

# Saint John Bosco

1815 - 1888

PARADISE

Saint John Bosco, from when he was a young student in the seminary in Chieri, made this pact with his friend and fellow disciple Comollo: whoever of the two should die first would come the following night to inform the other of his fate, on the condition that God would allow him. "I ignored all of the consequences of such a promise, many years later Don Bosco would write, and I admit that it was a great folly; hence I strongly advise others to refrain from doing it. But we at the time did not find anything reprehensible about this promise and we were very much resolved to keep it. We renewed it several times, in particular during the last illness of Comollo. The last words of Comollo and his expression assured me of the fulfillment of our pact.

In the seminary of Chieri, the night from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1839, that followed the burial day of Luigi Comollo, I - recounts John - was reposing with twenty alumni of course of Theology... I was in bed but not sleeping. On the strike of midnight, a cavernous, somber sound was heard at the end of the corridor, a noise which became more notable, more somber, and more acute in relation to it drawing nearer. It seemed like that of a large buggy pulled by many horses, or of a railroad train, almost like the shot of a cannon... The seminarians of that dormitory woke up, but no one

speaks. I was petrified from fear. The sound comes closer, and always more frightful; and near the dormitory a door opens violently all by itself. The roar continues more vehemently without being able to see a thing, except for a faint light, but of varied color, that seemed to be the regulator of that sound. At a certain moment, it became suddenly silent: that light beamed more brightly, the voice of Comollo is distinctly heard again (but more faintly than when he was alive) which, for three consecutive times, says: Bosco! Bosco! Bosco! I am saved!

In that moment the dormitory became more luminous, the noise which had ceased made itself heard again even more violently, almost a thunder that would collapse a house, but it ceased immediately, and every light disappeared. The companions, jumped out of bed, had gone to flee without knowing where... All of them heard the noise. Many heard the voice, without understanding the meaning... I had suffered much and my fright was so intense that in that instant I would have preferred to die. It was the first time, in my memory, that I was afraid. From there began an illness that brought me to the edge of the tomb, and left me in such poor health that I was not able to restore my health until many years later."

