

SALESIANS OF SAINT JOHN BOSCO

San Francisco Province

Good Friday

April 4, 1980



REV. DAVID E. ZUNINO, S.D.B.

Dear Confreres,

Father David Zunino died suddenly of a brain hemorrhage on February 29, 1980, seven months before his 70th birthday, in Surrey, British Columbia. His parishoners, whom he had served zealously since the parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel had been entrusted

to the Salesians five years earlier, showed their gratitude and sorrow by attending the Mass of Resurrection celebrated by Archbishop James Carney of Vancouver.

Then the body of Father Dave was greeted in San Francisco in his home parish of SS. Peter and Paul. Here confreres and friends prayed for him as they met at the rosary and concelebrated Eucharist, reviewing a life that was significant from beginning to end. Here he made his first contact with Salesian life as he served Mass so faithfully and devoutly as to attract the attention of Father Oreste Trinchieri, S.D.B. This founder of Salesian Boys' Club and moulder of youth saw in David Zunino a vocation to the priesthood, and he directed him to the Sacred Heart High School of the Christian Brothers. There, and at Salesian Boys' Club, he became an outstanding scholar, leader, and sterling athlete.

Upon his graduation, David entered the Salesian Novitiate at Richmond, California, where he later completed his philosophy course, simultaneously attending classes at St. Mary's College. Following this he had a three year period during which he became an assistant and teacher of aspirants to the

Salesian life at Richmond, where he was admired for his charisms as instructor, guide and athlete to whom youth looked as their inspiration.

As the time approached for his study of theology he was sent to the Salesian International Studentate of La Crocetta in Turin, Italy. Here he became a well grounded student of theology and an expert in liturgy. During his fourth year of study he was accepted as an outstanding leader, with an appointment as assistant of his fellow theology students. His final year was capped by his ordination to the priesthood on July 3, 1938.

Father Dave's first Mass at his parish of SS. Peter and Paul was a triumph in the presence of his mother and a huge crowd of parishioners. His first assignment as a priest took him back to the Junior Seminary at Richmond, where he had begun his Salesian life. In 1941 he was back home as Associate Pastor of SS. Peter and Paul's Church--coordinator of the highly successful C.C.D. program and Director of Salesian Boys' Club. From here he went to St. John Bosco School in Bellflower, where his talent for financial administration first became evident. But before long the newly opened house of theology in Aptos called on his talents as teacher, and he was sent there to prepare men for the priesthood by training them in history, Canon Law and liturgy.

Father Dave was called to St. Patrick's Parish in Los Angeles in 1950, where in one year he put the church on a secure financial basis and united the various ethnic groups into a true Christian fellowship. On the basis of this success he was asked to take over the building of Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco, where he remained as pastor for the next nine years. During that time he completed the parish church, the school and the convent and left Corpus Christi in good financial standing. He also promoted many active parish groups, but his main interest, as always, was the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, where he personally trained catechists to give instructions to children attending public schools.

Next he was appointed pastor of St. Dominic Savio Parish in Bellflower,

where he worked assiduously for the rapidly growing number of parishioners. In time he doubled the number of classrooms in his school, as he also built up the guilds, of 60 families each, to increase attendance at church and in the inevitable C.C.D. classes for the public school children. Under his guidance St. Dominic Savio won an award as the best organized parish in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Following his work at Bellflower, Father Dave was given a short period of rest in Vancouver and then in San Francisco. But his reputation demanded that he be given charge of a newly accepted parish in Surrey, British Columbia. In the brief period of four years he paid off a huge debt and won the undivided support of all the people.

It was in Surrey that he was suddenly called by God. He had heard confessions right up to the time of retiring the night before, and he had dressed for Mass the next morning when a cerebral hemorrhage struck him down. He remained unconscious in the hospital for several days before he died on Friday, February 29. Father Dave Zunino will be remembered for his priestly zeal and virtue. His death as he approached the age of 70 is one that is mourned by all the Salesians who knew his great accomplishments, and by countless friends whom he served so well as a priestly follower of St. John Bosco.

Fraternally yours in Christ,
(Rev.) Larry W. Byrne, S.D.B.
Director, Salesian Boys' Club,
San Francisco

DATA FOR NECROLOGY: Father David Zunino, born in San Francisco on September 29, 1910, died in Surrey, British Columbia on February 29, 1980, at the age of 69, having completed fifty years of religious profession and forty-one years of priesthood.

