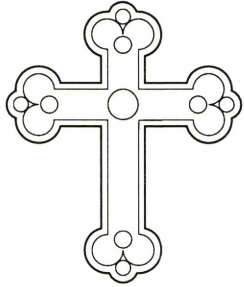


# DON BOSCO PREPARATORY SCHOOL

300 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116



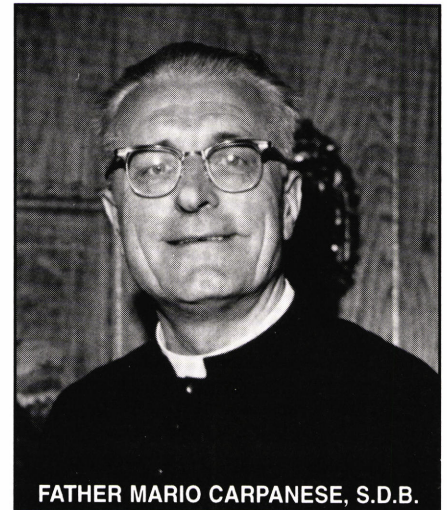
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

MAY 24, 1997

FEAST OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

Dear Confreres:

Our confrere, Rev. Father **MARIO ANTHONY CARPANESE**, died on February 27, 1997, just before the midnight hour. He was eighty-six years of age and a priest for fifty years. Father Mario spent twenty-seven of those years at Don Bosco Technical High School here in Boston. Both from 1955-1957 and again from 1968-1978, he served as Treasurer. After three years as Provincial Economer in New Rochelle, he returned to Boston as Assistant Treasurer in 1982 until ill health forced him to retire in 1990. He served also in the Salesian communities of Suffern, N.Y., West Haverstraw, N.Y. and Jacquet River, New Brunswick, Canada.



FATHER MARIO CARPANESE, S.D.B.

Father Jim Heuser wrote a fitting epitaph for Fr. Mario. It is found on his memorial card:

*He abandoned a career in accounting, hearing the words of Jesus:*

*"Go sell what you have and come follow me."*

*He entered the family of Don Bosco believing the claim of Jesus:*

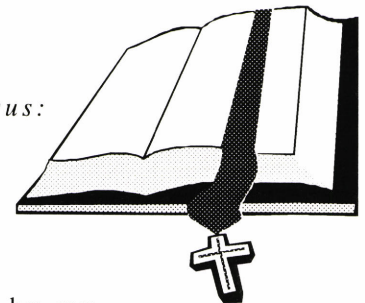
*"Whoever welcomes one such child, welcomes me."*

*He was a faithful steward of finances heeding the warning of Jesus:*

*"Do not lay up for yourselves an earthly treasure."*

*He suffered illness prayerfully trusting the promise of Jesus:*

*"He who lives in me and I in him will produce abundantly."*



May he now hear the words of Jesus: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

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## FATHER MARIO ABANDONED A CAREER

Mario Anthony Carpanese was born in Galzignano [Padua] Italy on the Feast of Dedication of St. Mary Major, [Our Lady of the Snow], August 5, 1911 to Fortunato and Teresa (Lunardi) Carpanese. He was baptized ten days later, the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, August 15, 1911. Father Mario writes in his memoirs from which I will quote liberally in the coming pages, "My childhood was spent in a quiet and peaceful countryside environment. Mom and dad were farmers who cultivated fields, vineyards and orchards on the slopes of the Euganean Hills, celebrated by the English poets, Byron, Shelley and Keats."



Mario was the firstborn of six boys. His brothers, Egidio, Guerrino, Antonio, Francesco, and Adriano all survive their eldest brother. The Carpanese's were a large extended family. There was a unique bonding of uncles, aunts and grandparents. When World War I came along the family unit was sorely tested, but love intensified, never to abate. Family unity was always a strong value for Mario who loved to visit his family and did so almost every year in summertime. At age eleven Mario finished all the schooling available to him in the neighborhood. He was about to commence studies in high school. Mario writes, "but my father who by now was in business for himself needed my help. So I got down to work in the orchards and fields managing the finances and a good number of employees and following my father to the markets as a general merchant." It was also during these years that young Mario joined The Catholic Action as well as the Balilla and the young Fascist squads. Mario's father worried about Mario. He thought he might be brainwashed. Mario tells what really was happening. "At this point I must say that Divine Providence sent me the call to Salesian life. In the ranks of the Italian Catholic Youth Movement I learned not only to keep my spiritual life in line with Christ's life through the sacraments, devotion to Mary but also in learning to love working for youth. How fortunate also at this time to discover in the library of The Catholic Youth Movement, the two volume Life of the Venerable Don Bosco by John Baptist Lemoyne. In addition to all this there was the Beatification of Don Bosco in June 1929. Being a member of the instrumental band, I attended the celebrations organized by the Salesians in the Venetian Province. These encounters with Don Bosco and the Salesians generated a lot of enthusiasm in me for Don Bosco's work for youth. At this time a very meaningful incident happened that deeply affected my ordinary life. In September, 1929, my closest friend, Albano Boaretto, suddenly left for the Cardinal Cagliero Institute in Ivrea. The following year the young Novice Albano returned home to say farewell before leaving for the missions in Rio Negro, Brazil. He spoke at length with me about the Congregation, the spirit of Don Bosco and about the grand work the Salesians were doing for youth the world over. The idealism of the missions re-lit a very warm light in my mind and heart. That evening before leaving Albano Boaretti said, think it over. 'Come to Ivrea and take my place as I leave for the missions. Become a coadjutor brother, as I intend, and perhaps some day we will meet in the Rio Negro Forests. Pray to Mary Help of Christians and Don Bosco.' He gave me the address of the Institute, the name of the director, Father Joseph Corso. I did not promise him anything. The seed of God's predilection was planted in my heart and it brought a deep change in my life style and spiritual life. By the summer of 1931, I had reached a decision encouraged by my spiritual director in the Camaldolese Monastery on Mount Rua. He was a former Salesian. He and the chaplain of the Youth club encouraged me to try at least one year in Ivrea." It would be there that Mario was to hear ever more compellingly the words of the master: "Go sell what you have and come follow me."

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## ***FATHER MARIO ENTERED THE FAMILY OF DON BOSCO***

Arguably Mario's father was distressed that his eldest son should leave him. Mario intimates that his father told him that he was ungrateful and a dreamer and that at age nineteen he should know better. Despite the prevailing reluctance and sadness, Mario left home the day after Christmas, December 26, 1931. Mario writes, "The first night at Ivrea was one of complete home-sickness and tears. But, next day I learned that I had no time for the luxury of nostalgia and sadness... I tackled my pile of books and soon became completely immersed in my studies. By Easter I had passed every subject, even Latin, Thank God!" Father Mario has written extensively of his years at Ivrea. Suffice to quote the following: "The study load was enormous and very serious business. Life at Cardinal Cagliero

Institute was strictly scheduled and full of activities and lively recreations. Spiritual life was lived in simplicity and spontaneity. The chapel was crowded before and after recreation periods.



**FATHER MARIO AT DON BOSCO TECH  
IN PATERSON, N.Y. (1959)**

The liturgy and the singing were rendered with inspiration and perfection. Father Corso's office was always sought with eagerness. He was with us and for us. He was a youthful director who understood and led us toward Salesian ideals 'fortiter et suaviter'. The summers were spent in the Alps at magnificent summer camps such as Dondena and Pracherbon." Mario says he could never forget the summer spent

with Father Peter Ricaldone, [Rector Major], climbing the snow-blanketed valleys and higher glaciers toward Monte Rosa where holy Mass was celebrated at sunrise in the invigorating crisp air.



Towards the end of the fourth year in Ivrea Mario was to be vested, accepted to the Novitiate and readied for missionary departure. During the novena in preparation for the solemn feast of Mary Help of Christians Father Corso came to the study hall and announced where each senior would soon make his novitiate. Luigi Bianchi, Mario Carpanese, Giovanni Faita, Felix Martocchi and Elio Torricelli would go to Newton, New Jersey in the U.S.A.. After a few days of retreat the vestition ceremony was held. Mario remembers the great joy of having his mother and father attend. They were in complete fascination and wonderment at the solemnity, warmth and remarkable exultation of the days' activities. Afterwards Mario took a few days respite at home with his parents and family.

He recalls his father's conversation en route. He told Mario he would never have believed that the Salesians could be such splendid people. He was very impressed by the work and spirit of Don Bosco. His father proceeded to say that originally he resented his son's decision, but could now admit he was wrong.

After fifteen days of happy family reunion and Church celebrations Mario departed Italy at the Port of Naples aboard the *Conte Di Savoia*. While uneventful, the trip was spent somewhere between homesickness and sea sickness. He recalls, "Only the grandeur of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor and the hearty welcomes of both Father Louis Trifari and Father Caesar Rinaldi brought welcome relief to both body and heart. After a



**FATHER MARIO AT WEST HAVERSTRAW  
TENDING GARDEN**

Byrne, Carpanese, Cecconi, DiCairano, Faita, Marasciulo, Martocchi, Guido Protti, Savage, Torricelli and Versaggi.

Now it was time for philosophical studies. The years went quickly. These were years replete with serious study, campus landscaping and other manual work, happy hours of recreation, sports, music, drama, summers at camp and in general intense spiritual development. After Newton, Mario was assigned to Hope Haven in Marrero, Louisiana, for two years of his tirocinium. It was here that Mario really came to believe the claim of Jesus: "Whoever welcomes one such child, welcomes me." To enhance that priestly welcome all the more, Mario returned to Newton after two years as general assistant and teacher for the last year of tirocinium. He made his perpetual profession on September 8, 1942, and then completed his theological studies. Ordination was on the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, June 29, 1946. Father Mario remembers "It was a day of intimate joy and humble gratitude to our dear Lord, St. Joseph and St. Dominic Savio."

## **FATHER MARIO WAS A FAITHFUL STEWARD OF FINANCES**

After sacred ordination, Mario began a challenging ministry whereby he served the Salesian community as administrator of finances. All this began, as Mario recalls, with the guidance of good mentors-- superiors like Fr. Ernest Giovannini, Provincial, and confreres such as Frs. John Lomagno, Mark Ferrito, Joseph Stella. Generous obedience demanded that Mario serve communities from Suffern, N.Y. to West Haverstraw to New Brunswick, Canada to Boston to Paterson, Paterson to Boston two more times with an intervening stint as Provincial Economist under the leadership of Fr. Dominic DeBlase.



**FATHER MARIO CELEBRATING HIS  
GOLDEN JUBILEE OF PRIESTHOOD  
WITH BISHOP ALLUE  
SCHOOL CELEBRATION DEC. 8, 1996**



What might be said about these many years of service? Let us listen again to what Mario himself wrote; "I have been in the thick of financial administration in our Salesian communities since 1946 and earlier. Believe it or not, administration is a real apostolate. The Salesian financial administrator is not just a bookkeeper. He is not merely an accountant. As a matter of fact, he should be well versed in bookkeeping and accounting, kept in good professional order. The Salesian financial administrator carries out his ministry in being an animator and in being fully accountable to what pertains to the stewardship of the community's material resources which are somehow sacred since they are essential to the very Mystical Body of Christ." In all this then, Fr. Mario took to heart the injunction of Jesus: "Do not lay up for yourselves an earthly treasure."

## ***FATHER MARIO SUFFERED ILLNESS PRAYERFULLY***



**FATHER MARIO WITH HIS GOOD FRIEND,  
FATHER JOSEPH STELLA ( JAN. 1, 1977)**

In the past ten years Father Mario had begun to feel his age. It was apparent that he experienced some degree of pain from arthritis and the discomforts of diabetes. Tragically on July 4, 1992, Father Mario suffered a massive cerebral stroke which paralyzed his right side and impeded his speech from which he never fully improved. His good heart though was as strong as his will. He made great strides in learning to walk and speak again. He benefited immensely from the therapy at the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital here in Boston and from his continual drive to walk and exercise. This setback was frustrating for him. He was impeded from actively working and physically helping the community. He managed however to make an invaluable contribution in his prayer, brotherly presence, also in reading, writing, listening to classical music, and viewing television. He maintained an active interest in the school and community.

Undoubtedly, it was his celebration of the daily Eucharist, his presence at community exercises of prayer which enabled him all the more to reconcile himself with both advancing age and declining health. After the death of his good friend, Brother Julius Bollati, Father Mario seemed to grow more insecure and noticeably weaker. He had in fact entered the hospital on two occasions in January. Each time he returned home weakened. But his faith was always strong. Many a time I observed him praying his rosary or tenderly touching the heart of Jesus as he passed by way of the Lord's statue near the library. On Don Bosco's feast day he celebrated Mass in the community chapel. He seemed serene and in good spirits. By noon his health had taken a sudden turn for the worse. He had a serious attack and was rushed to the hospital. From that point on he never managed to recover. He was admitted twice to the New England Medical Center and finally was discharged to the St. Joseph's Nursing Home here in Boston. It was there that he finally succumbed to a fatal heart attack on Thursday, February 27, 1997. It can be said that dying was not easy for good Father Mario. We like to think that after some few days of struggle, he was able to let go trusting the promise of Jesus: "He who lives in me and I in him will produce abundantly."

## ***BEYOND THE EPITAPH***

Father Mario Carpanese has bequeathed to us a rich legacy of good memories: brotherly concern, unassuming leadership, diligent administration, solid Christian and Salesian piety. Would that each of us could leave that behind!

This community owes so much to Father Mario Carpanese. As we suffer the loss of his great presence we pray for the eternal repose of his noble soul. We entrust our community and its immediate spiritual and temporal needs to his intercession. We ask you to join us in this humble prayer. May Don Bosco receive his soul and present him to God the most high through the gentle maternal hands of Mary the Help of Christians. Amen.

Cordially in Christ the Good Shepherd,

*Richard J. McCormick, S.D.B.*

Richard J. McCormick, S.D.B. and Confreres of Boston



**FATHER MARIO IN BOSTON (1980)**

### **DATA FOR THE NECROLOGY**

FATHER MARIO CARPANESE, BORN AUGUST 5, 1911, GALZIGNANO, ITALY,

DIED FEBRUARY 27, 1997, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS AT THE AGE OF 86.