

St. John Bosco's Preventive System

An 8-week study for Ego brothers

WHY WE'RE DOING THIS

On the silent retreat last weekend, I was walking the Sorrowful Mysteries asking the Lord which battles are mine to fight. The answer that came back was the souls of my kids. The book in my hand was Don Bosco's *Preventive System in the Education of the Young*, written in 1877 by an Italian priest who took in the hardest cases (poor, orphaned, often violent boys) in large numbers and formed them into men. After our Ego conversation, we agreed to walk through it together.

WHO BOSCO WAS

St. John Bosco (1815–1888) was a priest from Turin who grew up in poverty. He spent his life with abandoned and difficult boys, the kind nobody else wanted, and built a system of formation now called the Preventive System. The whole idea is to shape the environment, the reasoning, and the love up front, so failure has less chance to take root.

Bosco was working with strangers' children. We have our own sons and daughters under our own roofs. We baptized them. We feed them. They already love us. The hardest part of Bosco's job is the part we already have.

The principles aren't limited to fatherhood, either. *Ragione, religione, amorevolezza* reach into every relationship where one soul shapes another: your wife, your siblings, the men you sponsor, your parish, your coworkers, the friends God has put in your life. Same three principles, every relationship. Get good at one and you'll start seeing it everywhere.

THE THREE PILLARS

Reason (*ragione*). The people in your care, kids included, are rational. Treat them that way. Give them the why behind your decisions and you start forming them. Skip the why and you breed resentment.

Religion (*religione*). Sacramental life is the engine. Confession and the Eucharist do the actual work. Everything else is downstream of those two.

Loving-kindness (*amorevolezza*). Be *with* the people in your care, on the same ground they're on. You can't be followed by someone who doesn't first know you love him.

THE 8-WEEK ARC

Week	Session
1	Foundation. Bosco, the Preventive vs. Repressive systems, why this applies to us.
2	Reason (1)
3	Religion (1)
4	Loving-kindness (1)
5	Reason (2), deeper
6	Religion (2), deeper
7	Loving-kindness (2), deeper

Week	Session
8	Integration. All three pillars on real cases. What we keep.

WHAT EVERY SESSION LOOKS LIKE

1. Opening prayer and a short concrete scene from a father's or mentor's life
2. Read a short passage from Bosco
3. Discussion. What Bosco meant in his time, what it means for us.
4. Live application. Each man surfaces a specific moment from his last 7 days.
5. Monday-morning commitment. Each man names one specific thing he'll try this week.
6. Closing prayer

THE ASK

We're here to change how you show up in every relationship that matters. So bring one specific moment to every session: your kid, your wife, a brother, a coworker, anyone else God has placed in your care.

That's the contract. Skip the moment and this turns into a book club. Bring it and we get something else.

PRACTICAL

When Thursday mornings, 7:30 to 9:00am

Coffee and arrival at 7:30, study begins 8:00am sharp

Starting Thursday, June 4, 2026

Where Sunset Heights Co (Coffee Co and Venue)

100 Porfirio Diaz St, El Paso, TX 79902

Duration 8 weeks

Bring One specific moment from your week, and yourself

Sancte Ioannes Bosco, ora pro nobis.