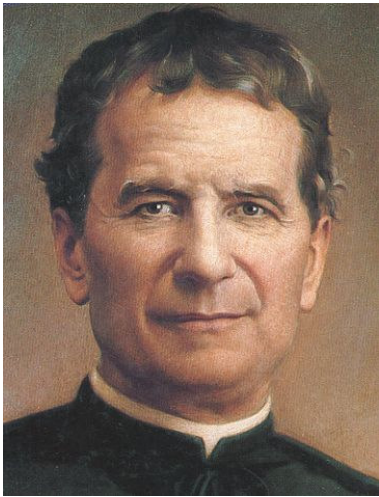


Lives
of
Saints

St John Bosco

1815 - 1888

Feastday: 31st January



“Frequent
Confession,
frequent
Communion,
daily Mass: these
are the pillars
which should
sustain the
whole edifice of
education.”

St John Bosco



www.sdc.me.uk

I was born of poor parents in 1815. When I was just over two years old, my father died, and my mother Margaret had to bring up my two brothers and myself on her own.

I entered the seminary in 1835, and was ordained priest six years later. During my first years as a priest, I visited the prisons of the city, and resolved that I had to do something to help the street children of Turin. The first boy to be admitted under my care was Bartolomeo Garelli. Within a few months I had twenty boys to look after, within a few years hundreds. I never failed to see the potential that lay covered under the dirt, the rags, and the uncouthness of individuals, and I used kindness and encouragement to develop it.

I started calling these shelters of mine, oratories, because prayer was their prominent feature. The municipal authorities came to recognize the importance of the work which I was doing, and I began to raise funds for the erection of technical schools and workshops.

In 1868, I began the erection of a church, dedicated to Our Lady, Help of Christians. In the same year, fifty priests and teachers who had been assisting me formed a society under a common rule. This was approved in 1874.

My method of study knew nothing of punishment. Observance of rules was obtained by instilling a true sense of duty, by diligently removing all occasions for disobedience, and by allowing no effort towards virtue to pass unappreciated. I also held that the teacher should be father, adviser, and friend.

I died in 1888 and was canonized in 1934.