

Saint John Bosco

The Saint Who Gave Boys a Home

Ages about 7-11 | Video 6:48 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth Don Bosco showed young people God's love through patient teaching, prayer, play, and practical care. Welcome becomes real in how we treat people.

Learning goals Children will name different needs met at the Oratory, connect gentleness with good teaching, and design one welcoming part of a community.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online [Open this video on Servus Dei](#)

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask: What helps a new child feel that they belong? Invite children to notice what Don Bosco offers beyond a building to stay in.

Watch and notice

Watch for four kinds of care: a home, a place to learn, a place to pray, and a place to play. Pause at Valdocco if children want to name what they have noticed.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What did John learn in the dream about the arguing boys?

He should guide them with gentleness and love, rather than anger or force. The dream shaped his hope for helping young people.

2. Why did games and performances matter to him?

Joy helped him build friendship and gather children. He also invited them to pray and learn; their whole lives mattered.

3. What made the Oratory more than a roof?

It offered welcome, education, prayer, friendship, and play. The boys needed care and opportunities, not merely a place to stand.

4. Did kindness mean that hurtful behavior was allowed?

No. Don Bosco corrected and taught, while respecting the child. A loving community has fair limits and adults who help everyone stay safe.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Children design four areas of an Oratory using symbols or drawings. The four labeled spaces help nonwriters show prayer, learning, play, and welcome.

Read & Write Children link a need to an Oratory response, rewrite a harsh correction kindly, and suggest a way to help a newcomer belong.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: suggest a book, ball, praying hands, and open door as drawing ideas. Ask children to explain one area.

Ages 9-11: ask why a game alone would not meet every need. Practice a correction that names the behavior without labeling the child.

Build a welcome together | Optional 4 minutes

Invite small groups to plan a club for newcomers. Give each group four responsibilities: welcome, learning, prayer, and play. Share one idea for each, including how children with different abilities can join.

Look for understanding Look for several kinds of care and a respectful correction. Every child should have a place even when they are still learning how to behave.

Closing prayer Jesus, help us make room for others. Teach us to learn with patience, play with kindness, and welcome with joy. Saint John Bosco, pray for us. Amen.

At home Plan one welcoming game or shared task with an adult. Explain the rules kindly and include someone else's idea.

Handout answer notes Possible needs: food, shelter, friendship, faith, education, and play. A correction names the action and offers a fair next step. An invitation should include a practical way to participate.

Teach with care

Explain that the boys faced poverty, demanding work, and a lack of care. These hardships did not make them less worthy or less capable. The video dramatizes scenes and dialogue. Do not ask children to label classmates as 'difficult boys.' Gentleness includes clear boundaries and adult support. No acrobatics are needed for this lesson.

Words to explain Don: an Italian title for a priest. Oratory: Don Bosco's community where young people could pray, learn, play, and find welcome. Salesians: the religious family he founded.

Sources for the leader

Oratory model: [Salesian Sisters: Four characteristics](#)

Valdocco: [Salesians of Great Britain: Don Bosco, Builder](#)

Design a place to belong

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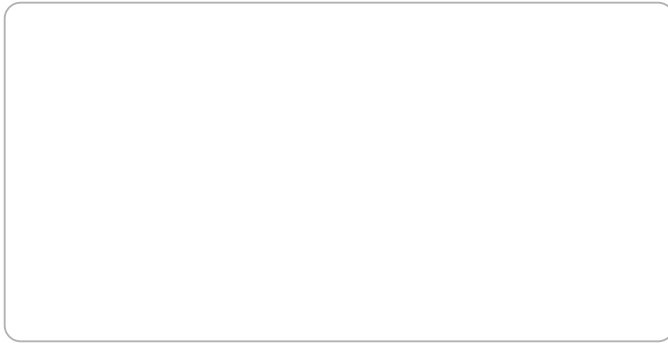
Don Bosco made room for many parts of a child's life.

Name _____

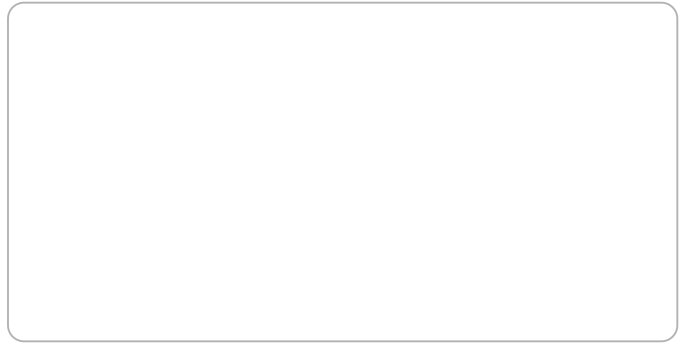
Adult helper Read aloud. Invite drawing, pointing, or spoken answers. Writing is optional.

Draw or describe one idea in each space.

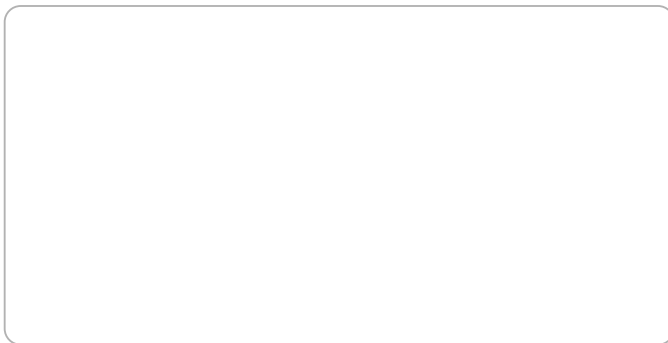
WELCOME: a place to feel at home



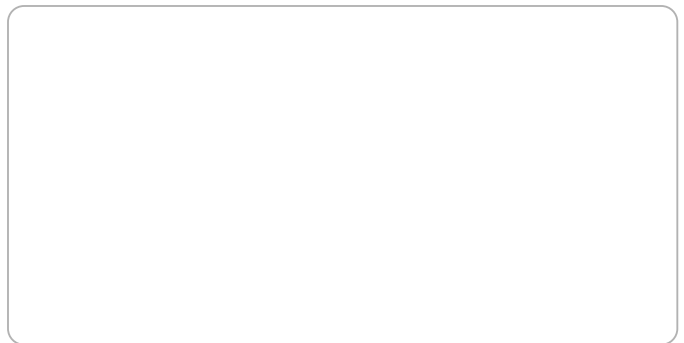
LEARN: a place to discover



PRAY: a place to turn to God



PLAY: a place to enjoy friendship



Tell Show how a new child could join one part of your Oratory.

Pray Jesus, help us welcome each other with joy. Amen.

At home Share your picture and one thing you learned about God or following Jesus.

Make welcome real

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Use Don Bosco's story to plan a caring community.

Name _____

1 Notice a need

Name a need the boys had and something Don Bosco offered.

The boys needed ...

2 Try a kind correction

A child grabs a game piece. Write a calm reminder that helps everyone play fairly.

You could say ...

3 Plan an invitation

How could a newcomer join your group's activity?

We could help by ...

Pray Jesus, help us welcome each other with joy. Amen.

Go deeper How can someone know they are loved even when an adult must correct them?