

## SALESIANS OF ST JOHN BOSCO

Salesian College  
Reading Road  
Farnborough  
Hampshire  
GU14 6PA

31st January 1982

Dear Confrères,

May I ask the charity of your prayers for the happy repose of the soul of Father John Bourn, for so long a member of this Community?

On Friday 15th January 1982, shortly after 9.15 p.m., Father Bourn suffered a severe heart attack in his room. Although he was quickly assisted by several of the confrères who were nearby, and given the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, shortly after the ambulance rushed him to Frimley Park Hospital, he died.

He was in the 66th year of his age, the 44th year of his religious profession and the 35th year of his priesthood. He was also in his 23rd year at the Salesian College here in Farnborough.

Born in Accrington, Lancashire on the 21st of April 1916, he attended St Mary's College, Blackburn, where his talents and his skills as a sportsman were soon recognised. In 1935 he went to the Salesian College at Chertsey in Surrey to prepare himself for entry into the Salesian Congregation and for the Priesthood, to which he felt himself called. After a further year as an Aspirant at the Salesian House, Cowley, Oxford, he entered the Novitiate at Beckford in Gloucestershire and made his first Profession there in 1938. His Philosophical course followed at Cowley and Shrigley Park (1938–1940), before he returned to Chertsey for three years practical training. In 1943, after making his Perpetual Profession at Farnborough, he began his four years of Theology at Cowley and Blaisdon Hall, Gloucestershire. It was at Blaisdon on the 20th of July 1947 that he was ordained to the Sacred Priesthood with nine companions by Bishop William Lee of Clifton. That same year his Mother died.

Father John Bourn again returned to Chertsey, where for seven years he was a very successful and popular teacher and sportsmaster. In 1954 he joined the Community of the Salesian College, Farnborough, where (with the exception of five years) he was to spend the rest of his life. He was Bursar at Thornleigh Salesian College, Bolton for three of these years (1962–1965), and also spent one year at Battersea (1955–1956) and one year again at Shrigley (1971–1972).

For most of his time at Farnborough, which was a boarding school until 1978, Father Bourn was particularly concerned with the care and welfare of the younger boys. A man large in build and in heart, his years in charge of the small boys in the Preparatory Department were especially fruitful and rich in happy memories and lasting friendships. A quiet and humble man, a gentle and humorous man, a man of faith and prayer, Father Bourn was much appreciated not only by generations of boys and parents, but also by his Salesian confrères around the Province, and by his many friends—priests and laity.

At the end of 1974, Father Bourn was admitted to hospital with a heart condition, and although he was later able to resume his activities in the Community and the School, his health continued to cause concern.

In April 1981 he was 65 years old, and the summer term was to be his last as a Latin teacher in the classroom. He continued faithfully to the very end. Although it was so short, he enjoyed his retirement and now he has been called to enjoy the eternal reward of the good and faithful servant of the Lord.

The Funeral Mass held in the College Hall on the 22nd of January with over 70 concelebrating priests was attended by the whole School and many friends, past pupils and parents. It was a fitting and moving tribute to a much respected and greatly loved Salesian Priest, teacher and friend.

By a remarkable coincidence, on the same day in Accrington, the funeral also took place of Father Bourn's stepmother whose prolonged ill-health had caused him much anxiety in recent months. May they both rest in peace.

Please commend to the loving intercession of Mary, Help of Christians, this faithful Son of Don Bosco, and remember also in your prayers this Community.

Yours sincerely in C.J.,  
Bernard F. Grogan S.D.B.  
(Rector)

*Data for the Necrology:* Father John Bourn born in Accrington, 21st April 1916, died in Farnborough, 15th January 1982, in the 44th year of his profession and the 35th of his priesthood.