

*Saint
Callistus Caravario*

**A good missionary
sincerely devoted to Christ**

**Priest and Martyr
(1903-1930)**

A single-minded self-offer to God

How much courage can be stored in a heart that single-mindedly loves God and man? Hopefully, reading this coloured biographical sketch will give everybody an answer to this question.

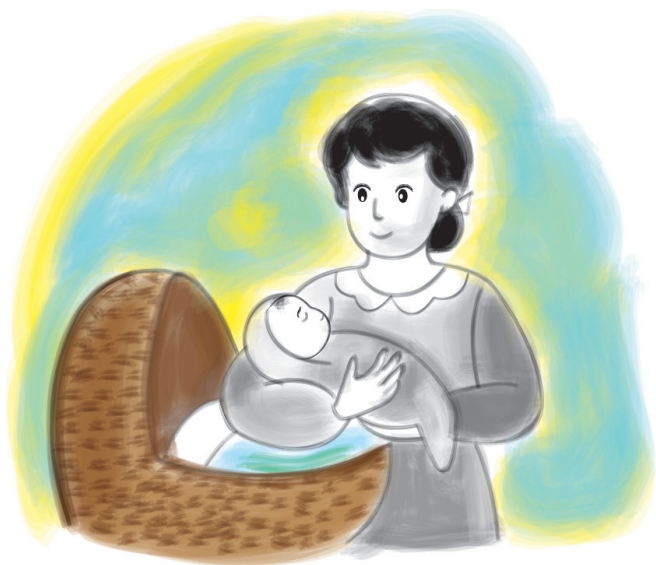
St. Callistus Caravario lived a short, and yet colourful, life. How could it be so? It could be so only because, as a young man, Callistus decided to love God with all his heart and saw becoming a missionary of Jesus' Gospel as the ideal of his life. Once he had so decided, he pursued relentlessly his ideal, making it become true in all its fullness. In what appeared to be a very simple life, Callistus cultivated holiness to an extraordinary degree, helping the young people of China to know the Lord. He and his Bishop Louis Versiglia became the first Salesian martyrs and the first Salesians of Don Bosco to be proclaimed Saints.

"Give me souls! Take the rest!" This is the motto of Don Bosco. Its meaning is clear: in order to save souls, one must be ready to sacrifice everything. I feel that this motto, in a nut-shell, also expresses the whole life of St. Callistus Caravario. In order to spread the Good News, he left his family and his motherland. In the end, to protect his parishioners, he did not hesitate to give up his life. What a faithful imitator of Good Shepherd Jesus who gives up his life for the sheep!

St. Callistus Caravario shows us that the path to sanctity is not difficult to find. We have only to love God and man single-mindedly. The good Lord himself will lead us on our way step by step. I pray that the Lord help us imitate the single-mindedness of St. Callistus Caravario: like him let us steadfastly walk the path of sanctity. Amen!

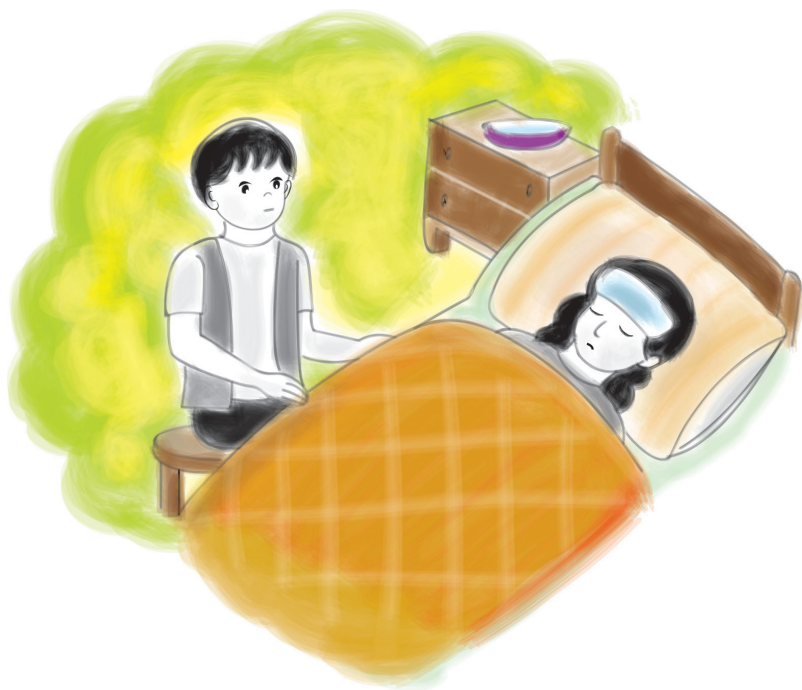
Fr. Lanfranco M. Fedrigotti, SDB

In Northern Italy there is the small industrial town of Cuorgnè. In it a lovely boy was born on June 18th 1903. His name was Callistus Caravario. His family loved him very much. The good Lord had a special life plan for him. He was to fulfill a noble and difficult mission, just he did not know it yet.





Little Callistus' family was not rich. It was a family that worked hard, with great trust in God. Callistus was carefully brought up by his parents. He loved to get close to God, he enjoyed praying, and to do things that he knew God would be happy with.

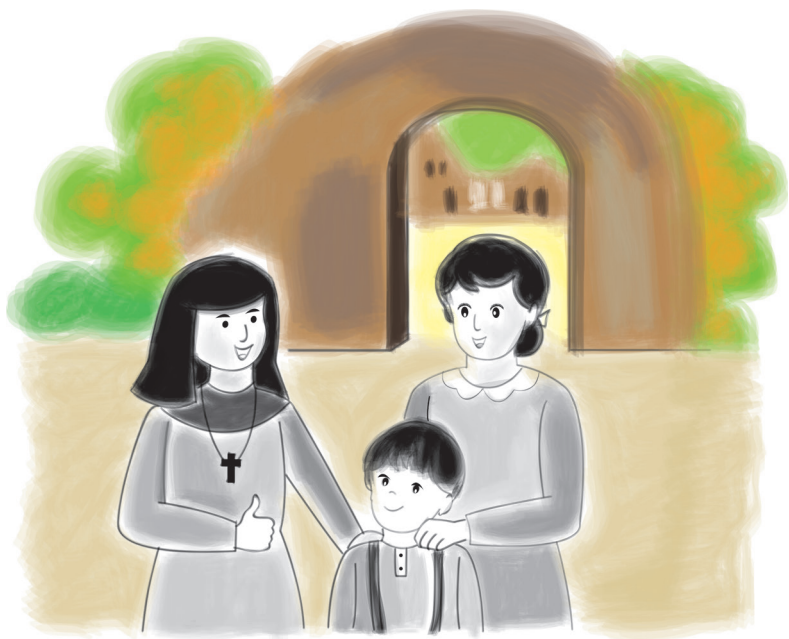


Little Callistus was gentle, kind and serene. He loved his mum. When all the kids would go out to play, he stayed at home to accompany mum. Once that his mum got sick, there was no one at home, he climbed onto her bed. When she woke up, on her hand she felt the soft lips of little Callistus.

“Mum, sleep peacefully, I will be with you!”

When little Callistus was 5 years old, the whole family moved from Cuorgnè to Turin. Little Callistus started school and joined the parish catechism class⁽¹⁾. The Sister who taught him liked him very much. She always praised him in front of his mother.

“This child will grow up to be a priest!”



Not far from little Callistus' home, there was a youth centre opened by the Salesian Society. It offered leisure activities and religious education. This youth centre became the second home for little Callistus. He was not so good at sports, but enjoyed helping the Salesian clerics to maintain cleanliness and order in the youth centre.

“Let me help!”

“Callistus, you are really a good child.”

