

# Mill-album tal-Familja Salesjana

*Fr Joe Cini SDB*

## 1. A brief introduction of yourself, your family and your studies.



I hail from Haż-Żebbuġ, where I was born, baptised, confirmed and celebrated my first solemn mass. At age 13, from the Lyceum in Hamrun, I went to continue my

secondary school studies at Pedara, in Sicily. This was the junior seminary for Salesian vocations, and it was Fr. Philip Grech, a wonderful and holy Salesian, who encouraged and accompanied me as I entered upon this adventure. After 4 years at this Juniorate, and the novitiate year, I professed as a Salesian at San Gregorio di Catania in 1964. We were three Maltese: Fr. Charles Cini, Fr. George Mercieca and myself.

My adventure abroad continued when my volunteering to go to the missions was accepted. That same year I left for India. My new Salesian province was to be Assam. Shillong, the capital city, is a beautiful place, and there the Salesians work with youngsters in a primary / high school, a technical school, a pre-university college, a Salesian minor seminary and a diocesan minor seminary. It was also there that the regional major seminary

was based. Shillong town was where I passed three years of teaching and being with the young. Here I met other Salesian missionaries: Fr. Carmelo Attard, Fr. Joseph Cilia, Fr. Joseph Forte and Bro. Carmelo Muscat.

My Philosophy studies, during another three years, were done in our college in another part of India: North Bengal, in a place very near to Darjeeling called Sonada.



## 2. How did you come to know Don Bosco?

As a young boy, I had come to know St. John Bosco through the many film-strips shown by Tal-Mużew. I also remember seeing the film about Don Bosco. But I really came to start understanding his charism in Pedara, during the aspirantate years.

And there I also came into contact with the first Salesian Fathers and Brothers. Their cheerfulness and joy struck me, and I was never homesick! It was after my year of Novitiate, at San Gregorio di Catania, that I fully tied my heart to Don Bosco. The interest and power of grace that I found in reading and studying him is still alive in me.