

Bosco Boys Mission Painting

Donated by Signage Plus EA Ltd. Art by Duncan 2021

Introduction

This painting portrays the work carried out by Bosco Boys in the mission to transform the children rescued from the streets and slums. The painting is done by hand to bring about the true and original idea of what happens. Even the crucifix is hand-carved. This represents the original idea that Don Bosco began in his work crafting everything inspired by Jesus Christ through Mary Help of Christians. The images of people are done in the form of cartoons to bring the idea that each one can identify himself or herself in this system. The image of Don Bosco is represented by a person wearing black cassock. This is to show that it is the work of Don Bosco. At the same time in place of Don Bosco is everyone who helps to bring about the transformation of the children; a Salesian, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, sponsor, donor and well-wisher. Any contribution that you make to Bosco Boys helps in the transformation process.

Jesus Christ at the center

It all begins with Christ the source of the Salesian charism, from whom we get all our inspiration, strength and providence. From Jesus emanates power that penetrates every corner bringing about transformation. In the whole painting Jesus is not painted but carved. This symbolizes the thirst of Jesus to save every child from their situation, the spirit he gave to Don Bosco. Jesus is restless to see that children are saved. He inspired Don Bosco at the age of 9 to go for the lost.

Jesus rescues, rehabilitates and reintegrates boys rescued from the streets giving them a successful life, giving them a future and ultimately eternal life.

Background

The background of this painting can be divided into four parts each complementing the other. From left to right; left is a harsh side of life and right is a brighter side. Left is hopelessness, right is hopefulness. The hopelessness is turned to hopefulness through Christ. Whatever we see on the left is reflected on the right side after transformation.

a) Top left

At the top left we have a desert, dry land without water, vegetation, without life. It is a lonely place with nothing much to hope for. This represents the hopelessness of the children and young people longing and looking for somebody who can give them life, somebody who can inspire them, somebody to lean on. They have nothing or very little to make it in life, joblessness, no education, no basic needs of food, shelter and clothing, no family, no opportunities, no life, illiteracy, hopeless children/young people; unless somebody goes to them to take them from there. The child is lonely. They hardly know anything else ahead in their lives. This is where Don Bosco finds these children. This is where Don Bosco approaches those hopeless cases, children in need of help. He befriends the lonely neglected child. He has nothing much in his hands to give in terms of handouts but he can convince this boy to move from where he is and promise him that there is hope for the future. He promises bread, work

and heaven. The boy can get education, he can go to church, he can have sports, he can be reconnected to his family.

b) Right side top

Through Jesus the fruitless land becomes fruitful, the waste desert becomes a fruitful land with vegetation, river and habitation. There are no houses in the desert apart from caves but on the right-hand side top we are able to have a village with a church, a home, a school and a playground. Here we are able to have fruit trees, a sign of life and hope rejuvenated. The promise by Don Bosco to the young people for hope gets fulfilled whereby the person can access the church, home, school and playground which are the four elements of our education system. Here we see opportunities and better life. There is peace and serenity. There is life. This is the land available for the young people to dwell in.

c) Bottom left

The background of this quarter of a painting symbolizes the street as well as slum dwellings. We see houses that are made of dirty material that looks like iron sheets and maybe some cartons or nylon papers. We see dry trees and smoke all over. We see a dirty trench of water right in front of the houses and a lot of rubbish dumped here and there. This is a typical environment of streets and slums where our children are rescued from. A Man lying down not even aware of himself where he is. This is a person who is completely drunk and taken up by drugs. He can sleep anywhere, he can sit anywhere no matter how that it might be. He is dirty, this might be a parent of some of the children in the Streets. He is from a street family who doesn't know what to eat, how to go about life. A boy carrying a sack on his left hand holding a bottle on the right, if you notice the liquid doesn't follow the normal direction of water which is typical for glue. The bag is all his possessions. If he finds on the way scrap metals he puts in, if he finds anything edible he carries away. He needs glue to make him get courage to beg and even collect scrap metals from rubbish. Wherever the day ends he sleeps there so the bag becomes his pillow and mattress. He is on a mission to make the day count whatever he finds on the way and thinks it useful he collects. No education, no thought of schooling, nowhere to call a home just roaming on the streets. Life gets very hard and some days he doesn't get food and he have to depend on the drugs to make him think that he is not hungry. He needs drugs to be able to persevere with the cold and the harshness of the street. This is the environment we find the children we rescue.

- Somewhere behind the slums Don Bosco reaches out to some children at their dwellings (base) and tries to convince them to join him. These are the hideouts where they can do all sorts of things. He doesn't force any of them, he doesn't even make them stop what they're doing but talks with them in their situation. That's why we see some of them are smoking, sniffing glue and other kinds of things that are typical in street life. This is our rescue process where we reach out to children in their situation and offer them options and encourage them to transform and change their ways of Life, get hope and look at the future in a better way. We promise the children a better life, a place they can call home, a school where they can be accepted and receive education. We teach them about God forming them spiritually and offer them a playground where they can interact freely and constructively.

d) Bottom right quarter

In this quarter in the background we see a very well-developed city, nice buildings and a nice environment. The smoky Streets and slums have now become a well-ordered clean City full of opportunities for job, good life achievements, success and fulfillment. Houses that were made of paper have now turned to skyscrapers, industries, offices, universities and schools all that you can think of in terms of development. In those buildings the people doing what they have to do are happy and content, different from the slums and the streets which are unlivable places. Don Bosco is celebrating with some of the young people who are transformed. They have excelled in life; a representation of a nurse, an engineer, a graduate and a priest; sample of the product of transformation that has taken place. These success stories of those who have gone through this process rescued from the streets and slums, rehabilitated, educated and integrated with their families. They have taken the opportunities to study, learn and get transformed, now they are enriching the society. Bosco Boys has transformed the lives of many who are now in the society working as good citizens. Many of them are self-reliant and have excelled in life.

e) Middle

In the middle we have Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus is at the center of our transformation. Surrounding the cross, we have encircled images portraying our system of education - preventive system.

- We see a child praying holding a rosary which is a symbol of church and presence of Mother Mary. We offer spiritual formation that instills fear of God as a basis for moral and character formation. When a child learns fear of God he/she can then respect and love others and get transformed.

- A child studying in the class and a child doing some technical work is another form of learning which is a symbol of a school. Our school has primary and technical education. This forms the child intellectually and orients him/her towards career.

- A child with a ball which symbolizes the playground. At the playground the child interacts with others, exercises physically nurturing his/her talents and skills. Through sports the body and mind get engaged keeping the child away from vices.

- A child with a mother in a family which symbolizes a home. Bosco Boys is a home for everyone. We offer a family atmosphere. We normally reach out to the families of the children through home tracing and follow up, for collaboration in the upbringing of the child. In the end we integrate the children to their families.

These are our four elements of the preventive system of education that we use for the transformation of our children; a church, a school, a playground and a home. This is our system of rehabilitation and education.

From Jesus comes rays and Sparks that touch all over the whole image. Everything that happens in this painting has been touched by the power from Jesus. These rays penetrate and transform, bring life where there is no life, bring peace where there's no peace; transformation of the fruitlessness to fruitful; hopelessness to hopeful; discouragement and depression to success and fulfillment; everything is transformed from the old to New from dark to light.

We believe in Christ working in this system providing and transforming these children. It is not so much of our human power but divine intervention. Our success is to see that the child does not go back where we rescued him from. That in every stage of his life he/she has changed, in turn transformed his reality, the whole life is changed and made better.

Conclusion – Here to be Transformed

Bosco Boys is a Centre for transformation. We are all here to be transformed. Every person who steps in here experiences transformation in one way or another bringing to him or her a change in the way of seeing things, attitude, character, understanding, outlook etc. It is Jesus who inspires and brings about this transformation through Mary help of Christians and St Don Bosco.

This is brought to its fulfillment enabled by the resources received by donors and well-wishers in kind, cash, and other ways that are very useful to us. We appreciate and acknowledge every little help that we receive from everyone who support us.