



May 24, 1967

My Dear Confreres:

On Easter Sunday, March 26, 1967, at 2:45 P. M.

## Bro. Donald Leach

Head of Don Bosco Tech's Electronics Department, died suddenly in an auto accident while travelling to Brooklyn to visit with his mother. His death has been attributed to multiple injuries sustained in the crash.

The sudden death of our dearly beloved confrere shocked all the confreres, students and their families, and the wide circle of his intimate friends, but above all his mother and sister, and his brother who came from Vietnam for the Solemn Requiem Mass.

The one consoling note which had dominated this tragic accident was that Brother Don was privileged to live the full realization of the day's liturgy—the participation with Christ's resurrection unto eternal life and intimate union with Him Who had died for the redemption of all mankind.

A Solemn Requiem Mass was offered in the school gymnasium where more than 500 persons prayed and paid a final tribute. The body was solemnly transported from Paterson to Goshen, N. Y. As a final tribute to Brother Don over fifty cars formed the funeral cortege to Goshen, N. Y., where Brother Don was buried in the Salesian Cemetery on the grounds of the Sacred Heart Juniorate.

The eulogy by Father Albert Sofia, S. D. B., and the summary of Brother Don's life eloquently paid tribute to an extraordinary, capable, and deeply lamented confrere who lived and admired the spirit of St. John Bosco.

Please pray for Brother Donald Leach's happy repose and for the furtherance of God's blessings on Don Bosco Technical High School.

FATHER CHESTER WISNEWSKI, *Director*

*Eulogy delivered by  
REV. AL SOFIA, S. D. B.  
on the occasion of the funeral of  
BROTHER DONALD LEACH*

*You shall be holy unto me, because I the Lord am holy and  
have separated you from other people that you should be mine.*

LEVITICUS XX 26

Rev. Father Provincial, members of the clergy, members of the Salesian family, members of Brother Leach's family, students of Don Bosco Tech, friends.

Bear with me. I know that each heart is filled with his own memories—his own recollections—his own emotions. There are those who could speak eloquently and long of these. But they are personal and I will not intrude nor will I disturb your meditation of them. My task this morning is to say farewell officially as a minister of God, in the name of Holy Mother The Church to a chosen creature of God, Brother Donald Leach. No we will not grieve as those who have no faith, we shall instead think that God has let us have Brother Donald for the last 37 years on loan — yes on loan, with the understanding that we should profit from his life, from his living with us.

On a beautiful September morning 14 years ago a young man stood before the Altar of God. In solemn tones, he swore an oath calling God to witness that he would serve God as a teaching Brother of the Society of St. John Bosco. And on that morning God answered with a correspnding oath: YOU SHALL BE HOLY UNTO ME, BECAUSE I THE LORD AM HOLY AND HAVE SEPARATED YOU FROM OTHER PEOPLE THAT YOU SHOULD BE MINE.

That morning a contract was signed. Donald gave himself to God's service and God promised him that in His eyes he was to be a special person—a HOLY person—a religious—holy because of his dedication, holy because God wanted it so.

What greater honor could he seek? He was now a prisoner of God. The highest dignity to which mortal man can aspire—to be officially holy and pleasing to the Lord. He was a chosen soul: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." So with God's blessing Brother Donald started his life as a religious brother—a Salesian Coadjutor.

The joys of a Brother are few and mostly spiritual. His sorrows, many and bitter. We must learn from both his sorrow and his joy. I know that as in the life of all those who want to love God — there was a period of purification. This was a time when he was misunderstood, a time when he felt a loneliness like the loneliness of Christ in Gethsemane . . . When a man's intentions are questioned, when his lawful ambitions are considered pride, when a man's work is disregarded and only his faults are emphasized. Then indeed a man really grows in spirit if his answer to all this is not despair but a more complete dedication, a search for more ways to help those around him. If a man contributes in sorrow, then he wins both the heart of men and of God. This I know that Donald did . . . his was no idle promise to serve whether in sorrow or in joy.

Consolations there are but only to those who can understand them—they are the consolation to offer the daily sacrifice of duty—to instruct the

ignorant, to nourish the hungry mind with the bread of truth, to rescue the prodigal, to comfort the sorrowful. All these things he did, for that was his promise and his life.

#### THE BEST PORTION OF A GOOD MAN'S LIFE ARE HIS LITTLE NAMELESS UNREMEMBERED ACTS OF KINDNESS AND LOVE.

These I will not recall. They are already among the treasured memories of all of us. But there are the larger deeds that made this man stand head and shoulders above his fellows. The traits of character that have inspired those who knew him. These will be an example to those who will more closely follow his vocation in life—our good coadjutor brothers. There was in his life that sense of dedication to work. There was that anxiety to help the image of future coadjutor. In this Brother Don was a real path-finder, a pioneer. From 1953-1959 he taught commercial art Don Bosco Tech. but he felt he should do more. He used his persuasive powers to be allowed to attend the R.C.A. institute. He graduated with honors. He immediately put his talents to work at Don Bos Tech in Boston as a teacher of electronics during the year 1962-1963. Back to Manhattan College for more schooling to get his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering. At same time he was a deeply appreciated Lab instructor at the college and a candidate for the master's degree at the University of New York.

By his life, his studies, his extraordinary accomplishments as a Salesian coadjutor, he was saying—we can't be satisfied with being mediocre. We can't be really dedicated to God without being dedicated to God's work especially in teaching the young.

When Brother Don came to Don Bosco Tech this past September, he was a happy man — he could now take over the math department as chairman, he could teach the seniors electronics — he was happy I say because now he could contribute more than ever before. He was in his humble way declaring his appreciation for learning. His ability to teach, his enthusiasm were silent and potent arguments for excellence as well as for dedication.

But learning and teaching were not enough—he wanted to contribute still more to making life a little easier for those around him. He knew that a full person branches out to all fields in which God gives him talent. . . . So he helped with music—band and the organ were not foreign to him. He found joy and had the ability to be a good basketball official, so the goal once set, he became a registered and approved official. He knew and use his talents to the full for in this is the real loving of God manifested—in making oneself available for the good of your fellow man.

Thus also when the opportunity offered just a few weeks ago he volunteered to organize and lead a group from the Tech to Atlantic City for the N.C.E.A. This would have been a new chance to show that education was important. He wanted his confrere to believe it and he was going to be helpful in doing just that.

But suddenly on a clear day very much like the day 14 years ago in September the call came from the Lord. Easter Sunday at 2:45 p.m. Brother Donald Leach was told: "Well done, good and faithful servant, come into the joy of your Lord."

In number of years, Brother Donald's life was short. In the number of accomplishments, he filled the life of many ordinary men. In the strength

of his dedication, which is the way the Lord counts the hours, Brother lived a long long life.

Last Sunday, Brother Don was given a new assignment—a new obedience. It was sudden—true, but for a religious—it was not unexpected. He was used to obeying even when obeying was hard. His religious answer could only have been: "Speak Lord, your servant heareth. What will you have me do?"

For those left behind Faith makes us understand: Life is but a fleeting shadow. The day of death for a Christian is a day of joy. The church calls it a birthday—a new beginning. The separation that the Lord promised Donald from others now became complete. Now he belongs only to God. This is what every religious pledges, what he strives for: To live so as to die in God's service and God's love.

Farewell dear friend, fellow worker in the field of the Lord—we will never hear your voice or clasp your hand in friendship. But you are not dead, you are only asleep in the Lord. You have exchanged mortality for immortality, sorrow for eternal joy, happiness for pain—and soon we will meet face to face in the blessed Vision of Peace and Eternity.

We will pray for your soul. You intercede for us and especially for the coadjutor brothers.

May eternal light shine upon you and may you rest in Peace. Amen.

#### BROTHER DONALD LEACH

#### A SALESIAN COADJUTOR OF ST. JOHN BOSCO

Born: June 14, 1930, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Aspirantate: Don Bosco Tech, 1951, Paterson, N. J.

Noviciate: 1952-1953, Newton, N. J.

Religious Profession: First Profession, 1953; Perpetual Profession, 1959

Teacher of Commercial Art at Don Bosco Tech, 1959-1959

R.C.A. Institute (New York City) 1959-1962 — Honor Graduate 1962

Teacher in Electronics, Don Bosco Tech (Boston) 1962-1963

Electronics Engineering at Manhattan College 1963-1966

BE (EE) Degree 1966

Lab Instructor at Manhattan College and Master Degree Candidate at New York University 1966

Chairman of Mathematics Department at Don Bosco Tech

Math Teacher of Juniors and Seniors

Electronics Teacher of Seniors 1966-1967

Member of the Tri-County Basketball Officials League

Sudden Call to Eternity Easter Sunday, March 26, 1967, 2:45 P. M.

*Christian Hope consoles us in the thought that Christ's Resurrection is being shared by Brother Don. Please pray for the eternal repose of his soul.*

#### DATI PER IL NECROLOGIO

COAD. DONALD LEACH, nato a Brooklyn, N. Y., Stati Uniti

14 Giugno 1930, morto a Paterson, N. J., Stati Uniti

il 26 Aprile 1967 a 37 anni di età e 14 di Professione