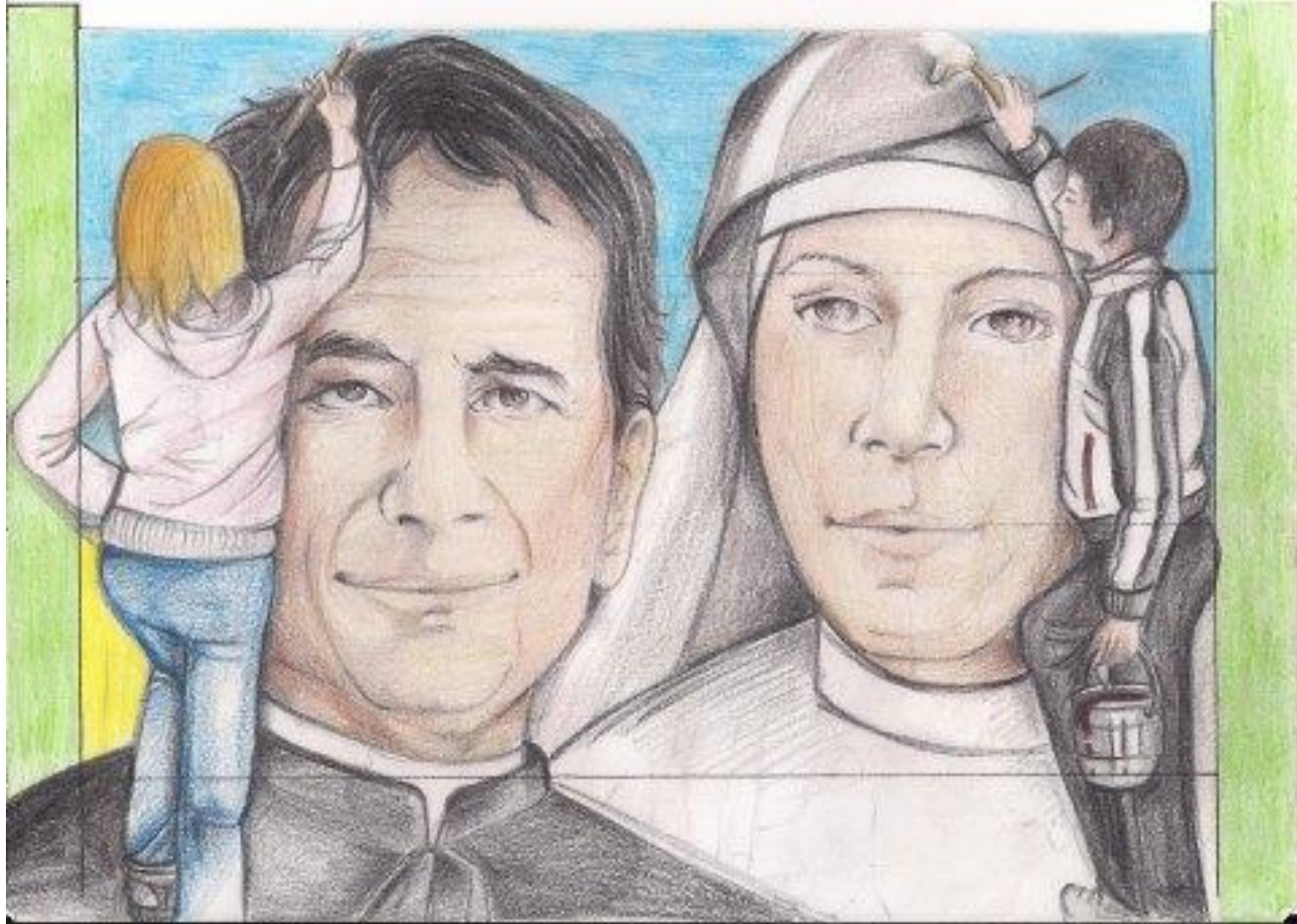


The Preventive System lived by Mother Mazzarello at Nizza



1879

Four examples

- **REASON**

A PRESENCE THAT REASONS: The transfer of *Casa Madre* from Mornese to Nizza for the good of the Institute and the education of young people (discernment, dialogue, sacrifice ...)

- **RELIGION**

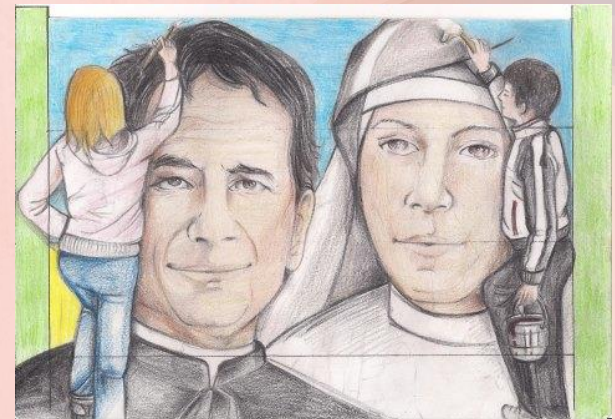
A PRESENCE THAT ACCOMPANIES IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH: the enduring accompaniment of Mother Mazzarello with Annetta Bedarida (gradual process of faith, commitment, courage...)

- **LOVING KINDNESS**

A PRESENCE THAT SEES A NEED AND LOVINGLY ACTS:

- The illness and death of several FMA
- Local natural disaster: The overflow of the Balbo River

(*Nizza in uscita*)



1. A PRESENCE THAT REASONS

Transfer from Mornese to Nizza

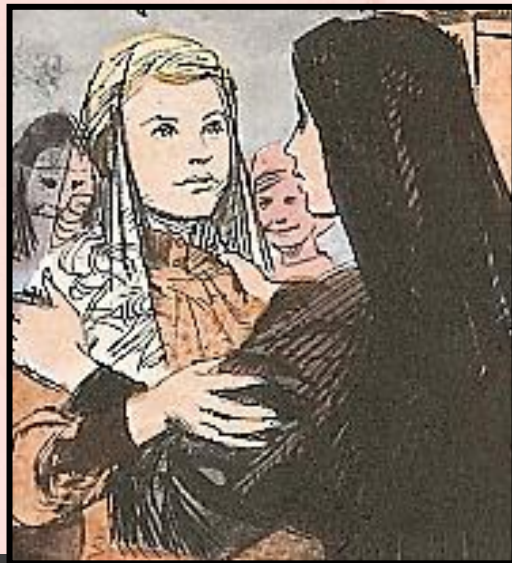


You must know by now that I am no longer in Mornese but here in Nizza. We must always make sacrifices while we are on this earth.

Let us make them willingly and cheerfully and the Lord will take note of everything and in His own time will give us a beautiful reward.

(MM, letter 22,4)





Annetta Bedarida, a young Jewish woman desired to become a Catholic.



The accompaniment by Mother Mazzarello was fraught with opposition, rejection and hostility on the part of Annetta's family and Jewish friends.



2. A PRESENCE THAT ACCOMPANIES IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH

IMPRISONED IN A CONVENT.

HOW SOME OF THE ITALIAN NUNNERIES OBTAIN RECRUITS.

Rome Correspondence of the London News.

Some weeks ago, in the Piedmontese town of Nizza Monferrato, a young Jewess, at the instigation of the nuns of the notorious Don Bosco, disappeared from her father's house, and became an inmate of the Convent of Mary the Auxiliatrix, in Turin. Her father brought the matter before the Court of First Instance, but was non-suited, owing to his daughter's declaration that no pressure had been put upon her. Since that ruling, however, certain facts have come to light which give the affair a totally different complexion.

On the 25th ult., a brother of the young Jewess, having occasion to come to Turin on business, thought he would pay his immured sister a visit; so, repairing to the convent, he was fortunate enough, in the absence of Don Bosco and his *alter ego*, Don Cagliere, to gain admittance, and to have a private interview. No sooner was the girl alone with him than she burst into tears and implored him to obtain her release from her cruel custody, giving him at the same time a bit of paper on which she had written in pencil an appeal to the civil authorities for protection and restitution to her home. Her brother, overjoyed to find her still true to the family faith, before hastening off with the penciled document, was in the act of taking affectionate leave of her when up came a priest, who had evidently been made aware of the interview. An altercation ensued, in which the priest defied the brother to do his utmost for his sister's release, assuring him that she had been inspired by the Madonna in the step she had taken, and that before trying to revoke it she must again pray to the Virgin, and remain for the ensuing night in supplication at the altar. It was in vain the brother pleaded that she had assured him of her wish to leave the convent, and that her detention in it was illegal; the girl was made to go up stairs to the next floor, followed by the priest, while a sentinel was placed at the foot to prevent the brother from accompanying her. In a short time she came down again, still followed by the priest, and with a terrified expression of countenance, she told him that for the night she must comply with the commands of the priest and the lady Superior, at the same time contriving to whisper in his ear that he must come back as soon as possible, and pay no attention to any letter purporting to be written by her to her parents.

Next morning the brother, accompanied by a friend, presented himself at the convent gate, but knocked and rapped without attracting notice. At last a louder summons than the previous one was followed by a partial opening of the gate, and behind it appeared a number of domestics, the chief of whom told the youth he need not expect to be admitted; and as for his sister, she had that morning left the convent at an early hour, and for an unknown destination. The brother, however, was not to be deterred, and, inserting his foot between one of the folding doors and the partially opened one, he tried to force his way in against the combined strength of the domestics. It might have gone hard with him but for an Inspector of Public Security, who, having been told of the girl's detention, had come up to ascertain the facts, and set her at liberty. This fortuitous parley with the convent people, but succeeded in extracting nothing but the young man's fury. It was told it was useless to seek admittance without an order from the Director of the Oratory, and on applying to that dignitary, he was again told that the girl had gone away, and that his errand was an idle one. And there for the time the matter stood, till the Minister of Grace and Justice instituted a fresh inquiry into it, and vindicates the turpitude of the subject.

Meanwhile information has been received as to the means practiced by Don Bosco and his nuns to secure their prize. Finding her unwilling to abandon her ancestral faith, they secluded her for many hours at a time in places where all access to her was denied, and where every letter she wrote to her parents was interrupted and detained if it did not hit the fancy of her custodians. Then a miracle was wrought specially composed and and performed for her, entitled "Il/Signora Convertita," (the Jewess converted,) in which the pains and penalties her obstinacy might incur, both here and hereafter, were vividly represented. During the performance (and the unfortunate girl was an enforced spectator of several of them, adapted from time to time for her further edification) a priest sat by her side to check any waywardness of emotion or gesture. The climax of the play was the apostolicism of the converted one, who preferred to see her old father die of grief rather than renounce the new faith in which she had been baptised.

This new Mexican case is much commented on by the Italian press, and its discussion before the Turin Assizes is awaited with the keenest interest by all classes.

The New York Times
22 September 22, 1879

31 May – The Subprefect of Acqui, the Kings' prosecutor, and two local authorities interrogate the new candidates (Felicina Ravazza & Maria Terzano) thinking they were forced to become FMA novices. They also search the house. Fr. Cagliero is present. The novices hold firm.



While they search the house, Fr. Cagliero said to the official: “As you can see there are no dungeons or traps here” The reply, “Tomorrow we will send a civil guard as the ceremony for the young women take place”. Fr. Cagliero invited them to attend the reception of the novices the next day!

3. A PRESENCE THAT SEES A NEED AND LOVING ACTS

Six FMA die at an early age

11 March, + Sr. Lucretia Becchio

14 April, + Sr. Cappelletti died at 25, the first to die at Nizza

21 April, + Sr. Margaret Ricci died at 27

4 August, + Sr. Maria Mazzarello died in Turin

28 October,

**+ Sr. Albina
Frascarolo**

died in Turin

19 November,

**+ Sr. Adelaide
Carena**

died in Nizza.

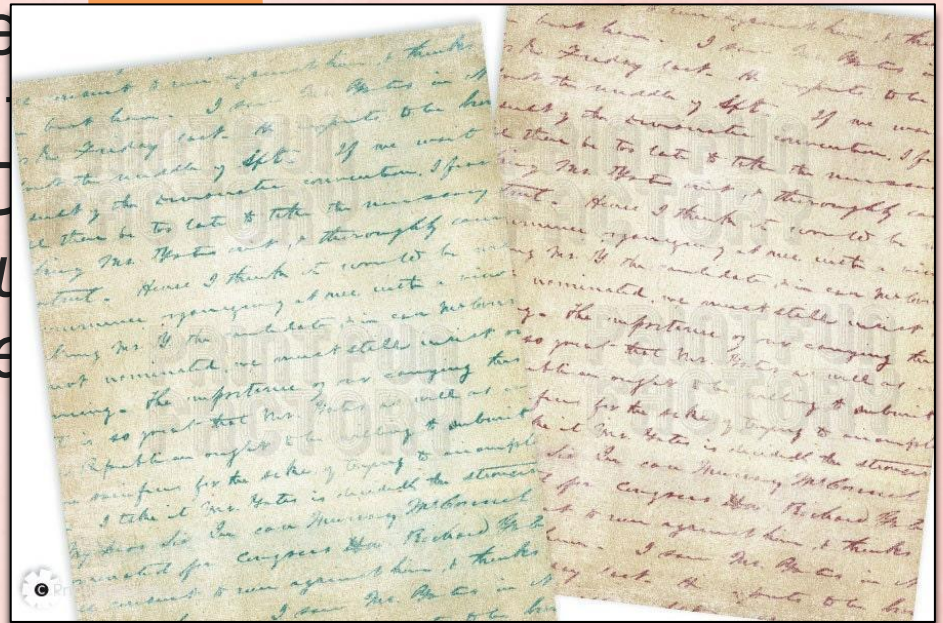


Mid May.

Some people in Nizza were worried about their own daughters wanting to become FMA. Tension mounts to the point that some people of Nizza wanted to burn down the FMA house, shouting: *“Death to the Sisters. Poor girls, what brought you to this place to die?”*



21 August - Don Bosco at Nizza speaks to the women, the Sisters and even the boarders. To the Sisters he gives two recommendations: one about health – *“There is plenty of land at Nizza. Create a garden and vineyard”*; the other advising the Sisters to write to their relatives, *“Do not leave them anxious through your prolonged silence”*.



25 May

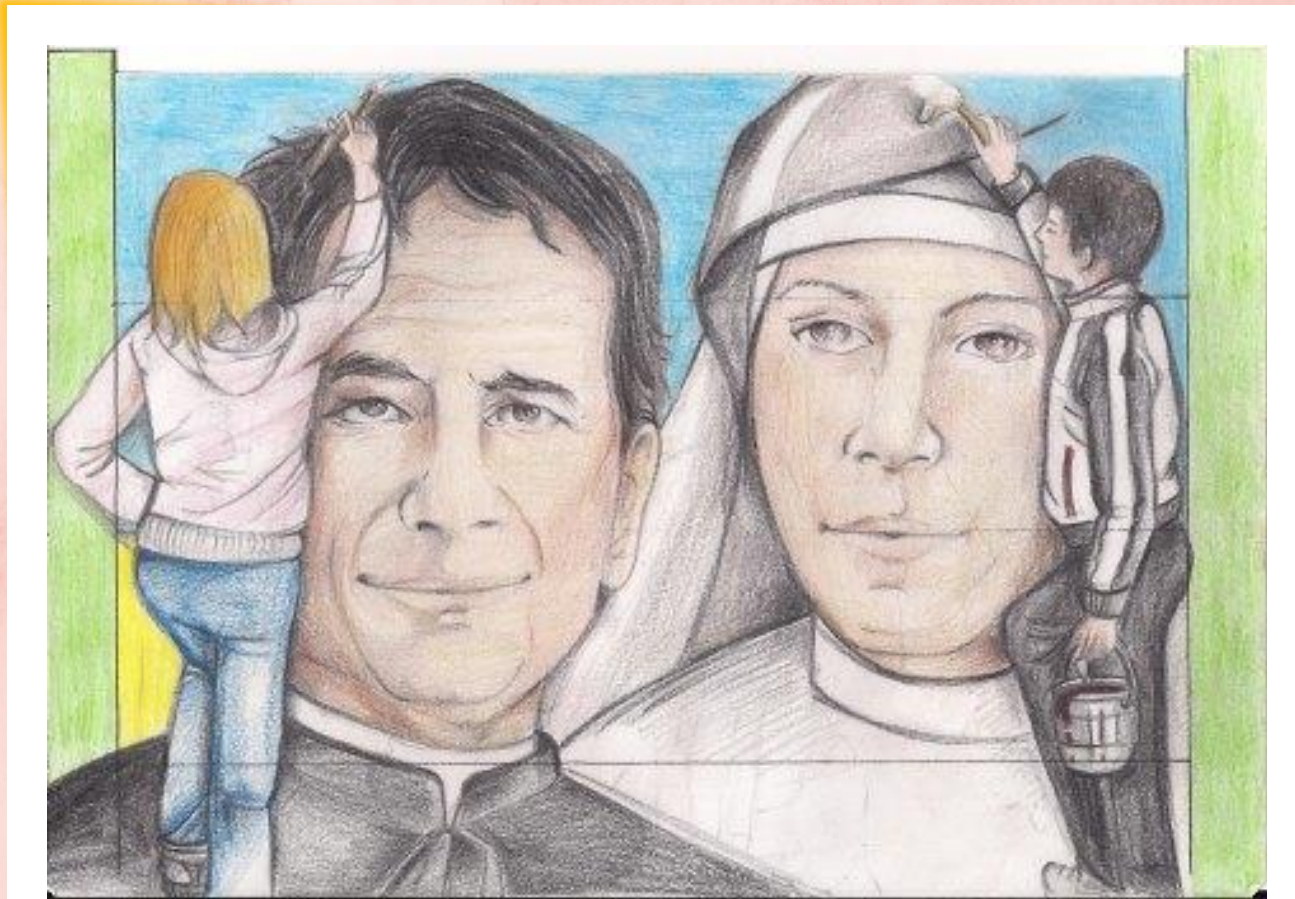
The Balbo River overflows and floods the homes near the river. Mother Mazzarello opened the doors of the school at Nizza for many families: men, women, children, teenagers ...EVERYONE. What little food they had was given, together with clothing.

4. NIZZA IN USCITA



Within two days the waters subsided and the opinion of the people began to change. Some, not all, began to sing the praises of the Sisters.

Reflecting on these four examples from Mother Mazzarello's life, what are the lessons for me as I live the preventive system in my reality?



1879

2024