

now Hour

AND AT THE

THE VOICE OF PROVIDENCE

APRIL–MAY 2014



Featured story on page 23:

Celebrating Human Life

at Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living

now HOUR

AND AT THE

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*O St. Joseph, foster father of
Jesus Christ and true spouse of the
Virgin Mary, pray for us and the
suffering and dying of today.*

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Mission:

The divine call places the Servants of Charity
in the heart of the Church, making us share
more deeply in her mission in the world and
especially in her care for the poor. In the
Church, we are witnesses of God's fatherly
love and of the sacred value of each person,
even of the least gifted.

In collaboration with the people of goodwill,
we endeavor to safeguard the least ones so
that we work toward building a better world,
open to Christ and His Gospel.

Easter

By Fr. JOSEPH RINALDO, SdC



Easter Vigil services. The darkened Church is a vision of flickering candlelight from the hands of each member of the assembled congregation.

The celebrant intones, “Light of Christ” for the third time. The congregation responds, “Thanks be to God.” He places the Paschal Candle, representing Christ the Light of the world on the candle stand in the sanctuary and opens the Missal to sing the most beautiful, poetic hymn of the Church’s Easter liturgy, the *Exultet* (Rejoice, All You People).

The lights come on like a blinding explosion, illuminating the entire Church.

The pristine beauty of the religious meaning of Holy Week is celebrated by the Catholic Church, under the symbols of the liturgical celebration.

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday with the clashing of cymbals. The liturgical events of Holy Thursday and Good Friday are like the drum-roll leading to the crescendo of the Easter Vigil—Christ is Risen. Holy Week celebrates the religious significance of the fundamental Christian mystery: the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Palm Sunday, also called Passion Sunday because we read the Gospel account of the Passion of Jesus, is the initiation into the joy and sorrow of Holy Week.

The entire Passion account is read, so that we, who were not present during the historical happening, may participate in the saving power of that event today.

It celebrates the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. He comes not as an arrogant, warring monarch riding on a horse, but as a humble sovereign, bringing the Good News of peace and riding on a donkey.

The Gospel, each Palm Sunday, narrates how within a few days, the very people who hailed Him as their king turned against Him, condemning Him to the intense humiliation, suffering and cruel death on a cross like an ordinary criminal.

Holy Thursday celebrates the joy and sorrow of Jesus' last will and testament of love for His friends. He washed their feet, doing the work of a servant, thus leaving them an example of humble service to be followed by the leaders of the Church.

The very purpose of authority is to serve, not with arrogant power, but as a profound privilege.



"If I your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you must wash one another's feet. I have given you an example that you should do what I have done to you." (Jn, 14–15).

Jesus then institutes two sacraments: the Eucharist and the priesthood; His living memory of sacrifice and service shall be shared and continued within His Church.

Then the tragedy of Good Friday comes; the sorrow of His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane; His betrayal by one of His disciples, Judas; His denial by another, Peter; and His abandonment by all the rest for fear of the Jews.

He is taken prisoner, made to suffer intensely and die ignominiously on the cross for the salvation of the whole world.

Good Friday celebrates Jesus' revelation of God's unconditional, everlasting love for us.

He declares, "Greater love than this no one has, than to lay down your life for one's friends." (Jn, 15, 13).

The Easter Vigil is like the overture to the cosmic climax of the Resurrection event on Easter Sunday. It is the culmination of Christian faith that Jesus rose from the tomb.

This is not a mere resuscitation from death like Lazarus, but a dramatic transformation to a new and everlasting life. The resurrection of Jesus is so fundamental to the Christian faith that St. Paul warned the Corinthians, "If Christ has not been raised, then our faith is a delusion, our proclamation is empty and we are still lost in our sins." (1 Cor 15, 14).

Therefore, those who share in Christ's sufferings here and now, also share in the certainty of His resurrection, receiving a fresh transfusion of His eternal life and a share in His victory over the power of sin and evil of every kind.

Holy Week is woven together by liturgical celebrations, authentic doctrine and daily life that lets us rediscover the Paschal Mystery—the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It teaches us that though life leads to death, death leads us to eternal life.



Mailbag

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the past I've sent you monetary donations. At this time I have only my prayers to offer to you. Money has never been the most important thing to me, but I'm struggling to pay off a credit card. I wanted you to know this, that I haven't forgotten you. When I can, hopefully later this year, I will send you more than prayer.

The Lord be with you. May God's will give your mission success. God Bless you all.

GS, Tulelake, CA

Dear Pious Union of St. Joseph,

My husband of 18 years died of MS on January 5, 2005. He was very devoted to St. Joseph. He always had a smile; a great example of how to carry his cross with love. I miss him dearly but I know he is with the Lord in a better place. I still have the Pious Union medal of St. Joseph. It's been 9 years since he died and now I'm taking care of my parents who suffer from Parkinson's and Alzheimers. I am glad to receive Now and at the Hour. I don't have much to offer, but I hope it helps so you can keep on doing God's will helping the poor.

Lovingly and grateful, MR

St. Joseph,

Because he interceded, we were able to sell our house in just 5 weeks. We are truly blessed to be moving into our new home and will continue to ask St. Joseph to intercede for our family.

RM, Beaumont, TX



St. Joseph

God's Silent Worker

FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SdC

St. Matthew in his Gospel describes St. Joseph as a “Just” man, the true spouse of the Virgin Mary, and then virginal father of Jesus. He was the man chosen by God to accompany with his quiet strength and silent industriousness the only begotten Son, incarnated to defeat the work of the devil.

For centuries silence has surrounded his testimony beside Jesus and Mary. But as much as the mystery and mission of Jesus was taught throughout the centuries, the more the example of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph were taken as a model of spiritual growth by those who wanted to imitate Jesus and follow the influence of His grace through the Holy Spirit.

Devotion to St. Joseph grew up in the Church, inspiring generations of believers who turn to him for spiritual and material favors that seemed impossible to get through any other way.

We recognize the power of St. Joseph in the Church in thinking of many religious congregations that took their name from him. How can we also forget the thousands of churches dedicated to him in the world in which we can always venerate his image? Let us think also of the men and women who on the day of their Baptism were called by his name.

There are then many associations and confraternities dedicated to him who devote themselves to prayer and to the service of the poor. These include our Pious Union of St. Joseph that has as its end the prayer for the Suffering and Dying .

Let us recall then that the Magisterium of the Church dedicates golden pages of teachings and prayers to St. Joseph and we still turn to him. Suffice it to recall his presence at the Second Vatican

Council, entrusted by Pope John XXIII to his patronage. The Pope himself has decreed that the name of St. Joseph be placed in the Eucharistic Prayer close to that of the Virgin Mary. It illustrated the significance of his devotion when he said, "Stay with us always Virgin Mary, together with St. Joseph, your most chaste spouse, the patron saint of the Ecumenical Council, whose name now shines in the Canon of the Mass. May he accompany us on our journey, as he was given by God as a companion to help the family of Nazareth."

We recall here one of these great moments in the history of the Church through the experience of St. Teresa of Avila, the holy reformer of the Carmelite Order, who has inspired legions of priests, religious and laity to take an ascetic path of love, joy, sacrifice and redemption, following Jesus to Calvary to live in the joy of eternal peace.

"I took for my advocate and lord, the glorious Saint Joseph, and commended myself earnestly to him; and I found that this my father and lord delivered me both from this trouble and also from other and greater troubles concerning my honor and the loss of my soul, and that he gave me greater blessings than I could ask of him. I do not remember even now that I have ever asked anything of him which he has failed to grant.



**"I HAVE NEVER KNOWN
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ALWAYS HAD IT GRANTED."**

I am astonished at the great favors which God has bestowed on me through this blessed saint, and the perils from which He has freed me, both in body and in soul.

To other saints the Lord seems to have given grace to assist us in some of our necessities but of this glorious saint my experience is that he assists us in them all and that the Lord wishes to teach us that as He was Himself subject to him on earth just so in Heaven He still does all that he asks.

This has also been the experience of other persons whom I have advised to commend themselves to him; and even today there are many who have great devotion to him through having newly experienced this truth.

I wish I could persuade everyone to be devoted to this glorious saint, for I have great experience of the blessings which he can obtain from God. I have never known anyone to be truly devoted to him and render him particular services who did not notably advance in virtue, for he gives very real help to souls who commend themselves to him. For some years now, I think, I have made some request of him every year on his festival and I have always had it granted. If my petition is in any way ill directed, he directs it aright for my greater good.”

I only beg, for the love of God, that anyone who does not believe me will put what I say to the test, and he will see by experience what great advantages come from his commending himself to this glorious patriarch and having devotion to him I do not know how anyone can think of the Queen of the Angels, during the time that she suffered so much with the Child Jesus, without giving thanks to Saint Joseph for the way he helped them. If anyone cannot find a master to teach him how to pray, let him take this glorious saint as his master and he will not go astray.” (Autobiography Chapter 6).



St. Teresa of Avila

Blessed Clare Bosatta, DSMP

A Lily for Heaven

By FR. PIERO PELLEGRINI, SdC

The Motherhouse of the Servants of Charity in Como is almost a museum of buildings and memories. Anywhere one looks, the Founder can be sensed moving, praying, planning and encouraging. You can feel the soft steps of Sr. Clare quicken from one room to another to comfort and attend to the needs of the orphans and the elderly.

Sr. Clare was the first Superior of the House in Como. She was sent there by Fr. Guanella on May 13, 1886. Together with Fr. Guanella and Sr. Marcellina, she signed the purchasing contract for the Biffi house and land. The house now is totally different and hard to recognize among the other structures built later. Many former residents of the orphanage still remember that old house with steep stairs leading to the sisters' quarters, the laundry and the pantry. It is easy to imagine and catch Sr. Clare softly climbing those stairs, whispering her prayers in the hall, which had become the first chapel for the small group of sisters and homeless little girls. After a long day of hard work and sacrifices, we can follow her withdrawing in the attic. There she took her rest during the night because she had given all the rooms available to the orphans.



When trying to conceal her internal suffering, her expression relaxed with a sweet smile. Sister Clare had an attentive and penetrating mind that was sensitive to the hearts of the little orphans to soothe their pain and suffering. Her words were measured, comforting and reassuring, with a beautiful voice for singing and dialoging with the other sisters. They never felt sad even when she corrected them. Her presence was pleasant and lovely, but unfortunately too short.

She had caught the attention of the city as well. She was a familiar sight at the parish church of St. Ursula and the Shrine of the Holy Crucifix.

From this church she wrote about her tears and prayers to her spiritual director. Often she went to the hospital for her eye problems and to visit the sick. The Canossian sisters also enjoyed her visit and company. The neighbors always saw the windows closed. The curtains down did not give any sign of life. They were asking: “who are those holy women? What do they do?”

On December 13, 1866, the little orphan girls, by the door, in tears were saying goodbye to Sr. Clare. She, the first Superior of that House, was laid on a mattress in a carriage to travel to Lake Como. A boat would bring her back to Pianello. Sr. Clare was twenty eight years old and was very sick. At first she was suffering with a violent cough. They thought it was pneumonia; instead, it was something much more serious and irreversible. She died a few months later, on April 20, 1887, in Pianello, from tuberculosis she had contracted serving the poor.

Father Guanella, the pastor in Pianello, wrote in the register of the dead: *“Our sister has been transplanted as a lily in the garden of Paradise.”*

More than one hundred years later, Sr. Clare returned to her House, where she had been the cornerstone and the first superior. She built that house, the Motherhouse, with her



goodness, her sacrifice and her holiness. John Paul II declared her “Blessed,” on April 21 1991. Blessed Clare pray for us!

Her body rests at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Como, next to her spiritual director, St. Louis Guanella. He guided Sr. Clare to the path of holiness, the sweet path of the evangelical beatitudes: Blessed Clare, poor, meek, peace maker, merciful, hungry for justice, weeping, persecuted and pure of heart.

Her sisters, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and the Servants of Charity will approach her altar praying for the grace of faith and charity.

The children and the youth, attracted by her graceful face, by the fascination of her presence will ask for the grace of goodness and purity of heart. The elderly, she served and loved so much during her short life, will come to pray for comfort and the grace of a holy death.

The Divine Providence House of Como will ask Blessed Clare to continue her visits to the city. With the presence of her grace, she will comfort the sick; guide the friends and benefactors to assist the House in its development for the poor, the elderly and the youth.

The Congregations of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and the Servants of Charity are entrusted to the firm and stimulating guidance of St. Louis Guanella and to the attentive, gentle and sweet care of Blessed Clare. May they look down from heaven on their Congregations and bring to perfection the work they started with their hands and hearts.





Cohabitation

BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SdC

I know friends and acquaintances who are living together planning for marriage or who are just comfortable with that situation. It seems that these days the thinking is “everybody is doing it, no problem; just two people making a personal choice.” The Catholic Church’s experience and statistics disagree.

As Catholics, we believe that marriage is the permanent union of a man and a woman, instituted by God, for the good of both spouses and for bringing new life into the world.

This love between a man and a woman is more than just sexual attraction. It involves the total giving of each person’s physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual being without any reservation. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, marriage can never be considered a temporary or “trial” arrangement.

Couples often claim that living together is a good way to test their compatibility before making a permanent commitment, but nothing could be further from the truth.

A few months ago, I made a comment to a young friend of mine, “within the last two years, you have come to visit me with three different girlfriends.” He answered me, “I take them for a ride, before deciding!” The Love of your life has been reduced to a commodity.

The Sacrament of Matrimony, the importance of the family, the sacredness of sex, and the dignity of the human person are part of God’s divine plan. Studies show that married people attain higher levels of personal happiness, emotional fulfillment, sexual satisfaction, mental stability, good health and positive relationships with extended family members.

When couples choose to cohabitate, however, there is no spiritual foundation for the union, no lifelong commitment, and no promise of fidelity, which leaves the relationship open to feelings of instability. If couples see their relationship as merely a sexual union that can be terminated when passion cools, boredom sets in, or someone more interesting comes along, the result can be disastrous.

Couples who live together before marriage actually face a higher risk of divorce than those who do not. One reason is that many cohabitating couples drift into marriage as the next logical thing to do without any intention to commit themselves to each other for life. They bring into marriage attitudes and behaviors that developed when they were two uncommitted individuals living together. They place less emphasis on shared dreams, common values and mutual understanding. They are less willing to make sacrifices for each other. They tend to speak in terms of “I” rather than “We.” Decision making and handling finances tend to be based on “yours and mine” instead of “ours.”

Cohabitating couples do not view their relationship in the same way that married couples do. Women tend to perceive cohabitation, as a step before marriage; men are more likely to see cohabitation as a step before making a commitment.



The dark side of cohabitation, besides the emotional, spiritual and physical toll and setbacks, is supported by studies and statistics.

Couples who live together before marriage face an 85 percent higher rate of divorce than those who do not. Only half of cohabitating couples actually marry. Up to 30 percent of people who live together never intend to marry. Within five years of a live-in relationship, while half of cohabitating couples marry, about 40 percent break up and the rest continue to live together. Only 4 percent of cohabitating couples stay together for ten years.

43 percent of all cohabitating households include children. In about 70 percent of the cases, these are the children of only one partner. Only one third of these children will live with both parents throughout their childhood. When cohabitating couples break up, the fathers are less likely to support the children financially or maintain contact with them. Studies show that children of cohabitating couples are at greater risk for behavioral and academic problems. They are also more likely to be sexually or physically abused. The most dangerous of family environments for children is when the mother is living with someone other than the child's biological father.

Sexuality is not something simply biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such. It is realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and a woman commit themselves totally to one another until death.



THE PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS

BY DON GIUSEPPE

I just finished reading *The Global War on Christians: Dispatches From the Front Lines of Antichristian Persecution*, by John Allen (Crown Publishing). It is an eye opener and a challenge to our faith. Jesus told his disciples in plain words, "If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." (Jn 15, 20).

The persecution of Christians is presented as the most dramatic religious story of the early 21st century as he gives a global overview of the varied threats faced by Christians. Christians today, indisputably, are the most persecuted religious body on the planet, and too often their new martyrs suffer in silence. Silence, he noted, because in large part the media does not report the persecution of Christians, in spite of the egregious nature of the offenses being committed. The Protestant scholar, Todd Johnson, has estimated that in the years from 2000 to 2010 there was an average of 10,000 Christians killed each year.

There is a distinction between the problems faced by Christians in Western nations and Christians elsewhere. For example, the predominant conflict is over health care legislation and abortion in the United States. There is much more bloody persecution in countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Yet, while it is certainly the case that Christians are not being tortured or put to death in Western nations, they do, nevertheless, face significant opposition.

A couple of recent cases from Australia exemplify the intolerance exhibited toward Christians. In the Australian state of Victoria, Dr. Mark Hobart is under investigation by the Medical Board of the state. His crime: refusing to refer an Indian couple to a doctor when they



wanted to abort a healthy unborn baby girl at week nineteen of pregnancy because they wanted a boy. Hobart, a Catholic, was asked by the couple to abort the baby, but he refused.

Upon being asked by them for a referral to another doctor who would perform the abortion, he said that he did not know anyone who would carry out such a procedure. The irony is that Victoria's abortion laws, among the most extreme in the world, were driven by a bipartisan feminist agenda. Yet, now, those laws are being used to punish a doctor who refused to participate in the sort of selective abortion of female fetuses which has made girl babies an endangered species in India and other patriarchal societies.

Then, there was the pro-life march in Victoria's capital, Melbourne. The LifeNews.com website filed a graphic report about how a peaceful pro-life march was violently attacked. A number of people were injured as a result of the assault. Around three thousand pro-life demonstrators attended the march calling for the repeal of the Abortion Law Reform Act of 2008, which removed all legal protection for children before birth.

Australia is far from being the only country with these sorts of conflicts. In England, Hazelmary and Peter Bull in Cornwall have put their hotel up for sale. They lost a legal case brought against them after having refused to let a same-sex couple stay in the same bedroom. Since losing the case they have been subjected to a barrage of attacks, including death threats and vandalism.

Due to their Christian beliefs since they took over the hotel in 1986, they have only allowed double accommodation to married heterosexual couples.

CHRISTIANS TODAY, INDISPUTABLY, ARE THE MOST PERSECUTED RELIGIOUS BODY ON THE PLANET, AND TOO OFTEN THEIR NEW MARTYRS SUFFER IN SILENCE. SILENCE, BECAUSE IN LARGE PART THE MEDIA DOES NOT REPORT THE PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS, IN SPITE OF THE EGREGIOUS NATURE OF THE OFFENSES BEING COMMITTED.

The couple has now gone to the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom to contest the ruling against them. "They could not be treated like racists or others guilty of discrimination because their decision had been founded on their religiously informed judgment of conscience," their lawyer argued before the five judges.

Same-sex marriage issues are also providing grounds for conflict in the United States. Barronelle Stutzman, a florist in Richland,

Washington, has been sued twice: once by state Attorney General, Bob Ferguson, and once by the American Civil Liberties Union. Her crime was not being willing to provide flowers for same-sex couples. Priests and members of the clergy are generally protected from such legal measures, but this does not extend to business owners.

Christians who in good conscience feel they cannot endorse homosexuality face many problems and threats. A number of the problems stemmed from same-sex marriages, ranging from wedding cakes to marriage receptions and wedding photos. Christian business owners are pleading the right to religious freedom, but their petitions are being denied by the courts. The pleas for tolerance and respect, it seems, only apply so long as you endorse one side of the debate.







The Guanellian Lay Movement:

PART 1

Making Charity the Heart of the World

BY JOSEPH YEKULIS

As we ponder the mysteries of today's world, we look around us and see a steady erosion of our religious and societal moral and ethical values. Christianity is under attack all over the world, either through direct assaults on the people and churches of the Middle East by religious fanatics, or through the outward attempts of government leaders and the mainstream media in the United States to reduce the significance of our Church and the values we believe in.

However the Holy Spirit remains with the people of God and cannot be diminished, and that is the positive message that can be carried from the Guanellian Lay Movement (GLM).

A booklet entitled *Making Charity the Heart of the World* (2011) is a collaborative publication of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and the Servants of Charity, and is an attempt to help define the relationship between the Guanellians and the laity who support them. So why bring the world's turmoil into this discussion? Because Fr. Guanella always said, "It is God who works," for it is His light that shines through us by the works that we do, and we carry the conviction that "God is present in everything." His light will shine through us by our involvement in the Guanellian charism, thereby making today's world a better place for everyone.

Concerned about the men of today's world turning away from their faith, Pope Benedict XVI remarked in 2005 that, "What we need right now in history are men who, by their enlightened faith, truly live, making God credible to men... We need men who keep their eyes fixed on God, because only in Him can they learn how to be true men. We need men whose intellect is illuminated by God's light, men whose hearts are opened by God so that their intellect may speak to the intellect of many, and their hearts may open the hearts of their brothers and sisters. Only through men touched by God, can God return among men." (*L'Europa di Benedetto nella Crisi delle Culture* p. 63-64).

And so St. Louis Guanella and his predecessors through the years have created the Guanellian Lay Movement, recognizing that their respective religious communities need the assistance of the laity to be successful in their work. A letter co-written by Superior Generals Sr. Giustina Valicenti, DSMP and Fr. Alfonso Crippa, SdC, affirms this belief. “We believe that religious and lay people together will be able to further develop the vast resources of our charism, offering the Church and the world our witness of communion and fraternity by joyfully and transparently showing the Face of God our Father, who calls everyone to become members of His family.”

So what is the Guanellian Lay Movement? “The GLM is the common dwelling of all men and women of good will. Attracted by the spirituality of Father Guanella, they show concern and care for the poor and have the desire to increase the culture of

“The GLM is the common dwelling of all men and women of good will. Attracted by the spirituality of Father Guanella, they show concern and care for the poor and have the desire to increase the culture of solidarity and love in the world.”

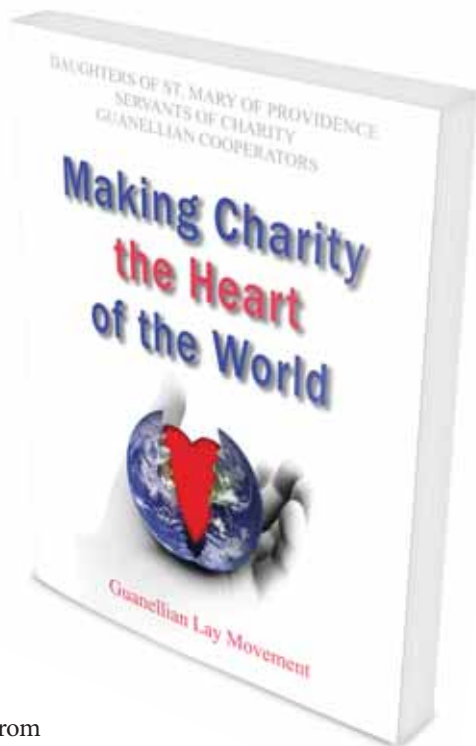


“The charity of a person consists in responding willingly and lovingly to the needs of others...”

solidarity and love in the world. The GLM derives its vitality from some power principles that guide those who participate, directly or indirectly, in a convergent way. The exchange of values and ideas regarding spirituality and charism is built on communications and a minimal organizational structure necessary for the coordination of common activities.” (*Making Charity* p. 21).

The heart of the GLM can be found in the hearts of the laity who support the Guanellian charism, and charity for the least of our brothers and sisters has become the guiding principle. “Charity is the better way. (1 Cor 13), Charity allows man to overcome inborn egotism, to heed the cry for help from needy neighbors, to stoop down to them, and take care of their needs. Charity is the privileged way. Charity is not just for promoting the dignity of each person, but also for recognizing God. ‘Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me’ (Mt 25). The charity of a person consists in responding willingly and lovingly to the needs of others...” (*Fr. Guanella, La Divina Provvidenza*, p. 57).

There is no doubt in anyone’s mind that our two Guanellian religious communities need the help of the laity to accomplish their missions in caring for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as the frail elderly, and hopefully a case has been made for one’s commitment. Part 2 of this series will provide a brief overview of the structure of the GLM, and explore tangible examples of how the laity is assisting our Guanellian religious in the U.S. and other parts of the world.



The Joy of a Christian is in Suffering

By ST. LOUIS GUANELLA

“Happy the man who holds out to the end through trial! Once he has been proved, he will receive the crown of life the Lord has promised to those who love him.” (Jas 1, 12)

The son who endures sweats and labors for his father's sake is blessed, because thus he obtains the benevolence of his father. Likewise, fortunate are the servants who labor faithfully for their master, or the soldiers who fight forcefully for their king. Why, then, do you complain when you find yourself in distress? On the contrary, you should thank the Lord in that situation. Is it not true that a loving son is happy when he is given a field to till, and that a servant is happy when he is assured of his job? Your occupation consists in laboring for the Lord! Do you not believe that at our birth God has assigned to each one of us the task we are going to fulfill during our lives? If we are faithful in fulfilling it, do you not believe that the Lord has the ability to see we are rewarded generously? Bear your tribulations with a joyful heart, then, if you want to be happy one day.



Even here on earth those who suffer are more blessed than those who enjoy. Oftentimes those who are persecuted are happier than those who persecute because the just, by suffering beautifies his soul which is already so pure and draws upon itself the merciful attention of heaven as well as the loving care of the saints on earth. You kiss with respect the relics of the martyrs who have given their lives for Jesus Christ. You stand with reverence before the Virgins who have been able to mortify the passions of their senses. How touched you are by the memory of the confessors who were strong in their faith, and of the popes who were so concerned in their governing! When a brother of yours is tried and is found enduring to the end in his battle, the Vicar of the Divine Savior in the name of God elevates him to the honor of the altars. Indicating the image or relics of that Christian hero to the whole world of his believing children the pope says, "Who wants to be saved, may follow the example of the saint of the Lord." Compare now the glory of the humble servants of the splendor of Hannibal, Caesar, Augustus, Alexander and Philip and then ask, "Where is the mighty of the world?"

Yet, you will enjoy much more the certainty of receiving your reward from God soon. The consolations and, at times, the honors which those who are in distress on earth receive, are nothing more than a pledge of the fruits which will mature during the summer season. The reward that the Lord will give you is worth God's infinite majesty and will be the very glory of paradise.

While the forty martyrs who stayed in the frozen lake of Sebaste were stiffening because of cold, they saw above angelic spirits who were carrying crowns from heaven and seemed to say, "One more instant and these crowns will be placed on your heads."

The more you suffer, the more confidently you should look to heaven and trust that the Lord will soon send His angel to crown you too.

The souls who ascend to heaven rejoice in saying, "We have loved, and now we are saved! We have loved and now we are saved!" The Lord has promised salvation to those who love him. However, if you not only love Him with affection but show with your suffering the proofs of your love, then who can doubt that you deserve special rewards of contentment? Rejoice in your spirit, and when tribulation comes to visit you in any form, repeat with confidence, "Blessed is the man who suffers!" Keeping this in mind, arm yourself with the fortitude of the saints who repeated, "Let me suffer or die, Lord!"

Taken from In the Sacred Time: Little Sermons for Each Day of Lent



Celebrating Human Life

at Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living

BY PEGGY COLE

A showcase home for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are aging will formally open at St. Louis Center in Chelsea, Michigan on June 8, 2014. The new Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living will be, in the words of Pope Francis, “a place of dignity,” not one of “closure” and “silence” as are many existing homes for the aging.

Built in 1980 as a home for boys with intellectual and developmental disabilities and named in honor of St. Louis Guanella, Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living will be St. Louis Center’s—and quite possibly Michigan’s—first home designed specifically for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who require specialized care as they age.

In his address to the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers on November 23, 2013 at the Vatican, Pope Francis implored us to “... remember that, in God’s eyes, human life always retains its value far beyond any discriminating vision.” With the opening of Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living, St. Louis Center is proclaiming to the world that all human life indeed retains its value until the very end.

As we watch the construction crews working daily against the blustery backdrop of this winter’s nearly impossible weather, knocking down existing walls to expand



living space, installing air-conditioning to help residents cope with summertime heat and humidity, and building seamless connections between interior and exterior spaces, among numerous other improvements, we know that what St. Louis Center is doing is the right thing: creating a home for the aging that will promote human life.

The cost of the Father Guanella Hall renovation project is \$2,000,000.

Approximately one-half of those funds have been raised to-date from private individuals, corporations and foundations by members of St. Louis Center's Legacy Campaign Committee, co-chaired by Fr. Enzo Addari, SdC, and Mr. Norman Neuman. Expensive? Absolutely, but this is a showcase, an investment in human dignity, a celebration of life.

The mission of St. Louis Center's Legacy Campaign Committee is to create a future in which every resident with special needs is provided a continuum of life-long care in a faith-based residential community that provides a safe, comfortable, and family-like environment in which the individual's right to self-determination and personal decision-making, along with the need for dignity, respect, tradition, and spirituality are honored. The Legacy Campaign Committee intentionally sought to create at Fr. Guanella Hall a home that transmits as much warmth as possible, the kind of warmth a family-like environment provides.

Pope Francis reminded us in this same address that the family "remains the privileged place of warmth and closeness." St. Louis Center is, for many of its residents, their only home, their only family.

Promoting what St. Guanella called “Family Spirit,” “the central element of the Guanellian charism,” (From *With Faith, Love, and Competence*, translated by Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC, in 2002) is key to providing the kind of warm, loving, enriching care that older adults deserve. Care at Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living will respect the dignity, identity, and individual needs of the people who will live there. (Could St. Guanella’s writings and care philosophy be any more relevant than they are today?)



Contributing to the warm, family-like environment at the new Fr. Guanella Hall are numerous elements of “universal design,” design for people of all abilities. Such elements are expensive, but critical to the promotion of human life and dignified care. At Fr. Guanella Hall, residents will enjoy eating their meals in a modern, family-style kitchen/dining room with accessible tables, cabinets and countertops. This will be the heart of the home, as modern kitchen spaces are.

Enlarged windows throughout the home will allow for more natural light to fill rooms and hearts and will provide ample views of calming meadows, woods, and wildlife. Single-room occupancy opportunities, with private, barrier-free bathrooms, will lend themselves to dignified living. A calming yet uplifting color palette throughout will quietly announce that St. Louis Center paid great attention to every detail in an effort to create a home that celebrates life, a home with the kind of appointments so often reserved in our society only for those with the most resources. An outdoor patio with opportunities for gardening, dining, and relaxation, a living room for socialization, and a den for quiet moments or visits will further enrich the lives of the people who will soon call Fr. Guanella Hall home.

Residents of Fr. Guanella Hall for Assisted Living at St. Louis Center will be provided daily opportunities to socialize with friends, to exercise, and to keep learning. With this project, St. Louis Center is announcing to the world that despite their disabilities and age, residents of Fr. Guanella Hall, like all older adults, have great value and wisdom and much to teach the rest of us about life and about love. They are deserving of the best. With this project, St. Louis Center is celebrating life, human life, which “always retains its value far beyond any discriminating vision.”

A Road to Holiness

THE VOCATION OF MARRIAGE

BY KELLY FLAHERTY

Marriage is a politically charged topic these days with different views coming from many different sources.

As a faithful Catholic, one must always look to the church and the *Magisterium* for the truth.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) “The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between



baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.” But what does that mean? Isn't marriage just a commitment to live with the person with whom you have fallen in love? According to the church, yes, but it is so much more.

The fundamental and innate vocation of every human being is love (CCC 1604) and each person must spend time discerning how God is calling them to live out this vocation. Some are called to consecrated life, some remain single and some find they are called to the sacrament of marriage. This is not a quick answer, it takes a lot of time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, spiritual direction and even discernment retreats.

Finding a person “that your heart loves,” may not be enough. The spouses “are called to grow continually in their communion through day-to-day fidelity to their marriage promise of total mutual self-giving,” (CCC 1644). Loving another person is a start, but time spent in prayer together will help to reveal the level of commitment each is willing to make to the other. “It can seem difficult, even impossible, to bind oneself for life to another human being” (CCC 1648). Therefore “it cannot be an arrangement ‘until further notice.’ The intimate union of marriage, as a mutual giving of two persons, and the good of the children, demand total fidelity from the spouses and require an unbreakable union between them.” (*Gaudium et Spes* 45)

So how does one know if they are called to marriage? If you think you have found that special someone to share your life there are a few things that can help determine your compatibility. First and foremost spend time alone together in both social and spiritual settings. Go to Adoration together, begin a pattern of praying together asking God to reveal His plans to you. Secondly, spend time with one another's families. Are they people that you can see yourself growing closer to over your lifetime? Also, bring that special person to meet your priest and spiritual director; they should know a lot about you and would have some guidance to offer.

Once you have decided that you are willing to commit to the other, a period of preparation is prescribed to assist the spouses in forming a bond between them, marriage is much more than a grand celebration. The celebration is just the beginning of a new life. Just as the sacrament of baptism gives one new life in the family of the church, the sacrament of marriage gives the spouses new life as the “two become one flesh,” (Gen 2,24). And the work doesn’t end there, married life requires spouses to “help one another to attain holiness in their married life” (*Lumen Gentium*, 11) “Christ is the source of the grace [necessary] to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to bear one another’s burdens, and to love one another with supernatural, tender and fruitful love” (CCC 1642).

Is it even possible to meet someone who shares this view of marriage? Of course it is. Many young people are able to find their spouse through involvement in parish youth groups either as leaders or participants. Attending parish missions or Catholic conferences or other places where many Catholic people have gathered also gives them the opportunity to meet people who share their beliefs. Some couples have been introduced by mutual friends. Many of these couples have become models for the youth in their parish to follow, they are truly living the sacrament according to the teachings of the church.

If you believe that you are being called to the vocation of marriage, remember to bring your concerns to the Lord, ask Him for guidance and most importantly ask Him to help you find your spouse. He is your Father and He knows what is best for you. If you live your life according to His will, you will not be disappointed.



The Ministry of the Pious Union of St. Joseph

By FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SdC

PRAYER INTENTIONS:

At the Shrine of St. Joseph there is a beautiful small chapel dedicated to the Transit of St. Joseph. There you can admire an Italian style sculpture that dates back a century depicting Jesus and Mary, who lovingly assist Joseph in the last moments of his earthly life. This image is very dear to the tradition of the Servants of Charity and the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence who received from their founder, St. Louis Guanella, the mandate to spread the devotion to St. Joseph, patron of the sick and the dying.



Devotees who visit the shrine enter this chapel to pray. To the intercession of St. Joseph they present their supplications, asking him to intercede before God for their health and that of their families.

Every day many devotees call and send prayer requests. There are people suffering in body and spirit, asking for special graces; children asking prayers for their deceased parents, parents mourning the death of a beloved son, spouses asking for a prayer and a blessing for the spouse who is now in the final stages of his/her illness and people asking to be delivered from an addiction to alcohol or drugs that is breaking their lives.

For all of them we pray every day during the Holy Masses celebrated at the Shrine. To St. Joseph, who was introduced in the vision of God by the loving prayers of Jesus and Mary, we ask to assist his devotees; getting for them an increase of grace and courage in their times of trial. For those who then reach the end of their earthly journey, we ask St. Joseph to intercede for them the grace of a happy death embracing Jesus who saves them.

PERPETUAL REMEMBRANCE:

In the same chapel devotees can read the names of persons written in the “Golden Book.” Whose names are these? They are the devotees of St. Joseph who want to remember their deceased loved ones by entering their name in the “Golden Book.”

Many members are part of the chain of prayers in all churches of the Pious Union of St. Joseph throughout the world who rise up to God supplications for the souls in need of purification before entering His eternal vision.

A spiritual embrace is offered by the Servants of Charity, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and pilgrims for the benefit of the souls in our Shrine.

All enrollees receive Spiritual Benefits:

- Masses celebrated by Priests enrolled in the Pious Union of St. Joseph.
- Mass intentions each Wednesday at the Shrine of St. Joseph in Grass Lake.
- First Friday Mass intentions in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Divine Mercy Chaplet every Wednesday
- Daily Rosary, Novenas and special supplications throughout the Year

The name of the dear ones you wish to enroll in “Perpetual Remembrance” will be written in the Golden Book placed beside the image of the *Dying St. Joseph* and they will be remembered in our daily prayers.

A suggested donation of \$10 is for a “Remembrance” for a year, while a \$100 donation is requested “Perpetual Remembrance.” A Remembrance Card will be sent to the donors.

Your donation will be used for the ministry of the Shrine of St. Joseph; spreading devotion to St. Joseph, Patron of the Church and the Suffering and Dying, throughout the U.S.



The Pious Union Library:

His Story is Called Hope

This story is more than just a biography of St. Guanella. It is a pictorial and poetic journey through the most significant events of his life and the impact he made on others.

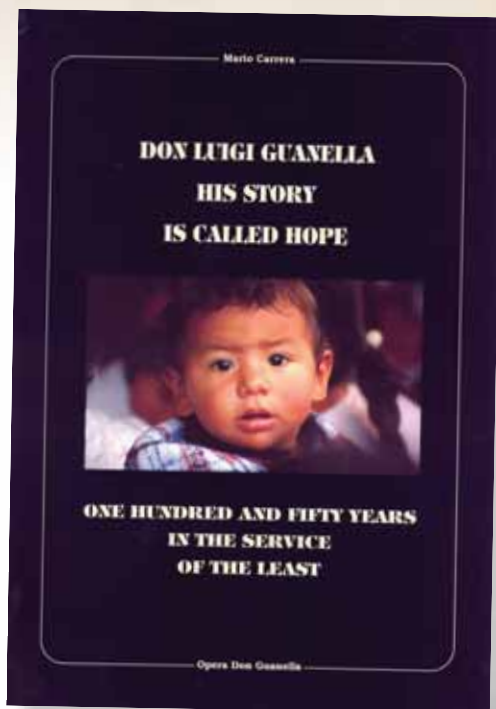
Fr. Mario Carrera guides the reader visually through St. Guanella's journeys and draws you into his charism; helping you to understand how he was able to attract so many holy and dedicated people to follow in his footsteps.

Fr. Mario's story begins in Fraciscio, Italy, leads you around Italy, through the lives of his disciples and into South America, India and Europe.

This biography will awaken your desire to become a humble servant of the Lord; keeping your eyes and ears open to seek the poor, hear their cries and bring to them, "bread and the Lord."

Fr. Rinaldo

Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC



Is God Calling You to Serve Others?

Among those who are deprived of human and spiritual support, we care for developmentally disabled, abandoned youth, indigent elderly, and the incurably and terminally ill. We are also committed to pastoral and missionary work in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa.

The Servants of Charity Priests and Brothers, Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, Cooperators and hundreds of members of the greater Guanellian family serve over a million brothers and sisters while offering comfort, consolation and support. There is room for many others; those needing help and those who want to help.

Consider joining our mission, making the love of God more and more visible in our world. For more information, contact:

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Daughters of St. Mary of Providence

Sr. Brenda McHugh
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St. Louis Center

Fr. Satheesh Alphonse
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Prayer for Vocations

Pray, we beg You, O holy Mother of God, that religious vocations to this work of mercy may be multiplied, and that those who are called to help may be eager to respond for the greater glory of God, your honor, and the relief of many who suffer in misery and abandonment. Amen.



Please consider helping one of our seminarians to become a priest or a brother for one dollar a day.



To become a member of the Pious Union of St. Joseph or to extend membership to prayerful friends and relatives, please send names and addresses to 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake, MI 49240 or email piousunion@pusj.org

Shrine of St. Joseph Sacraments and Hours of Devotion

Mass times: Sun 10:00 a.m. • M, Tu, Th, Fr and Sat 11:30 a.m.

Wed 8:30 a.m. followed by Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament

Benediction: Wed 4:45 p.m. • Divine Mercy Chaplet: Wed 4:30 p.m.

Holy Rosary: Before Mass • **Stations of the Cross:** Friday at 11:00 a.m.

Anointing of the Sick: First Saturday during 11:30 a.m. Mass and when requested

Confession: Before and after Mass, upon request

To receive the Monthly Shrine Bulletin and all special event mailings, please contact the office at 517-522-8017 or send email to piousunion@pusj.org

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