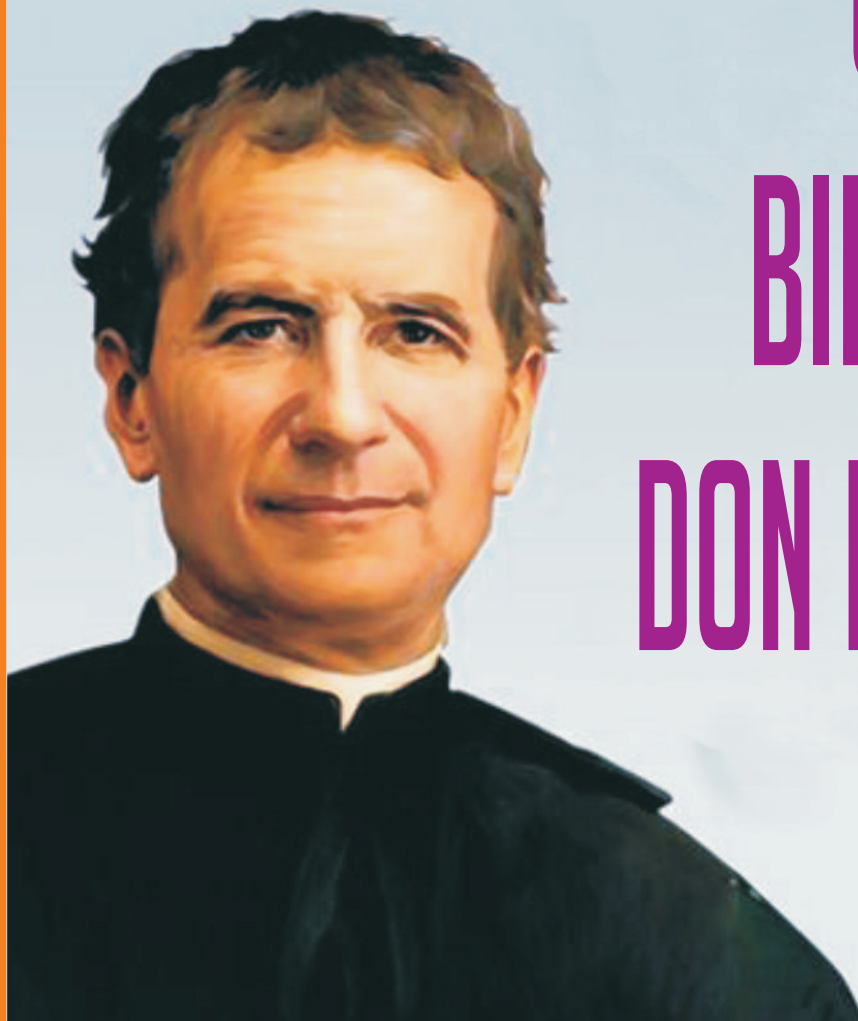




# 1815 *to* 2015

# BICENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF DON BOSCO

Page 1



I Salute Thee Salesian College  
Sonada

*Francis Palakeel*

Once a Salesian is always a Salesian; that's what I have realized after life at the Salesian College.

page 2



Message to Alumni

*Dr. Fr. Mathew Pulingathil  
SDB*

It is a great pleasure for me to write these lines of good wishes as we publish our first E Newsletter of the alumni. Salesian College has a history of over 75 years...

page 3



A ? FOR YOU

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page 3



STUDENT AWARDED GOLD MEDAL IN  
UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

*Rochelle Ann Lepcha*

It was a proud moment for Salesian College when Kuljeet Kaur was awarded a Gold medal in B. Com Management, by the University Of North Bengal on 26 th of February, 2015.

page 4

Student awarded Gold Medal in  
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page 4

Storm Hits Salesian College  
Siliguri

*- Rochelle Ann Lepcha*



page 4



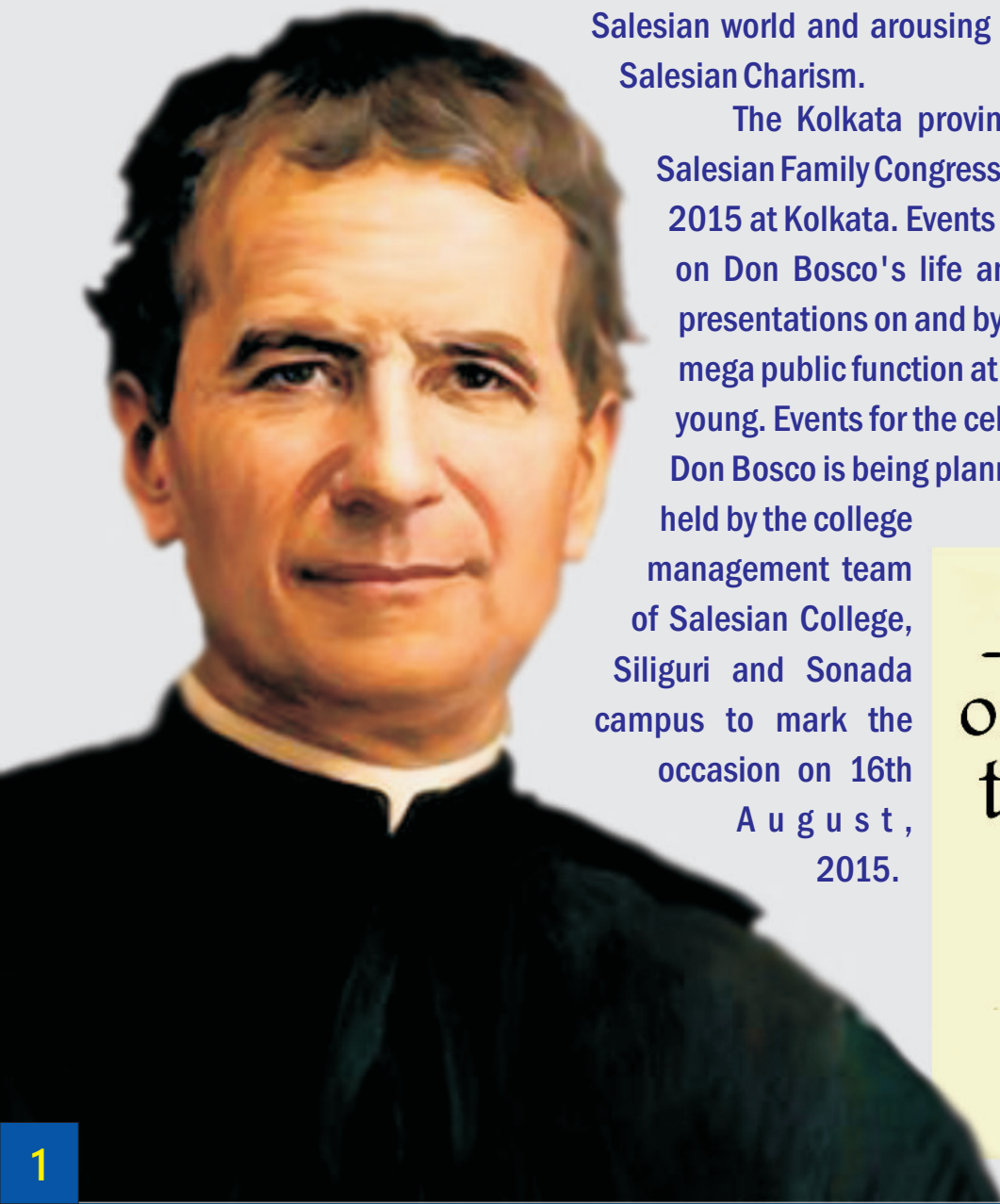
# BICENTENARY OF THE BIRTH OF DON BOSCO

**1815**  
*to*  
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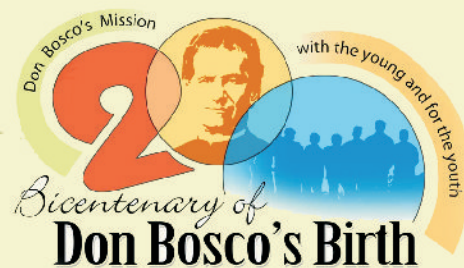
2015 marks the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth, the patron saint of Young people. The birth of Saint John Bosco on 16th August 1815 deserves a celebration. Don Bosco whose life and ministry as a pastor and a brilliant educator made an impact not only on the lives of the marginalised youth and poor people of his time, but continues to inspire and benefit young people and inspire Youth workers and educators over the years.

The theme of the bicentenary is "Returning to Don Bosco" and emphasises on the "rebirth" of Don Bosco's spirituality in every individual Salesian. The Salesian family over the last three years began a spiritual preparation with the sacred relics of the pilgrim Don Bosco and visiting the Salesian world and arousing a greater commitment to the Salesian Charism.

The Kolkata province has planned a three day Salesian Family Congress from 25th to 27th September, 2015 at Kolkata. Events planned include an exhibition on Don Bosco's life and works, panel discussions, presentations on and by the Salesian Family groups, a mega public function at the city Indoor stadium for the young. Events for the celebration of the bicentenary of Don Bosco is being planned and discussions are being held by the college management team of Salesian College, Siliguri and Sonada campus to mark the occasion on 16th August, 2015.



*The Saint*  
of the Young  
turns **200**





## I Salute Thee Salesian College Sonada

*Francis Palakeel*



Once a Salesian is always a Salesian; that's what I have realized after life at the Salesian College. Though I neither live in a Salesian House nor am I bound by the vows now, I proudly consider myself a Salesian than an 'ex Salesian'. Right from Bandel through Siliguri to Salesian College Sonada, it was a life's learning and Don Bosco influenced me much in my life.

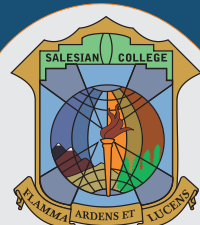
I currently work as Personnel Administration Officer/Head of Asia and the Pacific Unit with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in Budapest, Hungary. I worked previously as HR Officer for the country operation in Somalia (2012 - 2014), HR Associate in Sudan and later South Sudan (2010-2012), Personnel Admin Associate in Budapest, Hungary (2008-2010) and Srn Admin/HR Associate in New Delhi, India (1995-2008). As an International Civil Servant, I have an undertaking to work anywhere in the world as need be and as a trained emergency response team member I remain prepared to travel in 72 hours to any emergency situations in the world if need be. We work in more than 124 countries, mostly in conflict zones and our mandate is to provide international protection to refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people around the world. Life is challenging but most beautiful and rewarding.

I always acknowledge that what made me stand out for a job with the United Nations Organization, what makes me perform my duties and responsibilities with a special touch and what makes me climb up the ladder is what I have acquired during my formation years at the Salesians. It taught me to stand on my own and uphold my believes, values, convictions and disseminate the same to the world. Here I learnt about the depth of life, it's Giver, its wonders, surprises, short comings, providence, ups and downs etc. I also learnt here that what is more important in life is to be genuinely happy.

I shared the Salesian community spirit wherever I worked. Where 24 colleagues from 18 countries lived together in tents and containers in a compound in South Sudan, I organized regular get-togethers, games, group activities, sing-songs, movie-nights, debates with topics related to life skills ethics sessions outside my work profile after office hours and on weekends. Some called the venue 'Palakeel Square' but for me it was an extension of a Youth Centre which I used to administer while in Sonada. When one of our colleagues was killed during an attack in South Sudan and other colleagues were highly traumatized following the attack on our UN Compound in Mogadishu, or when colleagues underwent extreme level of stress and strain due to official or personal problems, I was often able to take control of the situations and counsel them to get over it through positive thinking and energy. I acquired these skills during the formative years in Sonada. If I was often able to entertain colleagues, including very senior officers, for example by making them sing and dance during training sessions and other occasions, it was a translation of what I learnt at the Salesians.

The Salesian College in Sonada remains the cradle of maturity in the formation of Salesians (and those who leave the Salesians after this period of studies, like me). The right blend of academics, Salesian priests, companions, activities, programs, music, sports, opportunities etc., fine-tunes any honest human being here. I acquired several role-models during this journey and I continue to extort energy from them. Even the problems and/or difficult moments and perceived contradictions and even conflicts have all become learning for life. The atmosphere, the grand building, the silence that surrounds the area, the environment, the locality, the weather, all those hard working local people living in the area have all contributed to personality building. Above all, the right atmosphere for reflection and retrospection makes one discover self at some point during the stay.

I wish to congratulate Fr Mathew Pulingathil and his team for this opportunity to verbalize my fond memories of Sonada and this way to get in touch with several others. I wish my Alma Mater, the great Salesian College Sonada every success in its future endeavors.



## MESSAGE TO THE ALUMNI OF SALESIAN COLLEGE

*Dr. Fr. Mathew Pulingathil SDB, Rector, Salesian College*

Dear Friends (Alumni of Salesian College),

It is a great pleasure for me to write these lines of good wishes as we publish our first E Newsletter of the alumni. Salesian College has a history of over 75 years as we had concluded the platinum jubilee of the college recently. We are making every effort to reach all the alumni of the college who are still among us in various parts of our small world. Several alumni have helped us to get in touch with others, whose whereabouts were unknown to us. We are grateful to them and we again request your kind co-operation in tracking down other friends, who have not yet been reached by us.

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.” Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. Many of you have done that in life and Salesian College is proud of you. God bless you.

With prayerful and affectionate wishes,



## A ? FOR YOU

*Fr. Peter Lourdes, SDB.*

I am an alumnus of Salesian College. There was a school attached to it once. I joined Class IX in 1941. World War II was raging.

In my Class VIII final exams in Bandel I scored 100% in Math and 0% in Latin. More disaster followed. I sat for the Matriculation (Class X) Exams from the University of Calcutta and scored first division marks in Latin and 0% in Math. My Titanic sank in freezing waters. How did that happen? Which iceberg did we hit?

In Classes IX and X we had no Math teacher. One of the Seminarists who had joined us after passing his Senior Cambridge exams was made to teach us math. He tried his best. But from then on math became one big, booming confusion for me.

A few years later I reappeared for the Matriculation studying by myself and passing in the first division. I studied by myself for the IA (Intermediate Arts) and BA subsequently and came out with a first division and a distinction. (The College allowed me to study by myself).

I was poor in school work when taught by teachers. I did much better when left alone, not only in India but also, and especially, during studies in Europe and the USA.

You might call me “unteachable.” I do not do well when taught. I do better when left to seek information on my own and create knowledge. In a classroom situation where I am expected to learn how to be taught, I blank out. If I am expected to learn how to learn, I get a kick.

Am I suggesting you get rid of teachers? Not me. Attend your classes and keep your notes handy.

What I'd like to suggest is there may be students in Salesian College today who are “unteachable” like me. What can Salesian College do so that they can learn how to learn and keep educating themselves long after their schooling stops?



## The Launching Pad at the Hill Top

*Jince Joseph : 2003-2006 Batch (BA English)*

At the valley of Himalayas, at the motherly clutches of Mother Mary, at the feet of Don Bosco, at the protection of Salesians, and at the presence of vibrant companions, one feels more at home than at home never missing anyone in the great lap of Salesian College Sonada. My experience was not any different than this! I had all the needed exposures at SCS to give wings to my life. So to say SCS was the launching pad at the hill top in my life.

The tight schedule which commenced at 5.30 am with yoga, and the prayer, morning jobs, breakfast, which followed and the five minutes gap to breathe and rush for the first hour session; all these and others made me tougher, stronger, wiser, smarter and a better human being. While looking back, with cent percent certainly I would like to state that I would not have achieved what I have achieved today without the SCS experience. SCS life had that formative effect and impact on me.

Fathers and lecturers who triggered and ignited the fire of wisdom in me burn bright and glossy even today. This inner spirit prompted me to pursue my higher studies. Thus with the grace of the Almighty I could successfully complete MBA (HR and Finance), MSC Psychology and MA English, and currently preparing for PhD in ELT. All these had their roots at SCS.

During my professional life, I could take up various roles like, Language and IELTS Trainer, Online English Tutor, Content Developer, Corporate Life Skills and Team Building Trainer, Training Consultant to more than 20 schools and colleges across India, University English Lecturer, Director of Training Organization, and Manager Training and so on. I could take up all these responsibilities and could do well because of the solid foundation that I had received at SCS. I would like to say that SCS shaped and formed my life. I am ever grateful to SCS and the Salesian Congregation at large for the wonderful service they do for the youth of this country.

Long Live SCS! Long Live Don Bosco!

## Student awarded Gold Medal in University Examinations:

- Rochelle Ann Lepcha



It was a proud moment for Salesian College when Kuljeet Kaur was awarded a Gold medal in B. Com Management, by the University Of North Bengal on 26th of February, 2015. Kuljeet who graduated from Salesian College, Siliguri Campus in the year 2013 was an active and diligent student. Joint treasurer of the Students Council, Kuljeet attributes her success in the University examinations to her parents and the teachers at Salesian.

“I was always an introvert but it was after joining Salesian that I started to open up and gain confidence. Everyone in Salesian was extremely encouraging and supportive”, says Kuljeet. She goes

on further to say that Salesian has contributed in a number of ways; it has instilled in her leadership qualities, confidence and given her exposure to new people and ideas.

Always a dedicated student Kuljeet advises students appearing for the University examinations that paying attention in class, understanding the subject and preparing one's own notes helps one score well rather than rote learning from the various guide books. She says, “The teachers are always willing to help us anytime and to clear any doubts that we might have.”

Presently working in Don Bosco School, Siliguri, Kuljeet is pursuing her Masters from IGNOU and plans to appear for the NET examinations and immerse herself in research work. She also shows a keen interest in charity work and hopes to join a NGO and “do something for the society” in the near future. We wish her the best for her future endeavors.

## STORM HITS SALESIAN COLLEGE, SILIGURI - Rochelle Ann Lepcha

On 4th of April, 2015, Siliguri and several parts of North Bengal witnessed heavy rainfall accompanied by hail and thunder. It was reported that two people died, several were injured, many cars were damaged and more than a hundred trees were uprooted in Siliguri and the nearby areas. The storm which lasted for over twenty minutes also affected Salesian College, Siliguri Campus.

Fortunately, no one at Salesian College was injured in the storm, however, more than eight trees in the college premises were uprooted, disrupting telephone lines and damaging college property.

The concrete marble benches and the kiosks near the basketball court were damaged by the uprooted trees. The boundary wall, the residence area and the stadium side classrooms too suffered damages in the wake of the storm.

The telephone lines which were snapped during the storm were restored within the next two days. Repair and restoration of the affected property is in progress.

The killer quake that claimed thousands in Nepal, has spared the campus and Siliguri except for the shock waves that still linger.

