Congregation!

May God bless you, and believe me to be always in Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your most loving friend,

Fr. John Bosco

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Turin, December 31, 1878

My dear Father Thaddeus Remotti,
I am very glad that you have written

to me so frankly several times. Please continue, but accept some basic recommendations which are my last testament for you.

1. Put up with the defects of others even if they hurt.

2. Cover the faults of others, and do not ever tactlessly expose anyone by embarrassing him.

3. Work, but work for the love of Jesus. Bear all things, but do not stop to practice charity. *“Bear one another’s burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.”* (Ga 6:2)

May God bless you, my dear Father Remotti. God willing, we shall see each other on earth. If not, Heaven is waiting for us, and the divine mercy will grant it to us.

Pray for me who is now and always in Jesus Christ,

Your most loving friend,

Fr. John Bosco



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