

Shepherd and Missionary

From a certain point of view we can say that Father Louis Guanella remained faithful throughout his life to that concrete way of giving himself as a good shepherd as teacher, catechist, preacher, writer, vigorous defender of sound catholic doctrine, spiritual director, promoter of social institutions, confessor, sedulous in visiting the sick, promoter of vocations and cultivator of devotions and associations meant for the sanctification of the laity. Father Guanella gave good example in executing an open and active pastoral ministry which, not only as “spirit”, but also as practical realization, is alive and is recognized today.

It is really true that the saints are there when needed. If his two Congregations are engaged in a direct pastoral ministry spanning many continents, as well revolutionizing social welfare, they do it with strength received by his saintly path.

“We can never stop as long as there are poor to be assisted,” Father Guanella kept saying looking at the immensity of people in need in his own country and all over in the world. In 1912 he set sail for the United States of America and traveled through cities and states in order to come to know the needs and to ascertain where to transplant the first “shoot” of his Works. He returned to Italy and sent a small crew of six Sisters to Chicago to take care of the children of their poor fellow countrymen.

He could not fulfill the dreams hidden in his heart but left as a precious inheritance to his Priests, Brothers and Sisters the task to evangelize the poor through Gospel and charity.

In 1875 Father Guanella joined Father John Bosco to understand better the will of God. He was welcomed by a prophetic invitation: “Let us go to Argentina!” Fifty years after, in 1925, the Servants of Charity reached Argentina spreading out beneficent branches over the immense region of Latin America..

Today, the Servants of Charity and the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, heirs of much “Prayer and Suffering” of their Founder, work with missionary zeal in twenty one countries, faithful to the message of the Founder *“The whole world is your homeland”*.

Our missionaries call for help. *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few,”* Jesus said! The laborers are few: they must be increased before the harvest, now ripening, falls in ruins.