

**February 4, 2010 - Ireland – The Irish Salesian Family studies Fr. Rua, the faithful disciple.**



**(ANS – Celbridge)** – At Celbridge in County Kildare, about 60 people responded to the local Salesian community's invitation to join with them on January 30 as they celebrated the life of Fr. Michael Rua, Don Bosco's first successor as superior of the Congregation.

This was the sixth such annual event the community has run to mark the feast of Don Bosco.

The reflective afternoon included a talk by Fr. Patrick Egan on "Fr. Rua, faithful disciple," tea and coffee, time for reflection and discussion, Mass and a buffet meal.

Those present included Salesians from Celbridge, Maynooth, and Warrenstown, Salesian Sisters from Dublin, past pupils, leaders from the youth services in Bru Crumlin, benefactors, and local people involved closely with fundraising for local Salesian community projects.

In his talk Fr. Patrick -- who had attended Fr. Rua's beatification in St. Peter's Basilica in 1972 -- told of Paul VI's praise of Fr. Rua as the faithful disciple, the one who had first encountered Don Bosco in 1845, had been drawn into the Salesian movement, committed himself to it, and grew to be a key figure in it.

Having taken the helm after Don Bosco died in 1888, in his 22 years as Rector Major Rua saw huge development, as well as much suffering, particularly in the question over the directors' not hearing the confessions of their confreres or pupils, the juridical separation of the Salesian Sisters from the Salesians, and the unfounded accusations in the press against the school at Varazze.

The talk ended with the recitation of the prayer for the canonization of this humble and courageous lifelong follower of Don Bosco.