

Don Bosco

To his Filipino Boys
BY REV. OSCAR DELTOUR, C.I.C.M.

My dear Boys;

"Don Bosco, why are you crying?" some of my boys asked me in the evening of the feast of our Lady, help of Christians. Standing on the playground of our Oratory at Turin, I was gazing at the church of Mary, help of Christians, so beautifully illumined by hundreds of lights. In a weak and feeble voice, worn out with years of constant use, I replied: "If you only knew, if I could only reveal to you how much Mary has done for us. Mary has always been our constant help, our loving Mother. We owe everything to her. You are all her boys.

Oh yes, all my boys are Mary's boys; she confided them to me, and it is through her that I am able to help them spiritually and materially. In my constant solicitude to provide for their needs, I was sometimes sorely tried, but at the last moment, it was always Mary who came to my rescue. She sometimes did it in such an extraordinary way, that people used to call me "the great wonder-worker" of their day.

In 1879 I went to France to seek help for my boys. At first I met one disappointment after the other. In fifteen days, I did not succeed in procuring anything for my work; the peo-

ple of France seemed to close their heart to my pleadings; they did not understand the great need of hundreds and hundreds of boys who depended on me for everything. Thinking that I had gone to the wrong place, I decided to go back to Turin. On the very evening that I wanted to leave, an extraordinary event took place. At about eight o'clock a poor lady asked to see me. With her was her young son, twelve years of age, whose feet were badly crippled and diseased; he could hardly walk.

"Don Bosco, help my son!" the mother begged.

"Have faith in Mary," I said in my usual way, "I will give you the blessing of Mary, our Mother."

No sooner had my hand been lifted over the young boy's head, when the boy jumped up perfectly cured. Overcome by joy, he forgot even to thank our Blessed Mother for this great favor and running out into the street, he exclaimed: "I am cured! I am cured!" His mother, besides herself, could not find words adequate enough to express the gratitude of her heart; and picking up her son's crutches, she followed her son, giving vent to her exultation by loud shouts.

In spite of the late hour, soon crowds gathered around the house where I had my abode. To all who approached me I repeated the same

words: "Have confidence in Mary," and on all I had Mary shower her graces and blessings. She worked miracle after miracle and found for my boys the bread and the clothes they needed.

These and so many other extraordinary interventions of Mary impressed my boys very much. They knew that they were Mary's boys and in return for her maternal solicitude they nourished for her such a tender devotion that all who came in contact with them felt edified and inspired. With filial pride and love they devoutly wore their scapular and daily prayed the rosary, the favorite prayer of Mary's loving children.

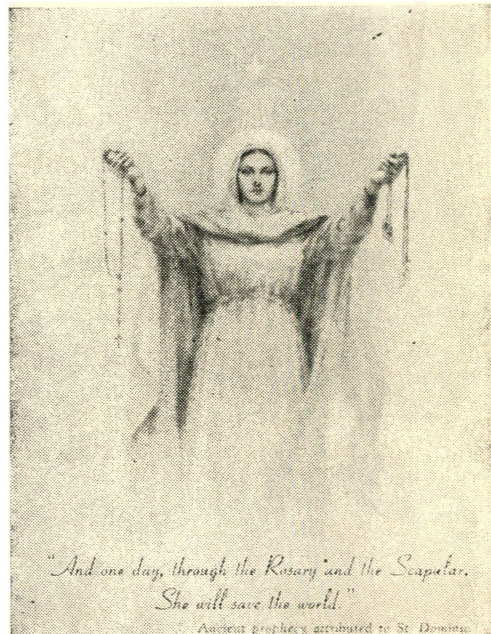
My dear Filipino Boys, you too, you are Mary's Boys. All that I do for you, it is through Mary that I am able to do it. When you were received in my Association, you were consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I never cease to recommend you to her and to beg her always to keep you in her Immaculate Heart.

The fourth resolution you have taken when you applied to be accepted as my Boys, was always to wear your scapular medal and your rosary. Boys, earnestly endeavor to be faithful to your resolutions. During this beautiful month of May, filially dedicated to the best of Mothers, I wish to remind you in a special way of your rosary and of your scapular medal.

Oh Boys, if you but knew how pleasing the rosary is to Mary and how many favors are secured through the devout recitation of this most beautiful prayer. Pope Pius IX said

that the rosary is the most efficacious prayer to increase in our hearts a faithful and true devotion to the Blessed Virgin. How I wish that all my Boys could alywas take the rosary along with them as a protection against the attacks of the devil and to pray it often, especially at night with all the members of the family.

The scapular or scapular medal comes next to the rosary as a powerful means to express our filial affection towards Mary. We owe the scapular to the direct intervention of our Blessed Mother. It was revealed to Saint Simon Stock, Superior General of the Carmelites of the West, in a vision with which the Blessed Virgin favored him on the "6th. of July, 1251. Holding the scapular in her hand, she said: "Receive, my beloved Son, this scapular; it is a special sign of my favor, which I have obtained



for you and for your children of Mount Carmel. He who dies clothed with this habit, shall be preserved from eternal fire."

A Papal decree of December 16, 1910, permits to substitute the cloth scapular with the scapular-medal. However, it should be remembered, that in order to gain the many indulgences attached to the scapular-medal as a substitute for the scapular, the cloth scapular should first be imposed by a duly authorized priest. In case this has not yet been done to you, you should approach your parish priest or director of school and ask him to have the cloth-scapular imposed upon you. Some of you have already lost their scapular-medal; they seem not to realize that they have lost a precious treasure; they should try to secure a new one

as soon as possible. The scapular-medal has on one side the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and on the other side that of the Blessed Virgin. This medal may be worn on a neck-chain (which is more advisable), on the rosary, in a purse or sewed in the clothing.

My dear Boys, always consider and lovingly keep upon you your rosary and scapular-medal as precious remembrances of your Blessed Mother to whom, after Jesus, you owe everything.

God bless you all!
Affectionately yours,

Jes. Gio. Bosco —

PROSPECTIVE "DON BOSCO BOYS."

PHOTO VERANNEMAN

