

Reflection Tuesday Week 4 St John Bosco 2023

St John Bosco (1815 - 1888) was born in Piedmont of a peasant family and brought up by his widowed mother. He was a contemporary of our founder Emmanuel d'Alzon. He became a priest particularly concerned for young people. Settling in Turin, which was affected by the industrial revolution that brought an influx of people and consequent social problems, especially for the young men looking for work. John Bosco cared for the young, first by providing evening classes, to which hundreds came, by opening boarding-houses for apprentices, and with workshops for their training and education. Despite many difficulties, caused by the anti-clerical civil authorities and opposition from senior Church leaders, 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, which he named after St Francis de Sales (whom he greatly admired). Today the Salesians continue his work all over the world.

A warm and sincere welcome gives a sense of caring and makes people feel appreciated.

Pope Francis says: *"May the church be the place of God's mercy and love, where everyone can feel themselves welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel. And in order to make others feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged, the church must have open doors so that all might enter."*

It is therefore necessary for us to walk together, without prejudice and without fear, placing ourselves next to those who are most vulnerable: migrants, refugees, displaced persons, victims of trafficking and the abandoned. We are called to build an increasingly inclusive world that excludes no one.

Together let us create a Church family in which all feel and are welcome.