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SIMILAR TO FATHER Bolduc
BIO - LOT OF QUOTES



THE BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS

of Saint John Bosco

himself with a simple outline of his ideas in a golden little treatise entitled *The Preventive System in the Education of Youth*.

Fortunately, the *Biographical Memoirs* of St. John Bosco are ample compensation for a book which, if written, might have given us only theories. These memoirs, a monumental work in nineteen volumes, until recently reserved exclusively to Salesians and published only in the original Italian, are now available, unabridged, in this American edition not only to his spiritual children, devotees and admirers, but also to all who are interested in education.

In these volumes Don Bosco is shown in action: not *theorizing*, but *educating*. What he said and did in countless circumstances was faithfully recorded by several of his spiritual sons, chief among them Father Giovanni Battista Lemoyne. From the day he first met Don Bosco in 1864 to his own death in 1916, Father Lemoyne spent his life recording words and deeds of Don Bosco, gathering documents,² interviewing witnesses, and arranging raw material for the present nineteen volumes of the life of Don Bosco, eight of which he himself authored beside readying another volume for the press before his death.

In the compilation of the *Biographical Memoirs of St. John Bosco*, Father Lemoyne's primary sources were the *Memorie dell'Oratorio dal 1835 al 1855* (Memoirs of the Oratory from 1835 to 1855) written by Don Bosco himself, the diaries and chronicles of various fellow Salesians who daily recorded what Don Bosco said or did, numerous letters of the Saint, the *Cinque lustri di storia dell'Oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales* (The History of the First Twenty-five Years of the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales) written by Father John Bonetti, S.D.B., and personally checked by Don Bosco, the proceedings of the diocesan process of beatification and other unimpeachable contemporary documents and testimonies. Above all, Father Lemoyne, intelligent, conscientious and well-informed, not only used reliable sources, but was himself an eye witness. He recorded what he personally saw and heard from Don Bosco. This enabled him to write a true history, even though not according to modern critical methods. He concerned himself

² All the documents in the archives at the Salesian Motherhouse in Turin, Italy are now being microfilmed and stored in the Don Bosco College Library in Newton, New Jersey.

principally with precision and therefore his naïve scientific method. It is a work which deals mainly with the life of Don Bosco, received from Mami and scholars of the 19th century. Don Bosco, the *Biograph* of Father Lemoyne lived and was heard, and eminently Don Bosco.

In editing the translation and readability were considered, as regards the Nineteenth century version that strives for a phrase.

We have departed from lengthy titles or sentences. Don Lemoyne's method of summarily made the content not possible, under the title and the volume each chapter with fill a whole page. So become unnecessary long episode and gap.

For the publication of gratitude to the provincial of the Salesians in this project.

In the preparatory press our thanks to S.D.B., and Rev. Mance; to Rev. Henry the Index; to Rev.

³ Cf. Francis Desran *Étude d'un ouvrage* for p. 411ff.

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principally with presenting chronologically his vast selected material and therefore his narrative is somewhat fragmentary and may lack scientific method. It is nevertheless true history, even Volume I which deals mainly with Don Bosco's youth and the training he received from Mamma Margaret, his mother.³ When gifted writers and scholars of the future will produce a critical biography of Don Bosco, the *Biographical Memoirs* will still not be surpassed because Father Lemoyne lived at Don Bosco's side, wrote what he saw and heard, and eminently succeeded in giving us a living portrait of Don Bosco.

In editing the translation of the *Biographical Memoirs* accuracy and readability were the goals we set. This was not easy and occasionally, as regards the latter, we may have fallen short of the mark. Nineteenth century Italian does not readily lend itself to an agile version that strives to be an accurate translation and not a paraphrase.

We have departed from the original in only one minor point: the lengthy titles or series of subtitles in each chapter. Father Lemoyne's method of chronological sequence in his narration necessarily made the contents of each chapter fragmentary. As it was not possible, under these circumstances, to give them a meaningful title and the volumes were not indexed, Father Lemoyne prefaced each chapter with many subtitles. In some volumes such subtitles fill a whole page. Since we have indexed each volume and subtitles become unnecessary, we selected in each chapter the most outstanding episode and gave it a title.

For the publication of the *Biographical Memoirs* we owe a debt of gratitude to the Very Reverend Augustus Bosio, S.D.B., Provincial of the Salesians in the eastern United States, who sponsored this project.

In the preparation of Volume I we are indebted and wish to express our thanks to Mr. Salvator Attanasio, Rev. Paul Aronica, S.D.B., and Rev. Michael Ribotta, S.D.B., for their editorial assistance; to Rev. Henry A. Sarnowski, S.D.B., for the preparation of the Index; to Rev. Pietro Stella, S.D.B., and Rev. Amedeo Rodinò,

³ Cf. Francis Desramaut, S.D.B., *Les Memorie I de Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, Étude d'un ouvrage fondamental sur la jeunesse de saint Jean Bosco*, Lyon, 1962, p. 411ff.

Sample chapter page

CHAPTER 42

Reception of the Clerical Habit

AFTER he had definitely made up his mind to enter the seminary, John Bosco prepared himself for the great day when he would don the clerical habit. Convinced that his eternal destiny depended upon this choice of his state in life he begged several friends to pray for him. He prepared himself with a novena and other devotions; then, on that day, October 25, [1835], he received Holy Communion. Father Michael Anthony Cinzano, rural dean and pastor of Castelnuovo d'Asti, before the solemn High Mass, blessed the cassock and John donned it.

As related to Father Secundus Marchisio by Father Francis Bertagna of Castelnuovo d'Asti, many boys and young men had come from neighboring villages to witness the ceremony. All admired John's sincere piety and humility. Now we shall let Don Bosco himself describe his feelings at that solemn moment and throughout this first day of his life as an aspirant to the priesthood:

"When the pastor told me to remove my civilian clothes with the words: *Exuat te Dominus veterem hominem cum actibus suis*, I said to myself: 'How much old stuff there is to get rid of. Oh! Lord, destroy all my bad habits.' When later he gave me the collar, he added: *Induat te Dominus novum hominem, qui secundum Deum creatus est in justitia et sanctitate veritatis!* I was deeply moved and added, speaking to myself: 'Yes, my God, grant that in this moment I may truly put on a new man, that from this moment I truly begin a new life fully in accordance with Your Divine Will, and that justice and holiness be the constant objects of my thoughts, my words and my actions. Amen. Oh! Mother of God, be my salvation!'

"After the church ceremony, the pastor wanted to have a little celebration. He said he would take me to Bardella, near Castel-

Reception of the Clerical Habit
nuovo, where they were Raphael the Archangel. at all to my liking. Wh a fool, dressed in bran in public? Besides, after fervently hoped for, it at dinner among strangers and have fun, people waste time. I would have felt in common with me words of holiness in order to respectfully I replied:

"Isn't there a fiesta in

"That's precisely why

"But I don't know

with you, I'll stay here

"There won't be a vited over.'

"Then I'll go home

"That's too far away now. Besides, I'll need ends in the sacristy or

"I went along. I kne to displease him. Still, banquet there is always church services, I sat of the fiesta, but for me

"Father Cinzano no I had been so quiet and plied that the religion in keeping with the overindulging in drink sion for my vocation of such behavior. Ralay this cassock aside withdraw completely Trappist monk.'

"That's the way to