

**SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO**



**SAVIO HOUSE  
INGERSLEY ROAD  
BOLLINGTON  
MACCLESFIELD  
SK10 5RW**

July 1989

**FR.DAN BRODER.**

Dear Confrere and Friends,

At around 5 a.m. on the morning of Monday, February 13th Fr.Dan Broder died peacefully, gently and quietly as he had lived, breathing his last as the confreres, called by Fr.David, were gathering at his bedside. He was 87 years of age.

Fr.Dan had taken to his room only the previous Tuesday. He had a fall on the Monday, bruising his head. "The Broders always give a week's notice" he had said many times. So it was to be.

On the Wednesday he had his meals brought up to his room and from then on he was confined to bed as he grew weaker and weaker.

During those final days he was looked after with great care, love and devotion by his confreres, by the staff at Savio House and by local friends. They were at his bedside day and night. This was Fr.Dan's last gift to this Community – a sense of great unity and warmth, as confreres and friends spent long quiet hours with him, praying with him. A great sense of belonging and of peace. A great realisation – to him as well as to the community – of how much he was loved.

Fr. Dan was, in his later years, a very quiet man. This resulted largely from an acute deafness that tended to cut him off from people. So much so, that people did not know much of his life story.

Dan Broder was a Londoner. Born 7th November, 1901 in Hackney, the youngest of six children. At the age of 13 he was already at work in the Building Trade. A desire for the Priesthood came to him and in 1920 he met the Salesians at the Salesian Parish in East Hill, London. He went to Battersea as an Aspirant, and to the Novitiate in 1923, taking his first vows in 1924.

His first posting was to South Africa, to Cape Town, at that time a school where poor orphaned boys were taught trades. Bro.Dan was a great sportsman. He was regarded as an outstanding footballer and much loved by the boys.

In 1931 he was Ordained Priest in Cape Town, together with Fr.Kelly (happily still with us as the oldest member of the Province) and Fr.Boat and Fr.Stubbings.

For 17 years Fr.Dan taught in Cape Town. For 3 years he was acting Headmaster to the school, and he did a lot of work as an Officer in the Cadets. He also worked in Teacher Training, and all the time was noted for his constant desire to "be with the boys" – no greater accolade can be given to any Salesian.

He always felt these were his best years.

In 1948 he returned to England. For 6 years he was in Farnborough, for 3 in Cowley, and then his first spell in Bollington, working with Fr.O'Brien on the Dominic Savio Guild. From Bollington, to Pallaskenry and then to Battersea, and in 1962 he went to Shrigley as Confessor to boys and Community, a task he fulfilled with great care and gentleness for 10 years.

In 1972 he went to Aberdour. In the 11 years that followed he made many friends, as is evidenced by the many letters, greeting cards, (Birthday and Christmas) from friends in Aberdour, Kirkcaldy, Dalgetty Bay and Dunfermline etc, that were still treasured in his room when he died. In 1983 he came to Savio House.

Here he found a new lease of life. People wondered how he would fit into a community that was so open, so many 'comings and goings' and a fairly unpredictable lifestyle. In fact he loved it! It was a new beginning for him. Happy, lively, laughing – he had four great years. Painting, writing poetry, making beautiful birthday cards – hand painted, and completed with home made poetry. They showed a warmth and deep way of expressing love and tenderness that many who had only seen the outside of Fr.Dan would never have believed. His love and care for local handicapped people and children is a particular memory for us to treasure. There were a number of single red roses that would come on special occasions.

The evening after his death I went to his room. It was lit by only a small candle, a single red rose on his bed, and kneeling by his bed a young person in prayer and in tears. She had known him only five months. This is a memory I shall always hold. An old man had touched many lives and drawn from so many hearts, love and gentleness. A wonderful vocation.

Fr.Dan died with gratitude in his eyes after he was unable to say thank you. He was at times frightened, but glad to be surrounded by so many of his community and friends. In spite of being so alone at times he ended his life as the source and focus of great affection. His gentleness in death was heroic.

The homily at his funeral Mass was preached by fellow Londoner, Fr.John Connolly who had drawn out so much of Fr.Dan's love and joy over the years in Aberdour and Savio House.

Now Fr.Dan lies at peace in the little grave-yard in Bollington where Frank Holloway also rests.

As we recommend him to your prayer, we ask too for your prayers for this Community and his many friends who loved him and will miss him.

Yours in Don Bosco,

Fr. E. Darwell, S.D.B.  
Rector.

**Data for Necrology :**

Fr.Dan Broder died 13th February 1989, at Savio House, Bollington aged 87 years in the 65th year of Profession and the 58th year of Priesthood.