



JUNE 10, 2025

2. IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF DON BOSCO

2.5 Don Bosco’s Adult Life – Valdocco

2.5.2 Museo Casa Don Bosco and Basilica of Mary Help of Christians



***"Filled the jars with water and filled them to the brim
you left the best wine for the end." Jn 2,7-10***

(meeting room Casa 35)

PRAYER

(Before beginning, glasses for each participant are prepared with wine.)

Guide 1: Good morning! In the name of the Father

After a day of journeying with Don Bosco trying to fill our jars with water so that the Lord can turn it into new wine, we are invited now to have a few moments of silence and remember all that we experienced. The empty jars have symbolised both the socio-economic depravity of Don Bosco’s boys and the challenges we face today. However, Don Bosco’s search for his boys to experience the ‘Living Water’ of Jesus is also our search in our own realities to fill our jars to overflowing.

(pause)

Guide 2: Mary, the woman who does not resign herself in the face of the crisis at Cana, shows us that there is an important principle by which things can go from small to great, from weak to strong, from water to wine, in all situations. It is the principle of hope and love. A hope, as Pope Francis notes, that “doesn’t deceive and doesn’t disappoint: All is born to blossom in an eternal springtime.” (*Pope Francis, The Autobiography, 2025, 11*) It is the principle of Christian optimism. And

following this principle requires "doing what Jesus tells us." He is always the centre and the secret of a full life.

Guide 1: Then the believer can start again and fill the empty jars of life, but not by one's own strength and will; the way is marked out by those words, "Do what He tells you." To "do what He tells us" requires attentive listening that becomes concrete action: a "doing" that comes from a rich inner life, from "being with God." It is almost impossible to "do" without "being" with Him. This is the secret of the Preventive System as an educational method and spirituality.

Guide 2: The master of ceremonies tasted the water that had turned into wine. He did not know where it came from, but those who served did because they were the ones who had drawn the water.

Guide 1: Whenever we are guided by God's Word and do what He tells us, our water is transformed into wine. In the certainty that God walks beside us, we are invited at this time to express in a word or in prayer, what new wine we want to offer youth, to the community so that all may have life and life in abundance.

Guide 2: At the wedding feast of Cana, only the servants knew from where the new wine came. Let us pray to Mary, that as poor servants, she may educate us to be disciples of her Son, faithful listeners of his Word to offer the wine of faith for the life and peace of the world.

All: Holy Mary, woman of the new wine, often we too experience at the banquet of life, the absence of wine. Look at our shortcomings, difficulties and struggles of life; help us to listen to your Son who can transform the water of our jars into generous jars of wine to announce to the world that beginning a new life is always possible. Amen.

(One by one as each participant comes forward to receive her glass of wine. She takes her glass and prays what new wine she wants to be for the sisters and young people. She will pray with the words, "I want to be for youth and the sisters the wine of The participant then returns to her seat with the glass of wine.)

Song: I'll sing a hymn to Mary

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzfe464v_8A

I'll sing a hymn to Mary,
the mother of my God,
the virgin of all virgins,
Of David's royal blood.
Oh teach me, holy Mary,
A loving song to frame,
When wicked men blaspheme thee,
To love and bless thy name. (2x)



Oh Lily Of The Valley,
Oh Mystic Rose What Tree
Or Flower, Even the Fairest,
Is Half So Fair as Thee?
Oh Let Me, Though So Lowly,
Recite My Mother's Fame:
When Wicked Men Blaspheme Thee,
I'll Love and Bless Thy Name. (2x)

(Now with good wishes all are invited to drink the new wine.)



(The participants will partake in guided visits.)

VISIT MUSEO CASA DON BOSCO

VISIT THE BASILICA OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

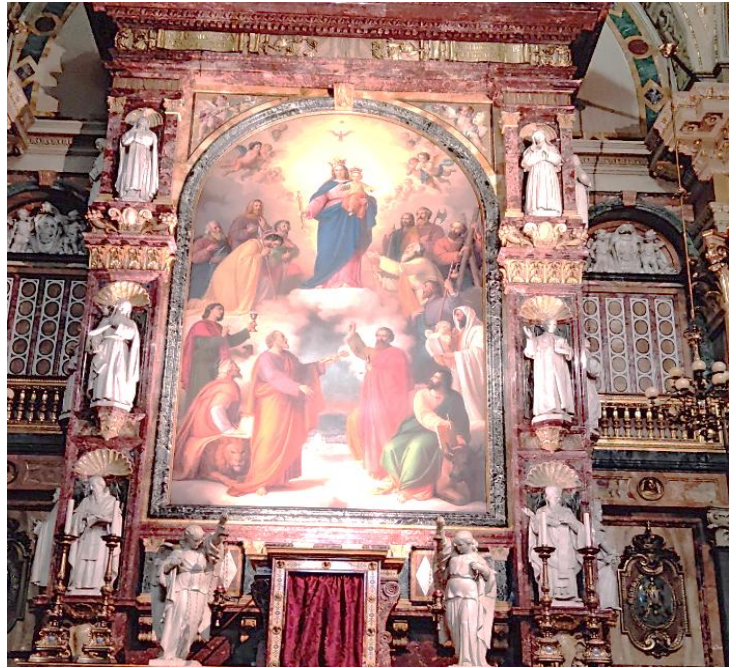


PRAYER IN FRONT OF THE PAINTING OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

(Before beginning distribute the keychain or symbol to each participant.)

Guide 1: We listen to the presentation of the picture as Don Bosco desired it and dispose our hearts to this experience of contemplation. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Guide 2: Each of us, in fidelity to Don Bosco's charismatic project, is a living memory of Mary, the mother of God, the educator and inspirer of our vocation, who wanted the FMA Institute to be, "a living monument of gratitude to Mary Help of Christians," a sign and expression of God's love for young people, ever becoming a life-giving presence.



Song: On This Day O Beautiful Mother

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x18UfKCnli4>

Refrain

On this day, O beautiful Mother,
On this day we give thee our love.
Near thee, Madonna, fondly we hover,
Trusting thy gentle care to prove.

On this day we ask to share,
Dearest Mother, thy sweet care;
Aid us ere our feet astray
Waver from thy guiding way. (Refrain)

Queen of angels, deign to hear
Lisping children's humble prayer;
Young hearts gain, O virgin pure,
Sweetly to thyself allure. (Refrain)

Rose of Sharon, Lovely flow'r,
Beauteous bud of eden's bow'r;
Cherished lily of the vale,
Virgin Mother' Queen we hail. (Refrain)

Guide 1: The picture of Mary Help of Christians is a contemplation, a story, a model and a hope. It is an examination of our identity as "helpers of Mary Help of Christians." It is an invitation to limitless trust in her powerful help. Pope Francis himself venerated the icon of Mary the Help of Christians which was blessed by Don Bosco himself and brought from Turin to Buenos Aires. He writes, "I have experienced Mary's maternal gaze for myself, and how it can bring light to darkness and rekindle hope" (*Pope Francis, The Autobiography, 2025, 69*).

Guide 2: In the painting, the Virgin stands out in a sea of light and majesty, on a throne of clouds. A royal mantle hangs from her shoulders, enveloping her. At the top of the painting, the symbolic eye represents God the Father; further below we see the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. From there radiate rays of light that rest on and around the Virgin's head, as if to say to her, "Hail Mary, the shadow of the Almighty covers you."

Jn 2,1-5

Voice 1: "On the third day there was a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, and the Mother of Jesus was there. Jesus was also invited to the wedding with his disciples [...] When the wine came short, Jesus' mother said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus answered her, "Woman, what do you want of me? My hour has not yet come"[...] His Mother said to the servants, "Do Whatever he tells you."

(pause)

Guide 1: Let the biblical text that illuminates the image resound in our hearts and in silence let us contemplate:

"The mother of Jesus was there"

"They have no wine"

"Do Whatever he tells you"

Guide 2: The Gospel passage of the wedding at Cana has special importance in the Salesian context. It is an expression of Mary's characteristic attitude of helping humanity to believe in the word of Jesus. In the light of Mary, the face of the FMA, God's helper and collaborator in his plan of salvation, especially for young people, is outlined. This face already appears drawn at the beginning of our history in that of Maria Domenica Mazzarello, who first had the experience of being and teaching to be a maternal helper for the smallest and neediest.

Guide 1: Pope Francis, in his conversation with the Superiors General, asked them to "wake up the world!" "Be witnesses in a different way of doing, acting and living!... I expect this witness from you. Religious must be men and women capable of waking up the world." Jesus makes us understand that believing in God is a celebration and that the encounter with God generates life. Instead, at Cana we are surprised by a God who has joy for people and cares for them. To believe is to rejoice! It is to celebrate!

Guide 2: What we have contemplated can be expressed in one word.

(The participants are invited to spontaneously say one word.)

Guide 1: Let us make a symbolic gesture as in Mornese....

Guide 2: In Mornese Mother Mazzarello urged everyone to hold the key of one's heart in one's hand to offer it to Mary Help of Christians on her feast day.

Guide 1: She herself also presented her with the keys of the house every evening so that Mary Help of Christians would be its absolute guide, protector, and inspirer. And she would tell us: She had a place of honour among us and we had

become accustomed to consulting her, to pray to her. To her we entrust the keys of our hearts, because we are sure that she will take care for us."

Guide 2: Let us also accept the invitation of Mother Mazzarello who, through the words of Mother Antonia, advises, "Let us hand over to Mary the keys of the heart so that she may help us to free it from everything that can exhaust the sources of true love and make it available to allow itself to be inhabited by the Word that saves and renews."

Guide 1: We are invited to make this Marian and Mornese gesture.... In silence, we accompany each sister as she hands over the key of her life and consecration into Mary's hands.

(Each participant goes to the altar to hand over the key placing it on the railing, steps, ecc.)

Guide 2: We feel Mary is present in our lives and in the history of the Institute. With the confidence of Don Bosco, we entrust ourselves to her with filial affection, affirming, with Pope Francis, that "that gaze helps us to root ourselves in history and in the Church, to take real care of ourselves and of each other" (p.69).

Voice 2: At Cana the mother of Jesus allows herself to be involved in synodal service. She is beside those in need and does not allow joy to fail. We too are called to be beside those in need, those who suffer and those on the margins of society so that they may experience the joy of life (GC XXIV). Mary, help us to listen to the silent cry of those who suffer with maternal sensitivity.

Voice 1: Mary sustains the fidelity of our vocation. The love we recreate from God and are called to live and express is 'attentive to each person, concrete, simple and deep. We are invited to value the person in every season of life, as Pope Francis suggests: "if young people are called to open new doors, older people have the keys. There is no growth without roots and no blossoming without new shoots". May Mary help us to take on the vocational journey proposed by GC XXIV.

All: O Mary, wise mother, animate our communities and each of us to be life-giving communities and women of hope, to revive our charismatic identity with the ardour of *Da mihi animas cetera tolle* and with joy proclaim the Gospel to the peripheries with the passion of the first Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Awaken the original freshness of the Institute's vocational fruitfulness in today's society.

Song: O qual sorte

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qS-QU9sOsU>

Refrain

Oh qual sorte! Siamo
"Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice"
"Salesiane di don Bosco"
Oh qual sorte più felice?
Splenda il cielo
o appaia fosco,
ah, giuriamo con ardor:
conservar vogliam lo spirito (2x)
di don Bosco fondator!
Di don Bosco, di don Bosco!
Ah, sì giuriam!



Siam la schiera che la Vergine
a don Bosco mostrò, pia.
Ei ci vide a cento a cento
sotto il manto di Maria
e ci volle monumento
di sua speme, di sua fè:
monumento dell'ausilio
che Maria ognor gli diè. (Refrain)



BRIEF VISIT TO THE CHAPEL OF THE RELICS

(If possible, the participants will briefly visit the Chapel of the Relics located in the Basilica.)



PERSONAL SYNTHESIS AND EVALUATION LINK

(Participants will spend time creating a personal synthesis of their time spent with Don Bosco. If deemed better the evaluation (link) can be completed after supper.)



MASS

Don Bosco's Room

(As the following is read one of the small jars is brought up.)

Introduction

Guide: Good evening! We have had the experiences so far of all that Don Bosco suffered, but also enjoyed what the Lord offered; he filled the jars and believed in what Our Lady told him, "Do whatever He tells you." So, we, too, thank God for all that we have seen, experienced and enjoyed these days in Colle Don Bosco, Chieri and Valdocco. Let us bring to the Eucharistic table a jar symbolizing the new wine Jesus makes for our community and for our lives.

Offertory

(The bread and wine are brought up for offertory.)

