

Monday Week 4 St John Bosco 2022

St John Bosco (1815 - 1888) was born in Piedmont of a peasant family and was brought up by his widowed mother. He became a priest, with particular concern for the young. He settled in Turin, where the industrial revolution was creating enormous movements of population with consequent social problems, especially for young workers. John Bosco devoted himself to caring for the young, offering evening classes that attracted hundreds. He set up boarding-houses for apprentices and workshops for training and education. Despite many difficulties, from both civil authorities and the Church, his enterprise grew. By 1868 over 800 boys and young men were under his care. To ensure the continuation of his work, he founded a congregation, named after St Francis de Sales. Today the Salesians continue his work all over the world. *He was a great inspiration to our founder Emmanuel d'Alzon (1810- 1880).*

Being asked to become like a child can seem rather odd if not nonsensical. Jesus does not ask us to be childish. In his wisdom he realises that children are full of wonder, inquisitiveness, excited at every new encounter, see a world full of richness, goodness, beauty and discovery. Yesterday's Gospel pointed out that when we become too familiar with people and situations, we can lose that wonder. The world of children is full of adventure, excitement and energy which easily slips away as we grow older. Children lift our spirits because they remind us of what once existed in our lives and they inspire hope and freedom. It is no wonder then that John Bosco loved working with young people and why Jesus asks us to become like them if we truly wish to experience the wonder, beauty and joy of Heaven.