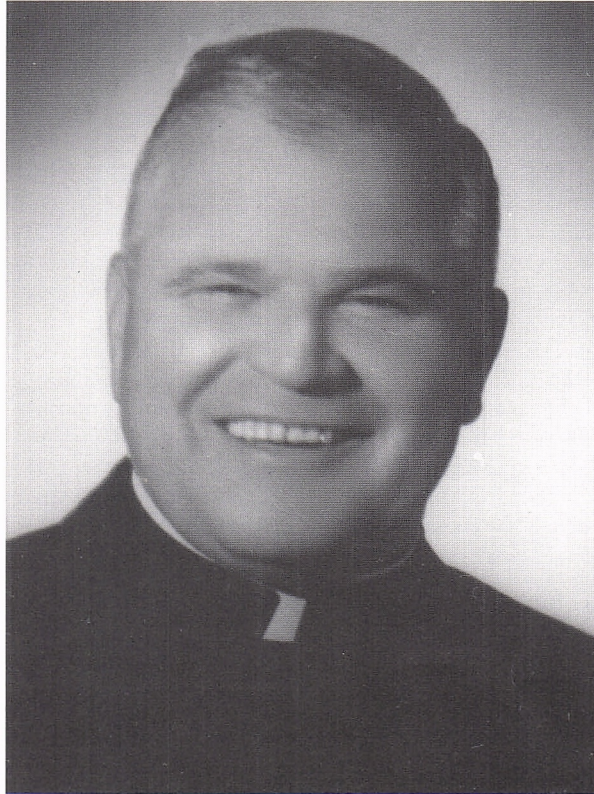




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## Fr. John Tkalec, S.D.B.



We, the Salesians of the Province of San Francisco, California, need to commemorate the life of Fr. John Tkalec. He died from cardiopulmonary arrest on the evening of December 26, 1989 at Nazareth House in Los Angeles. He had been in residence there since September, 1989. Though he died almost seven years ago, we would like to recall his life with this obituary letter long overdue.

Father Richard Presenti, SDB, director of St. John Bosco High School, Bellflower, arranged that Fr. John's body be brought to the School Chapel on the morning of Saturday, December 30, for a public viewing. Father John had been in residence at this school before withdrawing to Nazareth House. A funeral Mass and Rosary was held at 11:00 a.m. Fr. Thomas Prendiville, Provincial, was the main celebrant and Fr. Mirko Flac, SDB, com-

patriot of Fr. John, gave the eulogy. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at 1:45 p.m. on Tuesday, January 2, 1990, in the Salesian Community Chapel, Richmond, CA. followed by interment in the Salesian Cemetery adjacent to the school. The large crowd of confreres and friends that attended these services attested to the love they held for this humble Salesian.

### *His Early Life*

Fr. John answered the call of the Lord to serve youth in his native Yugoslavia. He was born in Lipa, Dol-Lendava (Slovenia), Yugoslavia on April 21, 1908. His parents were Andrea and Maria Horvat. He was baptized two days later. John frequented elementary school in his native place (1914-1919) and entered the Salesian high school at Verzej (1926-31). He made his Novitiate at Radna (Yugoslavia) (1932-33) crowning it with his profession on September 8. In the same Salesian College of Radna Br. John made his philosophical studies (1933—1935). His practical training as a teacher and assistant was spent first at Rakovnik (Ljubliana) (1935-37) and then at Murska Sobota (1937-38). After his perpetual profession (6/28/39) he began his theological studies also at Rakovnik. His superiors sent him to Chieri (Italy) for his last year of theology (1941-42). He was ordained a priest in Turin by His Eminence Cardinal Maurilio Fossati, Archbishop

*Fr. John relaxing on the patio roof of St. John Bosco, watching for his cats.*



of Turin on July 5, 1942. Fr. John returned to his country and was assigned as teacher and assistant in the Salesian school of Selo (1942-45). When religious and political troubles brewed at home, he travelled first to Italy and eventually to America, always using his considerable energies on behalf of youth in the various positions given him by his religious superiors. In Italy he rendered his services in Verona as chaplain of the Sisters as well as confessor and assistant and at Padua as associate pastor (1945-1946). His last year in Italy was spent at the Salesian School of Manfredini D'Este as Economer and Confessor (1946-1947).

### *Second Phase of His Life: In America*

It was in 1947 that Fr. John asked the Superiors in Turin to allow him to emigrate to the United States. The reason given was: Little hope of a free return to Yugoslavia. And so Fr. John arrived in the United States in the summer of 1947. He was assigned to our aspirantate in Richmond, California to learn English (1947-48). The following year he was assigned to St. Francis School, Watsonville, as confessor to the boys (1948-1952).

He was always available for confession from his first assignment in the U.S. as confessor at St. Francis School, Watsonville in 1948, to his retirement years at St. John Bosco High School, Bellflower in the 80's.

His other assignments in the Province were: teacher at St. John Bosco High School (1952-1953); Associate Pastor at St. Andrew's Church, Oakland, CA. (1953-1954); teacher and Confessor at St. Mary's Junior High School in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (1954-1959); Associate Pastor at St. Patrick's Church, Los Angeles (1959-1960); Business Manager at Salesian High School in East Los Angeles (1960-1981). So, Father John spent 21 of his 42 years in the San Francisco Province at Salesian High School in Los Angeles. He was there during the period when the school had its largest enrollment, close to 1,000 students. When he first arrived in 1960, Father Ralph Murphy recalls, he spent time with the students supervising in the study hall. Gradually he became involved in the food service area as cafeteria manager. In this area he oversaw the implementing

of the budget process for Archdiocesan schools. His accuracy was legendary in the school and the Archdiocesan school office. He would spend hours looking to correct the smallest inaccuracies in the account. His monthly reports for the archdiocese were always in on time, and very neat—and this was before the computer came on the scene.

Of these golden years of his life Fr. John Malloy, his superior, writes: "Fr. John came across to his confreres and students as a gruff but big hearted man. And he was big! (He was six feet tall and heavy). He was a joy to have in the community. He was a man who attended to details. With him in charge of financial matters, you knew that the situation would be handled efficiently and with exactness. He scrupulously accounted for every penny of funds and of every piece of bread when he was in charge of the school cafeteria. He was known to the boys as a man of discipline, both personal and in the classroom. He was exemplary in religious observance and asked for nothing for himself. He lived his poverty, was faithful in obedience and an example of personal mortification. His witness to common practices of community life could always be counted upon." He was always a sought after confessor for the community, the Salesian communities in Rosemead and diocesan priests. His sometimes apparently gruff exterior belied his care and concern for others and his efforts to be of personal help, especially to the young Salesians of the community.

"In my years as principal of Salesian " writes Fr. Ralph Murphy, "John was an invaluable help to me. His talented work made relations with the Archdiocesan school authorities much easier for me. His presence in the community during my six years as director helped set the tone for religious observance for us all. God rest John!"

His last years were spent in residence at St. John Bosco High School, Bellflower (1981-1989). Years of rest, but also of pain which he suffered without complaining. In fact his pain and the surgery which he underwent, changed him completely, from a gruff exterior and the constant angry look, to the mind and the heart of a little child.

Father Richard Presenti, the Director of St. John Bosco High School, expressed to Mother

Malachy of the Poor Sisters of Nazareth the Community's deepest gratitude for the wonderful care and concern that she and her staff showed to our dear brother, John Tkalec, during his final months of pilgrimage upon this earth. And a sincere thanks to Br. Barney Hagus, SDB, for the loving assistance given to Fr. John Tkalec in his last years of life both at St. John Bosco and at Nazareth House. Fr. John always appreciated this brotherly service.

Let me conclude with the words of **Fr. Mirko Flac** at Fr. John's funeral Mass in the Chapel of St. John Bosco High School on December 30: "Fr. John has borne the burden and the heat of a long day, giving in sacrifice to many people generously. Now he has departed alone."

"But we are here as a testimony that he will not be unremembered, nor unloved. Always there are a faithful few who visit, pray, remember. And all who came and who will come, as we accompany him on the last journey of his mortal remains, are cherished dearly. May he rest in God's peace, is our prayer."

Dear Confreres, we are asking for a fraternal remembrance of this kind and gentle confrere, Fr. John Tkalec, recommending him to the infinite mercy of God. In your kindness have also a prayer for this province that the Lord of the harvest may send worthy and generous workers like Fr. John Tkalec to increase our Salesian ranks.

In Don Bosco,  
Fr. Mario Mich and the Provincial Community.

## Father John Tkalec, SDB

Born: Lipa, Dol-Lendava (Slovenia), Yugoslavia  
April 21, 1908

Professed: Radna, Yugoslavia  
September 8, 1933

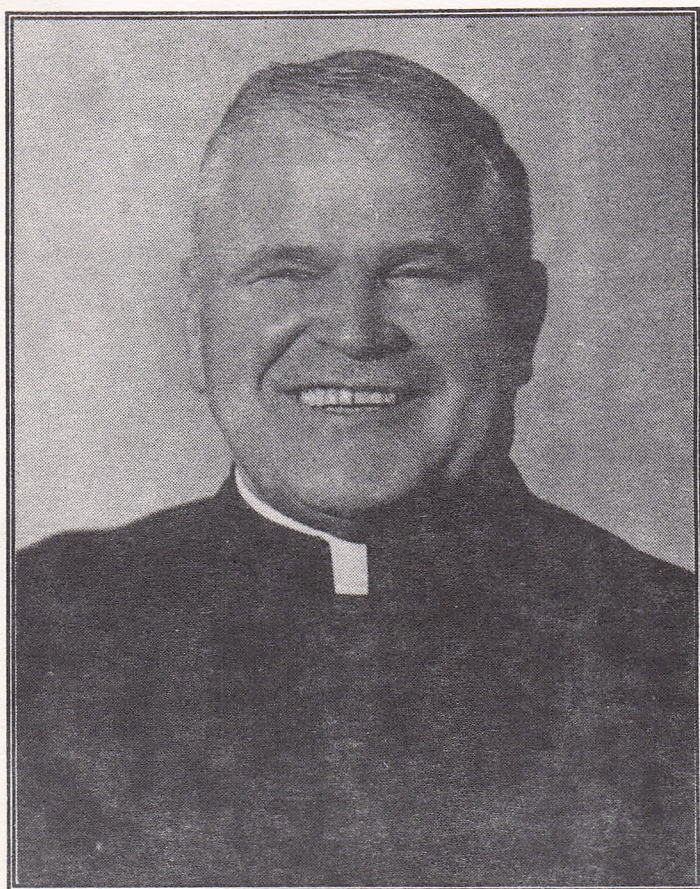
Ordained: Turin, Italy  
July 5, 1942

Died: Los Angeles, CA  
December 26, 1989



*Salesians of St. John Bosco*

SAN FRANCISCO PROVINCE  
1100 Franklin Street  
San Francisco, California, 94109



**Rev. John Tkalec, S.D.B.**  
1908-1989

St. John Bosco High School  
Bellflower, Calif.



The Salesians  
of the  
San Francisco Province  
thank God for the life  
of  
Fr. John Tkalec, S.D.B.

December 26, 1989

"In Him, who rose from the dead,  
our hope of resurrection dawned.  
The sadness of death gives way  
to the bright promise of immortality."

## Mass of Christian Burial

Rev. Thomas Prendiville, Celebrant

Entrance Song:                    Jesus, Remember Me

Jesus, remember me,  
When you come into your kingdom.

Greeting:

The grace and peace of God our Father, who raised  
Jesus from the dead, be always with you.

R. And also with you.

In the waters of baptism John died with Christ and  
rose with him to new life. May he now share with  
him eternal glory.

*[Coffin is blessed with holy water]*

Rosary:

First Decade:    The Agony in the Garden.

Second Decade: The Resurrection.

Opening Prayer:

Lord God,  
you chose our brother John to serve your people as  
a priest and religious and to share the joys and  
burdens of their lives.

Look with mercy on him



and give him the reward of his labors,  
the fullness of life promised to those who preach  
your holy Gospel.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

First Reading:

Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

Response:

I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the  
house of the Lord.

R. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the  
house of the Lord.

I rejoiced when I heard them say: "Let us go to  
God's house."

And now our feet are standing within your  
gates, O Jerusalem.

R. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the  
house of the Lord.

Jerusalem is built as a city strongly compact.

It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the  
Lord.

R. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the  
house of the Lord.

For Israel's law it is,

there to praise the Lord's name.

There were set the thrones of judgment of the  
house of David.

R. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the  
house of the Lord.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray: "Peace be to your homes! May peace reign in your walls, in your palaces, peace!"

℟. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the house of the Lord.

For the Love of my brethren and friends

I say: "Peace upon you!"

For the love of the house of the Lord

I will ask for your good.

℟. I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the house of the Lord.

Alleluia:

Come, you whom my Father has blessed, says the Lord; Inherit the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.

Gospel:

Luke 12: 35-40

Homily:

Rev. Mirko Flac, S.D.B

Prayer of the Faithful:

Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is risen from the death and sits at the right hand of the Father where he intercedes for his Church. Confident that God hears the voices of those who trust in the Lord Jesus, we join our prayers to his:

In baptism John received the light of Christ. Scatter the darkness now and lead him over the waters of death. Lord, in your mercy:

℟. Hear our prayer.

Our brother John spent his life following Jesus, poor, chaste, and obedient. Count him among all holy men and women who have followed your Son. Lord, in your mercy:

℟. Hear our prayer.

The Salesian Family of our brother John seek comfort and consolation. Heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief.

Lord, in your mercy:

℟. Hear our prayer.

Those who trusted in the Lord now sleep in the Lord. Give refreshment, rest, and peace to all whose faith is known to you alone. Lord, in your mercy:

℟. Hear our prayer.

Lord God,  
giver of peace and healer of souls,  
hear the prayers of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ,  
and the voices of your people,  
whose lives were purchased  
by the blood of the Lamb.

Forgive the sins of all who sleep in Christ  
and grant them a place in the kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

℟. Amen.

Holy Holy Holy:

Memorial Acclamation

Keep in mind that Jesus Christ has died for us  
and is risen from the dead.

He is our saving Lord, he is joy for all ages.

Amen:

Our Father:

Lamb of God:

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis  
Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis  
Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis  
pacem.

Communion Song:

Be Not Afraid

*Be Not Afraid. I go before you always.  
Come follow me, and I will give you rest.*

You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst. You shall wander far in safety though you do not know the way. You shall speak the words in foreign lands and all will understand. You shall see the face of God and live.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea. you shall not drown. If you walk amid the burning flames, you shall not be harmed. If you stand before the pow'r of hell and death is at your side, know that I am with you through it all.

Blessed are your poor, for the kingdom shall be theirs. Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh. And if wicked men insult and hate you all because of Me, blessed, blessed are you.

## Final Commendation:

Trusting in God, we have prayed together for John and now we come to the last farewell, There is sadness in parting, but we take comfort in the hope that one day we shall see John again and enjoy his friendship. All the Salesian family will disperse in sorrow, the mercy of God will gather us together again in the joy of his kingdom. There let us console one another in the faith of Jesus Christ.

*[All pray in silence. Coffin is then sprinkled with holy water and incensed.]*

Saints of God, come to his aid.

Hasten to meet him angels of the Lord.

**R.** Receive his soul and present him to God the Most High.

May Christ, who called you, take you to himself;  
May angels lead you to the bosom of Abraham.

**R.** Receive his soul and present him to God the Most High.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord,  
And let perpetual light shine upon him.

**R.** Receive his soul and present him to God the Most High.

## Prayer of Commendation:

Into your hands, Father of mercies,  
we commend our brother John  
in the sure and certain hope that  
together with all who have died in Christ,  
he will rise with him on the last day.

Merciful Lord,  
turn toward us and listen to our prayers:  
open the gates of paradise to your servant  
and help us who remain  
to comfort one another with assurances of faith,  
until we all meet in Christ  
and are with you and with our brother forever.  
R. Amen.

## Recessional Song:

## Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;  
vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve,  
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Evae.  
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes  
in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra,  
illos tuos misericordes oculos  
ad nos converte.  
Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,  
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.  
O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.



## Rev. John Tkalec, S.D.B.

Born	April 21, 1908 Lipa, Yugoslavia
Religious Profession	September 8, 1933 Radna, Yugoslavia
Priestly Ordination	July 5, 1942 Turin, Italy
Arrived in the USA	Summer of 1947
1947-1948	Richmond, California
1948-1952	St. Francis, Watsonville
1952-1953	St. John Bosco H. S., Bellflower
1953-1954	St. Andrew's, Oakland
1954-1959	St. Mary's, Edmonton, Alberta
1960-1981	Salesian H. S., Los Angeles
1981-1989	St. John Bosco H. S., Bellflower
Died	December 26, 1989 Los Angeles, California