

# SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

## *St. John Bosco & Patience*

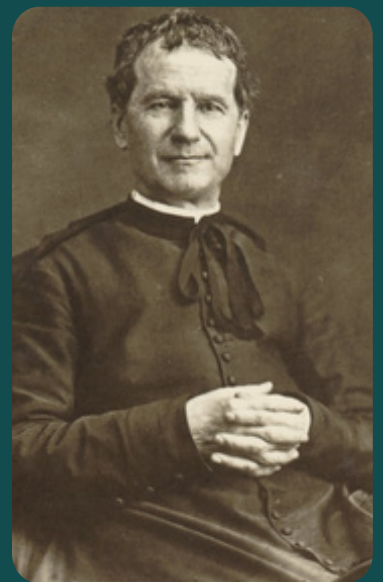
This month's saint is John Bosco and our focus is patience. Patience helps us to endure hardships and challenges with a calm and steady spirit, trusting in God's timing and plan for our lives.

### IN DEPTH

Patience is a virtue rooted in trust. Do we really believe God is a Father who works all things for our good? It is a call to control our thoughts, words, and actions in order to react with love, trust, and understanding. It is a virtue that requires humility as we acknowledge that we are not God, and cannot know His timing or design. We are called to trust all things to Him Who made all things and knows every hair on our heads and will wipe every tear (Lk. 12:7; Rev. 21:4). It is not a blind trust, but one based on faith, hope, and love. We are called to practice this patience in every part of our life, from waiting on our order at a restaurant, to enduring a toddler tantrum—from deciding where we will work or live to waiting on a family member to come back to the Church. As we practice this virtue this month, we must not forget to also be patient with ourselves as we struggle on the long road to holiness—God will not give up on you, so don't give up on yourself!

### CONNECTION TO THE SAINT

Anyone who has worked with young boys knows how challenging it can be to exercise patience when they have so much energy and often a twinkle in their eye for mischief. St. John Bosco founded the Salesian order and ran an institution that educated and cared for orphaned and troubled boys. He sought to guide his students gently and respectfully, even when they were challenging or uncooperative. He faced opposition from society, authorities, and even from some members of the Church. In spite of these challenges, he remained steadfast, patient, and confident that God would provide what was needed. His work was grounded in love and trust in God, and through Him, God transformed many lives and created lasting change. The Salesian order continues St. John Bosco's work today, serving youth all over the world with the same spirit of patience and compassion.



## WAYS ADULTS CAN PRACTICE THE VIRTUE

- **Listen Before Reacting:** Practice active listening in conversations. Rather than thinking of how to respond, focus on fully understanding the other person's words and feelings, and ask clarifying questions when needed— especially when you disagree.
- **Embrace Slow Progress:** Life's challenges often require more time than we expect. We must accept that meaningful progress is gradual and that setbacks are part of growth. Set small, realistic goals for large tasks or long-term challenges and celebrate small accomplishments along the way.
- **Manage Expectations:** Impatience often arises when things don't go as planned. Practice being flexible and open to adjusting expectations without becoming discouraged. God's timing is never too early or too late.
- **Practice Catholic Mindfulness:** Patience can be strengthened through mindfulness, which involves focusing on the present moment without judgment to reduce anxiety and impulsive reactions. Take short breaks throughout the day to take slow breaths and acknowledge God's presence in the present moment, intentionally releasing any worries about past or future.
- **Apologize and Forgive:** We must acknowledge our faults, apologize, and forgive with humility. When we see our own mess, it is easier to have compassion and react with patience when we are affected by others' mess.
- **Cultivate a Habit of Prayer:** God's love and wisdom are always at work, even when things seem out of control. Begin and end each day with a short prayer asking for patience, understanding, and the grace to see God's hand in daily events.
- **Focus on Loving:** Focus on loving and understanding the person or situation before you, instead of reacting only to challenges. When frustrated, think about how you can love the other person or bring love into the situation.
- **Accept Limitations:** We must recognize our limits and accept that we cannot control everything. By trusting in God's wisdom and leaning on His strength, we allow ourselves to be guided rather than forcing outcomes.
- **Be Patient with Yourself:** Self-criticism and impatience over personal growth are obstacles, not virtues. Remember that God's love for you is unconditional, and He knows you are a work in progress. In failures, have the same patience and kindness you'd offer a friend and see your sins as opportunities to lean on God's grace.