 Reading time: 3 min.

Dialogue between past, present and future: temporary exhibition for the 200th anniversary of Don Bosco's dream. Don Bosco House Museum

To speak of Don Bosco's life without mentioning the world of dreams is to suppress an important aspect of his identity. The saint's life was marked by the supernatural, by visions and dreams that God sent him from childhood, when between the ages of nine and ten John Bosco had his first dream, which marked him deeply and accompanied him throughout his life.

The dream was considered prophetic because it shed light on his life project, both in his choice of the clerical state and in his total dedication to poor and abandoned youth. Indeed, in a certain sense it marked his path, since it began in the meadows of the Becchi, his home town, came to fruition in Turin when he settled in the Valdocco district and was commemorated in the church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, at the Castro Pretorio in Rome, a year before his death. At the same time, from 1875, with the Salesian missions, he embraced several continents of the world, until today, where the Salesian presence works to keep the founder's dream alive.

Two centuries later, aware that Don Bosco's dream is still alive, the museum at the mother house in Valdocco, Turin, the *Museo Casa Don Bosco*, opened a temporary exhibition on 22 May that will remain open until 22 September 2024.

The exhibition, the result of previous research, is divided into several sections that explore the narrative, history and iconography of the dream in the arts and the resonance of the dream today, two hundred years later.

The selection of historical and artistic items on different media helps one discover different moments in Salesian history that recall this crucial event in the life of the saint. Together with the historical photographs, objects from the period between the beatification (1929) and canonisation (1934), when the representation of the Dream in the arts began: illustrations in books, postcards, commemorative coins, oil and paper paintings, etc.

The exhibition presents an important selection of original prints. Corrado Mezzana (1890-1952), Guido Grilli (1905-1967), Cosimo [Nino] Musio (1933-2017) and Alarico

Gattia (1927-2022) are just some of the artists. Comics by Grilli, Musio and Gattia were commissioned by the *Libreria della Dottrina Cristiana* (1941), founded by Don Bosco's fourth successor, Fr Peter Ricaldone (1870-1951). These works, which have been distributed in various publications, media, formats and languages throughout the world, are preserved by the current publishing house Elledici.

The exhibition is completed by seventeen photographs which won the international photography competition held since January 2024 and are promoted by the museum house with the aim of highlighting the artistic and creative talent of the entire Salesian world. The photos are described by their creators in the original language and come from Italy, Mexico, Panama, Slovakia, Spain and Venezuela.

These images involve the past, present and future and make us reflect on how, two centuries later, Don Bosco's Dream has become a reality in Salesian presences around the world.

In addition, the Youth Ministry Sector of the Salesian Congregation is promoting the celebration of the Salesian Youth Synod around the world and, on the occasion of the bicentenary of the dream, has collected more than 200 dreams of young people from all over the world in a publication called *Hidden Diamonds*, some of which are displayed in the exhibition.

Photo: Guido Grilli (1905-1967), Giovannino's Dream, 16.6 x 23 cm, 1952, film D15, picture no. 4. Historical Archive Editrice Elledici.

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