

The Love of Christ Impels Us

now HOUR

AND AT THE

APRIL–MAY 2007



*Lord, You Are My Light
and My Salvation
Whom Should I Fear?*

Cover: A family prays together in the Shrine of St. Joseph

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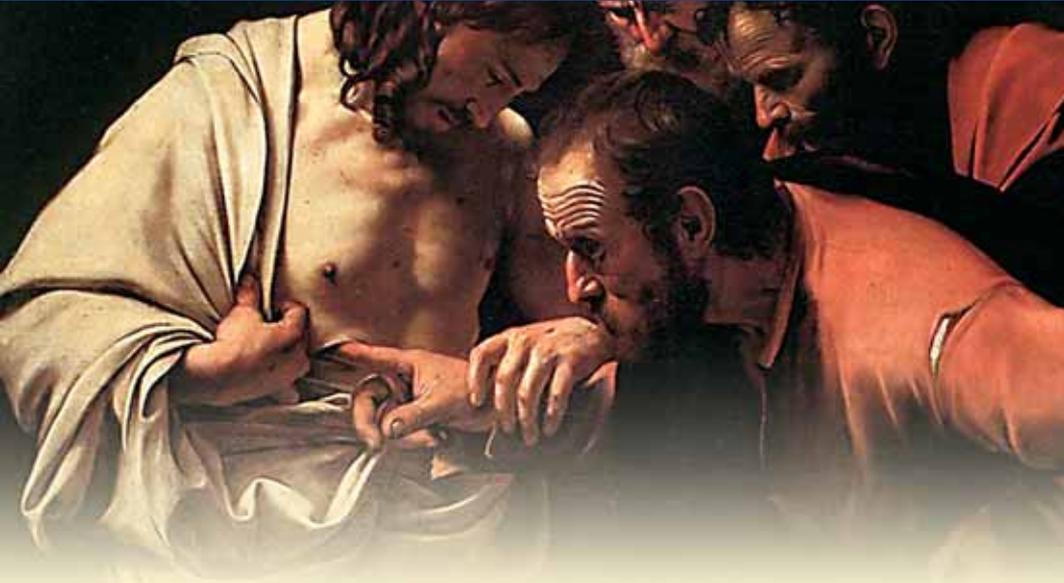
The Pious Union of St. Joseph for the Suffering and Dying is an Association of the faithful, founded by Blessed Aloysius Guanella in 1913 and made a Primary Association of the Catholic Church by Pope St. Pius X, on April 12, 1914.

The mission of this Association is to spread devotion to St. Joseph throughout the world and to bind together as many priests and faithful as possible in a universal Crusade of Prayer and work of mercy for the benefit of the suffering and dying.

To become a Member: Enroll your name at the Pious Union of St. Joseph and make a commitment to pray every day to St. Joseph for the suffering and dying.

The Prayer of the Pious Union of St. Joseph

*O St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus
Christ and true Spouse of the Virgin
Mary, pray for us and for the suffering
and dying of this day. Amen.*



Do Not be Afraid!

We just celebrated Easter, nevertheless the joyous reciprocal message of the apostles resounds again in our ears, “The Lord is risen! Indeed, He is risen!”

Jesus who we contemplated, pierced on the cross, is for us the living expression of the Father who through his death gives us back his full love: an incarnated love, an immolated love, a self-giving donated love.

Today, once again, Jesus repeats to us, who are in doubt, the same invitation which he made to Thomas, “Do not be afraid! Put your finger in my wounds; touch my heart which is burning with love and compassion! Believe in me!”

From his heart flow fresh and beneficial fountains, which quench our thirst for love and instill in us, at the same time, the desire to love.

The one who drinks from these fountains, through the Church’s sacramental grace, finds the reasons for a love without borders in the likeness of Jesus.

His love becomes flesh in his daily chores. His love courageously faces challenges coming from a world that is rooted in material exploitation and is marked by the evil one. He will offer himself as a gift of hope to those who do not have or have lost their voice: the unborn, sick, exploited, weak, the marginalized, like Jesus, to whom was denied a decent place to be born and who was condemned to die on a cross, like the worst among criminals.

Nevertheless, Jesus rose from the dead and tells us, “Do not be afraid! Look for me and I will reveal myself to you! Look for me and I will be Life for you!”



The Charity of St. Joseph

By Fr. John Ascedu

PART I

Charity is the supreme virtue among the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. Its importance can be seen clearly in the following considerations:

First, charity is so united to sanctifying grace that once we fall into mortal sin we lose charity.

Second, while faith and hope are our companions in this life and will cease once we enter into eternal life, “Charity” is eternal.

Third, charity is the mother of all virtues. It is enough to read the thirteenth chapter of the 1st letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians. In his words we learn that practicing charity means to be patient, kind and much more.

All who seek to be holy cannot avoid practicing charity, which is the hallmark of perfection.

Saint Joseph was profoundly good in living his faith and hope. The Holy Spirit, through his gift of intellect, helped him to exercise the virtue of charity. By the gift of the fear of the Lord, the same Spirit gave him comfort in living charity. By the gift of wisdom He strengthened his heart to live fully the virtue of charity. As charity is the greatest of the theological virtues, so too is the gift of wisdom the greatest among the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

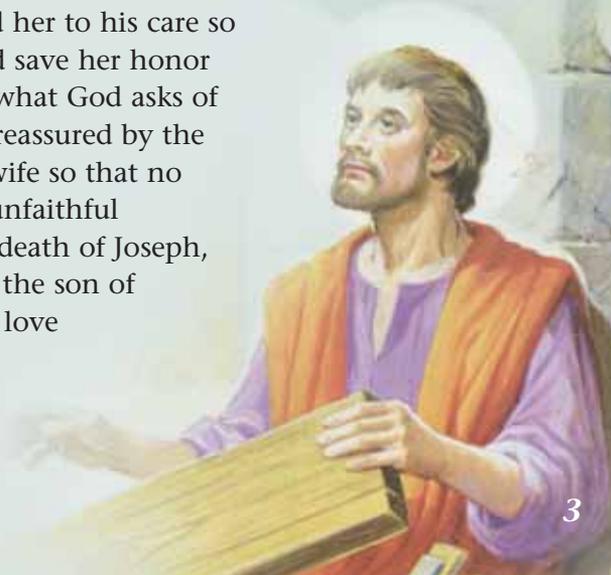
St. Joseph received the grace to live closely with two very exceptional people: Jesus, the Son of God, and Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Joseph’s attitude toward Jesus was one of deep veneration and adoration. He knows also that Mary, while being his wife, is also the mother of

Jesus. He knows that God has done great things in her and that there is no other creature like Mary and will be none after her. In response, Joseph surrounds her with his esteem and veneration.

Joseph also knows that God entrusted Jesus and Mary to him, as Son and wife, and for them he proffers the greatest love. It is not only a human love within a marriage or the love that a father has for his son. It is much more. The relationship that Joseph has with Jesus and Mary does not remove the natural bonds. On the contrary, they are sublimated by God through the supernatural love that is “Charity,” infused by the Holy Spirit. The love that unites Joseph to Jesus and Mary is not only his human love, coming spontaneously from a human heart, but it is also supernatural love because it is infused by the Lord Himself into the heart of Joseph. Without it, Joseph could not have loved Jesus and Mary appropriately.

Jesus is the Son of God; He is God, and God cannot be completely loved through our human love. A supernatural love, that only God can give us, is needed. God should be loved by Himself, the penultimate Love. Joseph loved Jesus, his God, and accepted him as his son, because Jesus was worthy of his entire love.

Mary is the mother of the Son of God made man. It is true that she is also Joseph’s spouse and a creature like himself, but he understands that Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of the Redeemer. He knows that God entrusted her to his care so that he would protect and save her honor as a woman and he does what God asks of him. Joseph, after being reassured by the Angel, takes Mary as his wife so that no one may think she is an unfaithful woman. In fact, after the death of Joseph, people were calling Jesus, the son of Mary. Joseph showed his love to Mary, his spouse, and Jesus, her son, by deeds and words.



REASONS FOR HOPE

PRO-LIFE MESSAGE OF CARDINAL JUSTIN RIGALI

By FR. SILVIO DE NARD, SC

All Americans know what happened at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Recalling the Japanese attack, President Roosevelt defined the tragedy as a “day that will live in infamy.”

Today we can repeat the President’s words when thinking of January 22, 1973, the day when the US Supreme Court legalized abortion in the case of “Roe vs. Wade.”

Although the court has remained firm in its decision at every opportunity, the plaintiff “Roe,” Norma McCorvey, changed her position in 1995 when she became a fervent pro-life Christian and soon afterwards a member of the Catholic Church.

During Mass on January 22nd, while the 34th March for Life in Washington was underway, Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia, delivered his homily in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Remembering this tragic turn in our history, he invited the participants in the Liturgy to pray and to bow their heads in shame “repenting the violence inflicted upon millions of unborn children (over 47 million) and asking for help to stop this grotesque tragedy while preventing it from being repeated in the future.”





He also said, "At the same time I express a reason to rejoice because Americans are becoming a more 'Pro-Life' people. "There is a growing realization that human life and human dignity cannot be suppressed without immense damage to the entire fabric of our nation. In the midst of the enormous challenges, posed by threats to life, there are new reasons to hope that the truth of God's law will prevail as a great light in our nation as our people move increasingly toward valuing human life from its earliest and most vulnerable stages onward."

Being aware of the national disaster resulting from *Roe vs. Wade*, Card. Rigali quoted the message of John Paul II, delivered during his visit to the city of St. Louis in 1999, clearly stating that today there is "a conflict between a culture that affirms, cherishes and celebrates the gift of life and a culture that seeks to declare entire groups of human beings – the unborn, the terminally ill, the handicapped and others considered 'useless' – to be outside the boundaries of legal protection."

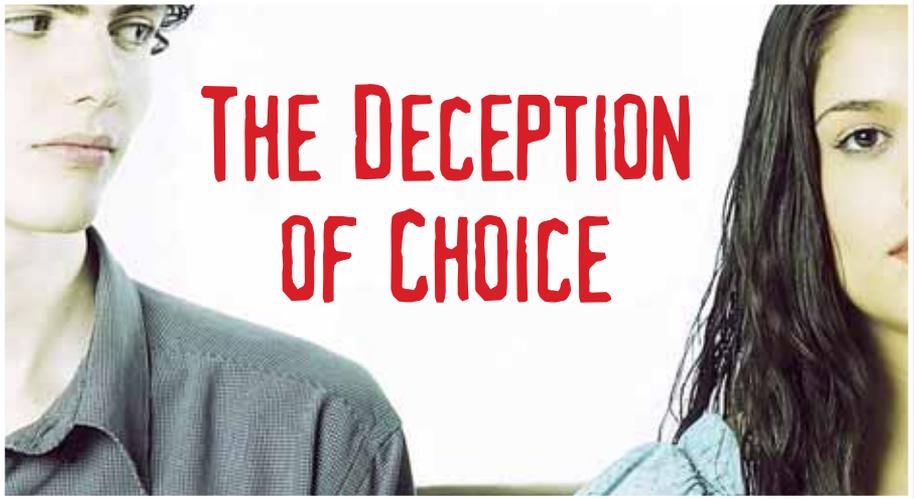
In this same message he said that "to choose life ...involves rejecting every form of violence: the violence of poverty and hunger..., the violence of armed conflict...,the violence of particularly abhorrent weapons..., the violence of drug trafficking, and the violence of racism."



As a Pastor, concerned about his responsibility to help his flock understand their own commitment in modern society and to guard them against the snares of easy conformity and pleasant relativism, Cardinal Rigali questioned the faithful about the real truth of the so-called “freedom of choice.” “Freedom of choice mocks our freedom. Americans are not free to halt the destruction of unborn children. Our legislators are not free to enact laws defending unborn life, laws that reflect the values and will of a majority of Americans. In many states parents are not free to intervene or protect their children from making decisions that have long-lasting, even eternal, consequences. *Roe vs. Wade* denies fathers the freedom to protect the life of their unborn child when the mother exercises her freedom to choose abortion. Siblings and grandparents are powerless to protect and nurture the most vulnerable member of their family because the law of the United States, determined in this case by the Supreme Court, said so.”

Cardinal Rigali ended his homily with a vibrant invitation: “The law of the Lord is perfect. The decree of the Lord is trustworthy. The precepts of the Lord are right. The command of the Lord is clear. The ordinances of the Lord are true.”

God’s word lives forever: “Thou shall not kill.”



By FR. DENNIS M. WEBER, S.C.

In the great abortion debate, the discussion is often marked by the viewpoints of two distinct sides: those who are pro-choice and those who are pro-life. A person who is pro-choice might say that a woman has a “right to choose” what she can do with her body, which includes the right to “terminate a pregnancy.” A person who is pro-life might say, in the words of Pope John Paul II, “respect, protect, love and serve life, every human life.” I would like to look at the pro-choice side of the abortion issue and propose that it holds a fallacy and that there are flaws in this position.

The first flaw begins when one states that they have a “right” to choose. This logic is inherently flawed in that choice is not a “right” but is a freely given gift of God. Choice represents the fact that God has given us free will. This endowment of free will is a reflection of our human dignity as persons created in “the image and likeness of God” (Genesis 1:26). Choice, or the exercise of free will, is inherently and innately a part of each person, based on his capacity to act. We also know that free will was weakened because of original sin, but that free will was redeemed by Jesus Christ and is further restored and strengthened through our cooperation with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Another flaw is that choice does not operate in a vacuum. There is an end or an object in our choices that may have very real consequences. Some choices may be relatively benign, having little or no moral content. For example, what shirt to wear or what color dress are choices which have little or no moral content. There is no real good or bad choice involved here.

However, a woman who says she has a right to choose an abortion must realize that there is a moral content to her act. If a woman chooses to have an abortion, she is choosing an intrinsically immoral act which is the direct killing of an innocent human being, an act which is always gravely immoral. In asserting her right to choose what she wants to do with her body, the result of her choice is the act of abortion, an immoral act that is against one's foundational and fundamental right to life.

The final flaw lies in the understanding of a person's "rights." It is true that each and every human person has certain rights rooted in the dignity of the human person created in God's image and likeness. Rights have their source in God and are inherent in every human person. There is a hierarchy of rights and at the summit is the right to life.

Pope John Paul II had this to say about the right to life: "The inviolability of the person which is a reflection of the absolute inviolability of God finds its primary and fundamental expression in the inviolability of human life. Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights - for example,





“WE ARE CARVED IN THE
PALM OF HIS HAND; THE
UNBORN CHILD HAS BEEN
CARVED IN THE HAND OF GOD
FROM CONCEPTION AND IS
CALLED BY GOD TO LOVE AND
TO BE LOVED, NOT ONLY NOW
IN THIS LIFE, BUT FOREVER”

MOTHER TERESA

the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture - is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination.... The human being is entitled to such rights, in every phase of development, from conception until natural death; and in every condition, whether healthy or sick, whole or handicapped, rich or poor” (Christifides Laici # 38).

In addition, rights do not stand alone. Every right has a corresponding duty. Blessed John XXIII explains: “Once this is admitted, it follows that in human society one man's natural right gives rise to a corresponding duty in other men; the duty, that is, of recognizing and respecting that right. Every basic human right draws its authoritative force from the natural law, which confers it and attaches to it its respective duty. Hence, to claim one's rights and ignore one's duties, or only half fulfill them, is like building a house with one hand and tearing it down with the other. (Pacem in Terris).”

Therefore, anyone who states that a woman has a right to choose to do with her body whatever she wants, must understand that the choice she should make is to respect the right to life and that this choice must also be consistent with the duty to protect, love and serve every human life.

Mary of Nazareth: Happy Mother's Day



MADONNA FROM PHILIPPINES

She is not real. Nothing about her is real, not even the stable in which Love was born.

When we are attracted to a particular saint it's usually the little human details which attract us. They give us a connection between their heroic virtue and our weakness. We love better those saints who, before they became great saints, were great sinners.

But for Mary such things are not recorded. So little is recorded of her personality, so few of her words, so few deeds, that we can form no picture of her, and there is nothing that we can select to imitate.

BY FR JOSEPH RINALDO, SC

During the Christmas celebrations I received several Christmas cards and I mailed as many depicting the typical scene of Joseph, Mary and the baby Jesus in the manger of Bethlehem. There are countless Mother and Child and Madonna paintings of enormous artistic value. These artistic renditions are incredibly beautiful, but for one thing, they gave me and a great many other people the wrong impression of the Blessed Mother. A great number of people still think of Mary as someone who would never do anything that we would do.

To many she is the Madonna of the Christmas cards, immobile, seated for ever in the immaculately clean stable of golden straw and shining snow.

But it is Mary of Nazareth, and no other saint, whom we can really imitate. She is not only human, she is humanity.

The one thing that she did and does is the one thing that we have to do, to bear Jesus Christ into the world.

Christ must be born from every soul, formed in every life. The true joy is that she did everything extraordinarily through the ordinary life that we all live, like when a natural request of Jesus, turned into a supernatural change of water into wine at the wedding in Cana.

Mary was a teenager when the Angel came to ask for her consent. She was not asked to do anything herself, but to let something be done to her. She was not asked to renounce anything, but to receive an incredible gift: to become the Mother of Christ.

She was not asked to live a special kind of life; she was simply to remain in the world, to go forward with her marriage to Joseph, to live the life of an artisan's wife.

Mary said yes to all of that. She said yes for all of us, and each one of us must repeat that yes for our own lives. We are not asked to do more than the mother of God. What we are asked is to surrender all that we are, as we are, to the Spirit of Love, in order that our lives may bear Christ to the world. What we are asked is to give to God our flesh and blood, our daily life, our thoughts, our service to one another, our affection and love, our words and intellect, our sleeping and our waking, our working, our ordinary joys and sorrows.

Mary's life was marked from that very first yes: Be it done unto me. She accepted to give Jesus her flesh and blood, her likeness.

As an expectant mother she experienced the season of joy, and she must have longed for his birth. But at the same time she knew that every step she took, took her little son nearer to the cross.

The account of Jesus' birth in the Gospel does not say that she held him in her arms, but that she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger.





As if her first act was to lay him on the cross.

She knew better than anyone else will ever know that the greatest of all grief is to be unable to mitigate the suffering of the loved one.

Jesus was completely her own, totally dependent upon her. She was His food and warmth at rest, His shelter from the world, His shade in the sun. She was the

walls of His home, the tabernacle of His Body and Blood.

Yet from the beginning Mary had to experience the loss of the Child Jesus, because it is an experience which we all go through, that our love may be sorted and purified. Mary suffered the sense of the loss of God. And of all the sufferings in human nature, this is the most universal and the most purifying.

We can experience the sense of the loss of God, when our faith vanishes, when we stop praying, when we are angry or lonely, when we sin, upon the death of a beloved one. Mary went through all that. In our lifelong seeking for God, how shall we recognize Him? If only we could read the Gospels with a completely new mind, it would be easier to recognize Christ. The Gospel is the touchstone of recognition. Who are my mother, and brother and sister? The ones who hear the word of God and keep it.

Mary gave flesh and blood to the Word and gave it to the world. She was the first one to hear it and keep it.

Devotion to the Blessed Mother is the treasure of the Catholic Church. She has never ceased, through all ages of Christianity, to foster this tender love for the Mother of God. She is the perfect model of Christian life for each one of us so we can recognize her as the Mother of the Church and our mother.

Happy Mother's Day, Mary! Happy Mother's Day, Mom! Every day is your day and every happiness of ours is your happiness, as every joy of Jesus was your joy. Every sorrow of ours is your sorrow as every sorrow of Jesus was your sorrow.

I Want to become a Saint!

By Fr. Fortunato Turati, SC

“Grandma is a saint!” This was what everybody said when my grandmother died. She loved the Lord, she loved her family, she did good for everybody and she made the best vegetable soup in the world. I still remember her, in the afternoon, sitting down on her little chair, saying her Rosary and at the same time watching us kids playing in the yard.

She was so good and I, too, think that she was a saint.

Years after my grandmother died, the Second Vatican Council would proclaim that all of us are called to be saints. It’s not only for the few, for the privileged, for the exceptional but for all of us: yes, for grandmother and grandfather, mom and dad and for so many friends, priests and lay people who were so good that I could feel the love of the Lord when I was with them. They still inspire me and point me towards the things of heaven.

St. John Bosco loved to be with the children and they would gather all around him. St. John Bosco asked the children one day, “What do you want to become when you grow up?” One child said, “I want to become a carpenter” another, “a doctor”, another, “a teacher”, another, “a priest like you.” Then St. John Bosco saw among the children Dominic Savio and he asked him, “And you Dominic, What do you want to become?” Dominic answered, “I want to become a saint.” And, he did.

The first vocation for all of us is: “To become a saint.” This is not something extraordinary for a very few people; it’s the ordinary thing for all of us to do.

St. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says: “He chose us in Him before the world began, to be holy and blameless in his sight.”



We cannot go to heaven unless we are saints. For this reason our purification in Purgatory is needed to experience the full vision and joy of God, the source of our holiness in Jesus Christ.

We embark upon a path to sanctity at the very beginning of our Christian life: at the moment of our Baptism.

John Paul II said: "To ask catechumens: 'Do you wish to receive Baptism?' is the same as asking them: 'Do you wish to become holy?'" When we were baptized we all said, like Dominic Savio, "I want to become a saint."

Vatican Council II affirmed that: "In the baptism of faith we truly become sons of God and sharers in his divine nature. In this way we are made holy. Then, by God's gift, we must hold onto and make visible this holiness that we have received."

To become a saint, we don't need to do extraordinary things. St. Francis De Sales said: "Holiness is to do with love what we know is the will of God." Sometimes, we are confused about the will of God. How do we know what God wants us to do? He gives us two basic rules: first, keep the general commandments of God and the Church and second, observe the particular commandments and duties in regard to your vocation in life. If you are a mother, be a good mother; if you work, do a good job; if you are a student, be a good student and so on.



We need to grow in doing the will of God with love and readiness and joy. The fact is that sometimes, we want to serve God, but we want to serve Him after our will and not after His will. Let us love what God loves, let us wish what God wishes, let us do what God wants us to do...and we will be in peace. "In your will is our peace."

St. Francis De Sales says another important thing about holiness: "make your holiness attractive... you will make it lovable if you make it useful and pleasing."

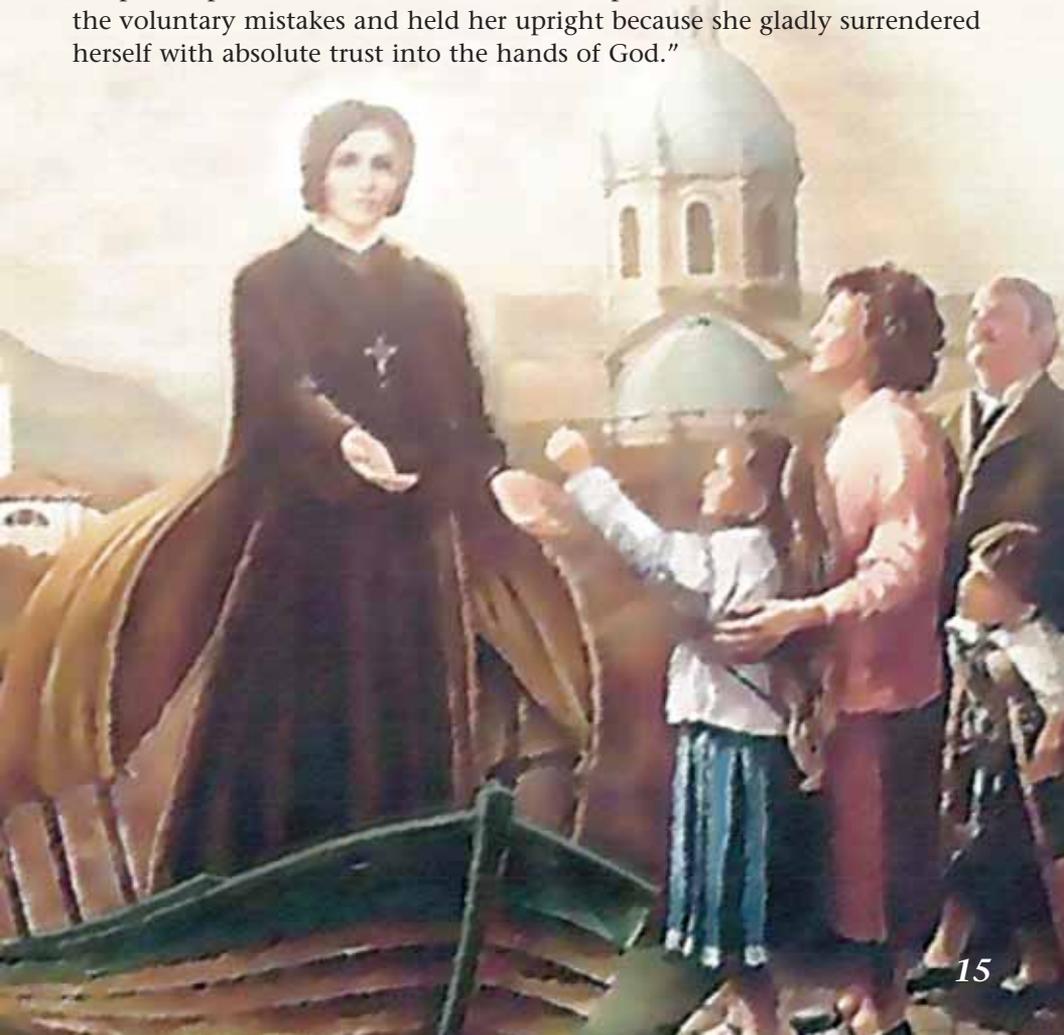
The sick will love your holiness if they receive care and comfort, your family will love your holiness if they see you are gentle and kind, and your spouse will love your holiness if you become more affectionate and attentive.

BLESSED CLARE BOSATTA

A WOMAN THIRSTY FOR GOD AND A DAUGHTER OF ST. MARY OF PROVIDENCE

By Dieudonne' le Presbytre

"Sister Clare Bosatta was born in Pianello Lario, Italy in May 1858. She generously traveled the path of Christian perfection, practicing innocence and penance. She was perfectly founded in true humility and trusting in the love of God she surrendered herself totally to Him. God led her in the way of the great souls, a way of difficulty and a dangerous way sometimes for the presumptuous ones. Nevertheless, He helped her so that she could avoid the voluntary mistakes and held her upright because she gladly surrendered herself with absolute trust into the hands of God."



In this way her spiritual director, Blessed Louis Guanella, wrote remembering Clare with whom he shared prayers, pains, suffering and hope in the beginning of his foundation.

Her life can be summarized like the life experience of many girls of her time.

She was a little bit

special, sometimes timid and introverted, but also favored with strong determination, notable human qualities together with deep faith, generosity and a spirit of sacrifice. Throughout her life she deepened her relationship with God looking for an inner sharing experience with the suffering of the crucified Jesus in her spirit and body.

Jesus made himself obedient to the Father until his death on the cross. Clare wanted to imitate him exactly, being obedient like him unto death.

Sent by the Founder to lead the foundation of the Mother House of the Congregation, Sr. Clare gave herself totally as a sacrificial oblation in her care of orphans, neglected persons, sick and poor. Her whole life was a choice of love, offering and suffering. She chose to give everything, unto death, out of love. The daily struggle she suffered with her Sisters, in order to foster a peaceful and spiritual environment for the poor, to whom they committed themselves to love and serve, brought them into the same poverty and lack of basic necessities.

Jesus died naked on the cross. She deprived herself of many things to be like him while she brought happiness to the hungry, naked, sick and homeless people knocking at the door of their poor shelter. To them she gave affection, the best portion of food, the more comfortable shoes, the warm cloth, the blanket from her bed, sometimes even her own bed. It happened also that in that cold winter of 1886 she gave hospitality to a poor woman in her small room and she went to sleep in the cold attic. This sacrifice seems to have taken the last of her strength from her already compromised health. Tormented by high fever and persistent cough she set out toward the Lord, stricken by incurable tuberculosis. While lying in her bed of suffering she



received frequent visits from Blessed Guanella, bringing her the comfort of the Sacraments and sustaining her with prayers and spiritual conversations.

One day he asked her, "Did you never experience or see a strong storm breaking out upon our mountain? Everybody looks for a shelter. The sheep, too, find refuge under the same roof with the shepherds while bleating. After the rain, a more splendid sun appears, the air is refreshed and the shepherds load their shoulders with firewood or hay, walking back home more relaxed. The sheep, too, joyfully jump here and there browsing the refreshed soft grass. Do you not think that it happens the same way during a spiritual storm? Are you like those little lambs that, after the storm, enjoy grazing with more desire at the table of suffering to find the precious gift of the Lord?"

After a few days Sister Clare died as she always desired to, because "God likes me to be always ready to do his will." It was April 20, 1887.

John Paul II wrote her name in the book of the Blessed on April 21, 1991.

Blessed Clare Bosatta, Pray for us and obtain for us the grace to be able to comply with the will of God in our life.

GRATITUDE

I feel an obligation toward Blessed Clare Bosatta because she helped me in a very difficult time in my life. I had already an eight year old boy and a four month old daughter to care for when I became pregnant again. It was a very delicate pregnancy until the point I almost lost my baby. A Guanellian Sister invited me to commend myself to the intercession of Blessed Clare, as I did with deep faith trusting in her intercession. A medical doctor, I knew the situation I had to face and all the pains I had to bear. I will send a full documentation to the Postulator for the Canonization of Blessed Clare. I want to declare now that I delivered a beautiful and healthy girl, very intelligent, thoughtful and serene. You can see her in the picture recently taken. I give thanks to Blessed Clare, asking her to continue her protection of my family, especially my children.



Rosalia Thome' Kreutz Duarte, MD

A Sunny Morning Full of Light

Guanellian Mission in India

BY FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SC

On our journey throughout the Guanellian world, our sails are set toward the coast of India, in Tamil Nadu.

An old tradition says that the apostle St. Thomas landed on these shores. Here, he preached the Gospel. Here, he suffered martyrdom and is venerated in the Basilica dedicated to him in Chennai, the former Madras.

It is in this same region that many holy and heroic missionaries consumed their human energy and their lives.

We remember St. Francis Xavier, a Spaniard, (†1559) who stopped en route to Japan, the kingdom of the Rising Sun, to spread the first seeds of evangelization.

Here also the Italian Jesuit Fr. Robert de Nobili (†1656) was able to translate the Christian message and rites, according to the Indian culture which was considered so alien to his own, and by those who thought God hadn't the imagination to make Himself understood, accepted and loved in different ways.

The Portugues St. John de Britto (†1693), who was miraculously healed in his childhood by the intercession of St. Francis Xavier, followed in the saint's footsteps. In Madurai he spent his apostolic life and suffered martyrdom. His body was broken in pieces and fed to wild animals.

His soul reached Heaven. His blood, with the blood of St. Thomas and other missionaries and Christians irrigated the Indian soil, so thirsty for God and eternal salvation.

India is full of fascination and charm for many: navigators and conquerors, writers and adventurers, traders and profiteers, contemplatives and missionaries. Blessed Guanella too, in his youth, dreamt of becoming a missionary in India.

Challenged by scientific, economic and pseudo-cultural globalization, the Indian people struggle to preserve their precious cultural traditions and deep spirituality. At the same time they are aware that they are called, among other nations in the same Church, to play an important role in the peace and spiritual growth of the entire world.

The Papal document "The Church in Asia" is a call to the Church living, working and suffering in Asia to be an instrument of evangelization through the Gospel of Charity.

Announcing Jesus, Good Shepherd and Good Samaritan, taking care of the suffering and the outcast, is the daily challenge we Servants of Charity face in our ministry. For nearly twenty years we have worked in India. We are committed to make more visible in the local context, and within its own expression, the unalterable message of Jesus, who cared for the afflicted, healed the wounded, helped the poor and announced to all a time of Grace.

Following the invitation of the Founder, who reminds us of the importance of unity in achieving effective results in our apostolic mission, the Servants of Charity advance toward the goals set out by the General Assembly of 2006.

One of the most important decisions, made during the General Assembly, was that we become ready for new pastoral experiences. Being in touch with other cultural environments and working in different regions of the world we will be truly multi-cultural and able to express more clearly the universality of the Church, the unity among the believers and the effectiveness of our mission of charity.

To this end, a new Religious Province was instituted: the "Divine Providence" Province to which the Guanellians, working in India, the Philippines and the U.S. belong.

The physical distance between us is as great as the differences in our cultural and spiritual traditions but, because the "love of Christ impels us," we engage in new forms of apostolic activities, becoming like grains of wheat which are cultivated for a fragrant loaf of bread to be offered to all those hungry for love and salvation.

For this reason we wish to share with you frequently some news about this experience because we need your support in prayer and helpful cooperation.

GO INTO THE WORLD

By Fr. Ronald Jesiah, SC

Though Jesus limited himself and his ministry to the land of Palestine, he wanted his disciples to reach the ends of the earth. That is why the Church is, by its very nature, missionary. Similarly our founder, Blessed Louis Guanella, expressed his desire to touch India, the mysterious land of religious, cultural, ethnic and lingual multiplicity even though his work was confined to Europe and America.

It was April 6, 1886 when the founder, full of deep gratitude to God, entered into the small house which would become the “Mother House” of his congregation. Blessed Clare Bosatta, with some religious sisters and poor orphan girls became the foundation stone of the Guanellian congregations.

In 1986, when the whole congregation was preparing to celebrate the centenary of the passing of the small flock of sisters from Pianello to Como, Providence was leading the Guanellian Charism from Italy into India. Yes, by then God had already sown the seeds of the Indian mission in the minds of the Superiors.

But how do we expand the “Tent of Charity” in this mysterious land? Who would take on this novel task? As the Founder remarked to the Sisters from the beginning, “The Institute intends to open houses as the way of Divine Providence clearly indicates.”





Disabled boys gather in the Don Guanella Center, Chennai

It was providential to accommodate Fr. Stephen Fernando, a diocesan priest from the southern tip of India, while he was studying in Rome at the Urbaniana University in 1983. In this he became a good friend of Fr. Domenico Saginario, the Superior of our major seminary, who shared with him the project of the Congregation to bring to the Indian Church the Guanellian Charism.

Promising to help our Congregation, Fr. Stephen returned to India and shared with others the desire for a Guanellian foundation. Having positive support and collaboration from some of the Bishops and his priest colleagues, he traveled to Rome on April 13, 1986 with a young Aspirant, John Bosco, who became the cornerstone of the Guanellian expansion. Fr. Tito Credaro was the first Guanellian to set foot in India, accompanied by Bro. John Bosco. During his short visit a group of young men expressed a desire to become Servants of Charity and they were entrusted



Newly ordained, Fr. John Joseph blesses his mother.

to the diocesan seminaries for their spiritual and intellectual formation. That same summer Fr. Domenico Saginario was appointed as Provincial Superior and in January 1987, along with Sr. Elena Salarici, Superior General of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, he paid a visit to the local Bishops regarding the possibility

of expanding the mission into their Dioceses. It was on this occasion that Miss Victoria, a school teacher, asked to join the Congregation and she became the foundation stone for the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence in India.

Thus the Italian St. Joseph Province assumed the mission in India, especially Fr. Piero Lippoli, who

became the director. He conducted vocational camps in the summers and helped boys and girls in their vocational discernment. The local church welcomed Guanellians with outstretched arms, accommodating the students for their initial formation and philosophical studies in their seminary.

Local priests too, became vocation promoters and collaborators.

The Tamil Nadu bishops, during periodic visits to the Pope, found hospitality in our houses in Rome, occasioning a deeper friendship. Being there they became aware of our ministry with the mentally and physically disabled and at the same time they were inspired by God with the possibility of the same activities in their local Church.

Archbishop Selvanathar was so close to us that he offered his own house to our first community in Samupillai Nagar and spent his last days with us there.

On December 19, 1991 the first Indian Guanellian, Fr. John Bosco, was ordained. In the following years more confreres were ordained followed by others, making it possible in 1995 to open our own seminary, dedicated to St. Joseph, that we consider our Motherhouse in India. Our gratitude goes to all the confreres who tirelessly worked to build up the Guanellian presence.

Today this small seed has sprouted with God's guidance and brings forth abundant fruit. The Indian Guanellians go out to the entire world to serve and to witness to charity. It is God's work, a marvel in our eyes.



Indian & Filipino Religious of the Guanellian Congregations

DO NOT BE AFRAID, LITTLE FLOCK

By Fr. Ronald Jesiah, SC



INDIA IS A VAST LAND

with a population of more than one billion. Christians, who owe their origin to St. Thomas the apostle, form a small minority of 2.3%. Though a small flock, its contribution to the entire nation is noteworthy and commendable.

In spite of the growth of secularism and its heart-breaking consequences in the world and in India too, Christians are sought after because they value education and selfless service in the imitation of Christ.

“In India, the Jesuits are educational specialists, the Salesians are known for youth ministry; and why can’t you, the Guanellians, be our specialists for the physically and mentally challenged?”

exclaimed the head of the local Church.

From the mouths of millions of people who suffer social marginalization and economic neglect emanates the same cry, “I have no one” (Jn. 5:7). Yet, India is a rich country with poor people and poverty is widespread.

Today children stay close to us for their basic education. People come to us in their need for rehabilitation. Withered elderly people look to us to lift them up. The harvest is plentiful and the Lord has been so gracious to us in sending laborers. From its inception the Lord has abundantly blessed the Guanellians with numerous vocations. The mission, begun with only a few youngsters, has grown so much that India stands second in the Congregation in numbers. Today there are 33 perpetually professed confreres, 47 temporarily professed, 19 novices, 19 postulants and more than 100 students aspiring to join the Servants of Charity.

The first phase of our mission in India has been formation of young students. Yet, in the past twenty years our mission has grown to include four parishes, four formation houses, two homes for abandoned children, one rehabilitation

center for the handicapped, one health care center and a nursery school. We are present in the southern states of India: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra. In Tamil Nadu we operate a theologate, a rehabilitation centre and a parish in Chennai; a minor seminary, a home for orphan boys, a parish, a nursery school and a health care center in Cuddalore and a parish in Kumbakonam. In Karnataka we located our novitiate cum philosophate at Bangalore. In Andhra we have a parish, home for the orphan boys, tailoring school for women, day care center for the elderly and teach a group of students.

It was the dream of Pope John Paul II in his Pastoral Letter "Ecclesia in Asia" that Asia be evangelized in the third millennium. Thus, he rightly remarked during his visit to Manila in 1995, "Open wide the doors of Asia to Jesus."

With duty and the prompting of the Spirit we Guanellians are extending the tent of Charity in North India and East Asia, where the name of Jesus is still unheard. India, which was evangelized by such great missionaries as St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Francis Xavier, St. John de Britto, and Fr. Robert De Nobili is proud to send forth her missionaries. We are ready to cooperate as part of this mission, spreading the Gospel of Charity not only in Asia but throughout the entire world.



Superior General, Fr. Alphonse Crippa, blessing a young boy's prosthetic legs

Helping the Poor: The Story of Martin

BY FR. ROBERT AROCKIAM, SC

It was a fine day when a small boy, named Martin Sebastin, knocked at the door of our house. His village is Paruthipattu, just 5 km away from Poonamallee in Tamil Nadu, India. His father, Sebastin is a gardener in a private company and his mother, Prema, is a housewife. He has two sisters and one brother and is the elder son. He wanted to be admitted to our rehabilitation center, because of neurological problems, which made him unable to walk, speak intelligibly or hold anything in his hands.

Our Guanellian mission in Chennai is known as Don Guanella Rehabilitation

Center, named after Blessed Guanella, who founded two congregations dedicated to this work of charity. The Center began as a little work when our students of theology began to see disabled persons, abandoned and in need of care. Our work emerged simply as an activity of gathering to sing and dance with them. Today, this simple initiative has expanded into a rehabilitation center which serves the needs of some fifty children.

In our rehabilitation activities we provide for the full recovery of our patients. Martin was sent for a complete assessment so we could learn



Martin working with ball during physiotherapy

what to do for him that would help him to become more a part of society, a person who can express his emotions, his desires and affection. His condition was assessed for physiotherapy, occupational therapy and special education and after these analyses, he was admitted.

In our center, we help our people to achieve long and short-term goals. We first break the long-term goals into goals that can be achieved in the short-term and then, building upon these little successes, they eventually reach their long-term goals.

Martin began his process of rehabilitation with parallel bar walking and other activities to improve the flexibility of his fingers. He was also provided with speech therapy. Apart from these therapies he was taught to carry out his activities of daily living: washing, eating, and dressing, etc., independently. He was taught vocational activities, in which he learned to prepare candles, incense sticks, soap oil and crafts. In these ways, his long-term goal of becoming a part of society was nearly achieved.

Martin's actions, along with those of his teachers and therapists, reaped a bountiful harvest through hard labor. Now he is able to walk, not as we walk, but with the balancing difficulties caused by cerebral palsy. He is a leader in our center, conducts a school assembly every day and recites prayers. He is happy, at last. We too are happy because we were able to play a vital role in his life through our ministry of love and service.



Disabled children playing at the Center



Little ones of the Guanellian Family

Remembering

the Guanellian Lay Movement 1st Conference

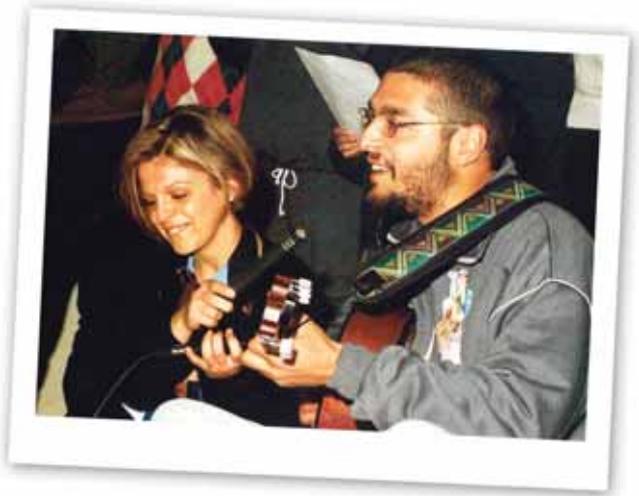
By Al & Pat Zangara

October 2006 presented a new and enlightening experience for us. We spent a weekend at the 1st National Conference of the Lay Guanellian Movement, where we experienced the tender, loving, touch of the Guanellian Family. We met several of the Sisters from the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, who had traveled from many areas of the United States, along with the Priests from the Servants of Charity, who traveled from Pennsylvania, to join those from the St. Louis Center in Chelsea, Michigan.

How naïve we had been about the degree of work and service generated by the Guanellian Family and the ways in which they contribute in so many areas within the United States, and in those countries less fortunate. We had thought we were aware of the multiple areas and services that the Guanellian Family was involved in, because we had been fortunate enough to travel to Franciscio, Italy, where Blessed Louis Guanella was born and raised and to visit several of the Servants of Charity facilities throughout Europe, and their home in Rome. However at this Conference, we became much more aware of how great the needs are of people with developmental disabilities who depend upon the assistance that the Guanellian Family provides. These individuals range in age from infants into adulthood. Some of the children are born into



families that have difficulties providing the care that special-needs children and young adults require. Also elderly and abandoned people who have no one to care for them are now entrusted to the care of the Guanellian Sisters and Priests. We saw first hand that even the religious members of the Guanellian Family vary in age, and now know that continuous service and care is being provided for individuals with special needs by religious at all stages of their lives. With as much care and love as they provide, the Priests and Nuns can't do it alone, and we thank the many lay people who are involved as members of the loving Guanellian family. However, many more lay people are needed to help fulfill Blessed Guanella's dream and carry on his work.



This Conference displayed for us the need and the capacity for growth in the Guanellian Family. In using the term "Guanellian Family," we are not only referring to the need for new vocations among the religious, but also lay people like you and I.

We are reminded that there are three families within the Guanellian Family. They are the Servants of Charity, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, and the Laity, and we have one heart and one goal in our mission of charity. The priests and sisters make a complete offering of themselves and it is up to each of us to decide in which manner we are able to contribute. Some of us contribute a great deal of our time as employees and volunteers; others may be at a stage in their lives when they can offer less time, volunteering for short spurts and donating their specific talents or assisting through charitable contributions. There is a strong need for support of all kinds. Each one of us has a gift and

through our discipleship we can experience gradual growth, so that little by little, we will get to where God wants us to be. When others see us witnessing, evangelizing, and helping those with special needs, through our enthusiasm, we can set their hearts on fire and they too will want to be a part of Blessed Guanella's mission.



We did not know what to expect or what we were going to learn by attending the First National Conference, but at the conclusion we came away inspired and appreciative. The efforts and contributions that we have made over the years to support the Guanellian mission has made us feel good. We look forward to the Second National Conference of the Lay Guanellian Movement, which is scheduled for May 4-6, 2007 in Chicago, and encourage you to consider attending with us.

2nd National Conference of the Guanellian Lay Movement

**St. Mary of Providence, 4200 N. Austin Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois on May 4 thru 6, 2007.**

For details call:

- Pious Union of St. Joseph 517-522-8017
- Sr. Linda Willette 507-794-2052
- Joe Yekulis at 734-475-8430



GUANELLIAN NEWS

■ The Pope Meets with the Superior General of the Servants of Charity

On January 23rd our Superior General, Fr. Alphonse Crippa, met with Pope Benedict. He was accompanied by a group of confreres and all experienced the same joy as Blessed Guanella when he met in friendship with Saint Pius X. To meet the Pope meant also for them to renew their commitment to the Church and their mission among the people. The Superior General informed the Pope about our ministry in the world, especially in the southern hemisphere. He asked a special blessing for the Guanellian Family, together with the sick and poor we are caring for in our institutions and for our benefactors. He also informed His Holiness that the proof of an extraordinary grace, obtained by the intercession of Blessed Guanella, will be forwarded to the Holy See in order to obtain the Decree for his canonization.



■ The Process of Canonization of Blessed Guanella

February 19, 2007. In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia the Canonic Investigation of the extraordinary grace obtained by the intercession of Blessed Guanella has ended. A young man recovered his health and all function after mortal injuries, which brought him near to death. Physicians in Philadelphia found no explanation for his full recovery and following the procedures

of Canon Law, Card. Justin Rigali signed documentation that has been delivered to the Vatican to be checked by another group of doctors. After the final approval by a group of Cardinals, the Pope will proceed with his Canonization.

Through our prayer and invocations let us now ask God to see this faithful servant, who spent the whole of his mortal life for the poor and neglected, glorified here on earth.

■ From the Philippines

Expressions of gratitude were received by the Pious Union from Filipino people giving thanks for donations received to help them rebuild after the typhoon that scourged the Bicol region, where the mission of the Servants of Charity is located. Our confreres continue to repair the damages done to the clinic, where sick and disabled people are treated. Medicines, food and all kinds of supplies are given to those who are in need by the Center. The people are striving to find work and to restore the little family businesses that were upset by this tremendous natural event. It will take many more months for the restoration and they are still in need. They will repay with their prayers all the help they have received and continue to receive from you even now.



■ Divine Providence Province: Appointment of the Superior

While preparing this issue for the print shop, we received the news that our Major Superiors had appointed Fr. Luigi De Giambattista as Superior of the newly erected “Divine Providence” Province. With the support of Fr. Anthonisamy Soosay Rathinam, his new Vicar, and four Councilors from India, Philippines and the U.S., Fr. Luigi is entrusted with the duty to govern the province, strengthen the bonds of unity among the confreres and sustain our ministry in the pastoral centers of these three countries.

Fr. De Giambattista was born in Italy in 1953 and received his Priestly Ordination in 1979. After several years working in a center for mentally impaired boys in Philadelphia, he was chosen, in 1989, to begin our ministry in the Philippines.

His trajectory in the fields of priestly formation, human promotion and his sensitive understanding of the rehabilitation of physically and mentally impaired people, qualify him as a precious guide who will uphold us in our ministry among the poor. We ask God to fill his heart with love and his mind with wisdom.



SHRINE REPORT

The feast of Easter marks the time that nature wakes up at the Shrine of St. Joseph.

Volunteers have begun a spring cleanup to provide pilgrims a more beautiful view of the green meadows and flowers.

The Calvary Project has been submitted to the Board of Directors for its approval and we hope to bring the building to completion before October of this year. Trusting in the help of Divine Providence we will begin the work in June.

We are glad to announce that benefactors have come forward to make donations for the building of the Holy Stair, benches, trees, and the Memorial Wall.

You may reserve the following Shrine or Calvary memorials or dedications with your donation:

- Dedicate a step of the Holy Stair.....\$5000**
- Dedicate a Bench in front of the Altar\$1000**
- “I am the Resurrection and the Life” Memorial Wall\$500**
- Dedicate a tile near the Calvary\$250**
- Dedicate a tile at Our Lady’s Grotto\$250**
- Become a Shrine Forester, Plant a tree\$150**
- Dedicate a leaf on the Tree of Remembrance in the Shrine\$500**

All donations are used for ministry at the Shrine of St. Joseph for the Suffering and Dying and for the continued building up of the Shrine in his honor.

For more information or to make a pledge, please call the Pious Union of St. Joseph Office Monday – Friday 517-522-8017 or send email to piousunion@pusj.org

The Servants of Charity and The Daughters of St. Mary of Providence God's Gift to the Church and the poor

... called to enlarge the tent of Charity and to announce
that the poor and the neglected are the preferred members
of the family of God ...

rely on
you.



Jesus needs you
to love others!

Vocation Directors

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"Under the Wings of Providence"

Pious Union of St. Joseph
953 East Michigan Ave.
Grass Lake, MI 49240

Shrine Pastoral Ministry

Mass Schedule

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., Sat. – 11:30 a.m.

Wed. – 8:30 a.m. followed by Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction at 4:30

Sun. – Eucharistic Celebration for Pilgrims at 10:00 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Daily before & after Mass

Saturday 2:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Sacrament of the Sick

Upon request

For pilgrimages and/or day retreats, please contact the Pious Union Office
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mon. – Sat. (517) 522-8017

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