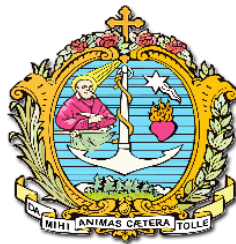


CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

1924-2024



OPENING OF THE SALESIAN SCHOOL

AND CHAPEL



The photo above was taken of the new Salesian Agricultural School when it was opened in June 1924. The picture shows the rear of the building. The front of the building, with the stoep and the balcony, faced the farm, the sports fields and eventually the classrooms. At first, the school was registered as an extension of the Salesian Institute in Cape Town, which had opened in 1886. The open door on the right-hand side of the picture was the entrance into the first chapel, which, at the request of Bishop Rooney, also catered to the needs of the Catholic community of the area. The cross placed over the door is still evident today!

The following is an extract from the archives:

"A very impressive ceremony took place at the new school in Claremont on Sunday 20th July. In the morning at 9. o'clock the new chapel, which is dedicated to Our Lady Help of Christians was blessed and formally opened by Very Rev Fr Tozzi, the Superior of the new house, who then celebrated Holy Mass in it for the first time. The chapel is very small but very neat and simple, yet impressive. Situated at the end of the new school building, its length is the width of the building, about 18 feet and its sitting accommodation about seventy people.

The altar, benches etc are all the work of the Institute boys' cabinet-making department.

In the afternoon at 4 o'clock there was a procession of the Blessed Sacrament through a portion of the grounds [...] a large number of people had gathered and this in spite of doubtful weather! Benediction followed and the sermon was preached by the Very Rev Fr de Bary, the Rector of the Institute, who stood at the door of the Chapel and in this way was heard by all present, whether inside or outside. Fr James Kelly, an Irish diocesan priest who had previously served the Catholics of the area was then invited to give the final benediction. The many hundreds of the faithful present, led by the Institute band, then sang heartily, "Faith of our Fathers".

Thus began the Salesian presence in Lansdowne, with the school and chapel dedicated to Mary Help of Christians, a pastoral ministry to the people of God which has continued unbroken for 100 years.



This is the only picture of the sanctuary of the small chapel that served the needs of the Salesian community, the boys and the Catholics of the area, until the early 1950's when a new double-storey building was added with a larger chapel downstairs and rooms for the Salesian school staff upstairs.

"I can't do big things , but I want to do everything for love"

St. Dominic Savio

