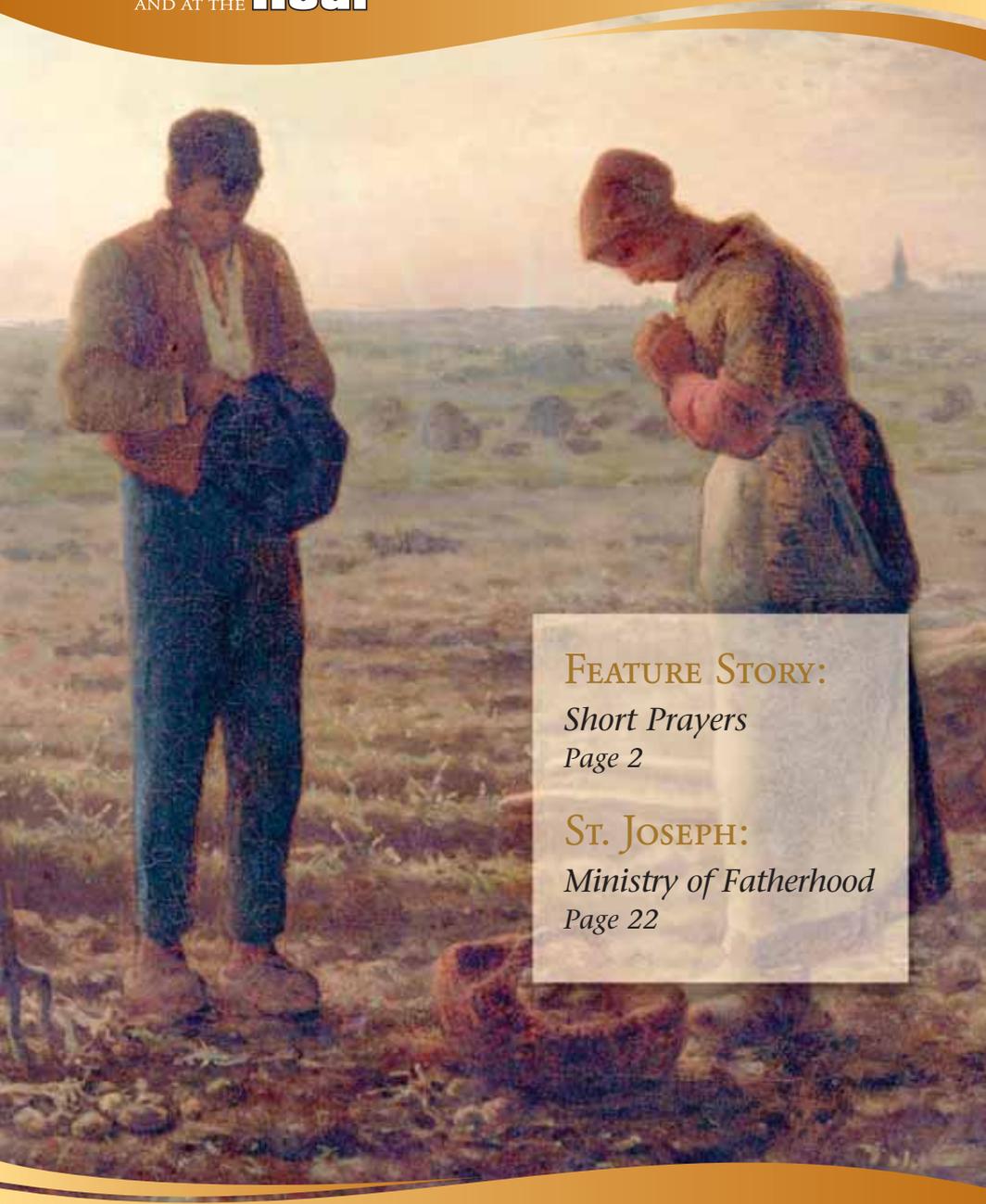


# The Voice of Providence

**now** hour  
AND AT THE

PUBLICATION OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY



**FEATURE STORY:**

*Short Prayers*

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**ST. JOSEPH:**

*Ministry of Fatherhood*

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August–September 2009

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953 East Michigan Avenue  
Grass Lake, Michigan 49240-9210  
517-522-8017 voice 517-522-8387 fax

PiousUnion@pusj.org  
www.servantsofcharity.org  
www.pusj.org

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Fr. Joseph Rinaldo SdC

EDITING TEAM:

Joe Yekulis, Lauren Hill, Kim Beaubien

CONTRIBUTORS: Fr. Enzo Addari SdC,  
Fr. Dennis Weber SdC, Fr. Charlton Viray  
SdC, Fr. Ronald Jesiah SdC, Fr. Paul  
Oggioni SdC, Fr. Silvio DeNard SdC,  
Fr. Satheesh Caniton Alphonse SdC,  
Fr. Nino Minetti SdC , Fr. Dominic  
Saginario SdC

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### **The Voice of Providence:**

Is a non-profit bi-monthly publication of the Divine Providence Province of the Servants of Charity, a Catholic Religious Congregation founded by Blessed Fr. Louis Guanella, (1842-1915).

### **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.



# Reconciliation

BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC

I went to visit a friend at the hospital and stopped at the nurses' desk to inquire about the room number. I proceeded to the room but my friend was not there. Another man with the same name was there. I apologized for the intrusion and started to leave. He called me back and asked me if I had some time for him.

He confided, "I am a Catholic, but I don't go to church. Nobody comes to visit me, not even my relatives. No one loves me. I guess I have many enemies."

I told him he needed to reconcile with himself, with others and with God, in that order.

"What is that?" he said.

Reconciliation is a process by which we are restored from enmity to friendship with God. We have already been reconciled by the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. God is the beginning and the end of any process of reconciliation; we have only to ask for it and accept it.

The first step is to reconcile with myself, that is, to acknowledge that I am a sinner. Once I have recognized that I am a sinner, I forgive myself and try to change my life. The second step follows with the understanding that if I am a sinner, I am at the same level as all the people who have hurt and offended me; therefore I forgive them and I reconcile with them. We are all sinners in need of God's mercy. Only then, God will grant us reconciliation and forgive us all. Prayer for perseverance follows, "Our Father in heaven, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." In return, the grace of God will fill us with that peace and joy we have been looking for. In God's will is our peace.



# Short Prayers

BY THOMAS HERRON

*“Aspire to God with short but frequent outpourings of the heart.”*

*St. Francis de Sales*

Whatever we call them—short prayers, spiritual aspirations, holy maxims, invocations—they are ever important in our busy frenetic lives in this 21st century. Some of us never seem to have ample time to complete one task before moving to the next, let alone to take enough time for prayer. But we can take a cue from the past. In the early church the monks of the desert, dedicated to work and prayer, relied on short prayers in harmony with work, to keep them focused, vibrant, and persevering. Also, with short prayers we can keep the command of Jesus in our lives to “pray always.” No matter where we are or how arduous our task, the short prayer is ever ready in our mind and heart to fill us with inspiration, energy, and recollection of God at our side.

It was Polonius, long winded as he was, in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* who spoke the wise maxim, “Brevity is the soul of wit.” We can apply that to our spiritual life by expressing ourselves to God using as few words as possible. That does not preclude us from remembering that we should prolong prayer if the occasion or circumstance so orders or if the Holy Spirit so inspires us: “In those days he [Jesus] departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God” (Lk 6, 12). Prayer, whatever its length, should be encouraged. It is the short prayer, however, that is suitable with the activities of our fast paced world and should not be overlooked.

One of the time tested little prayers taught to me by my mother and reinforced by the sisters at St. James School in the 1930's was "Jesus, Mary, Joseph." It was the Sisters of Mercy at St. James School who insisted that we write J.M.J. (Jesus, Mary, Joseph) at the top of the pages of any paper we prepared whether it was language arts, arithmetic, or penmanship. I remember this seventy years later and felt a twinge of guilt when I discontinued the practice many years ago. Thus at an early age I was introduced to short prayers, called aspirations by sister, and hence have had an affection and habitual practice reciting them ever since.

My menu of short prayers has increased over the years with some discontinued and others added as the vicissitudes of life vary. They can come from many different sources including one's own creation or the lives of the saints. The Old and New Testament are a rich source of



prayer with particular nuggets found in the Psalms and the teachings of Jesus in the four Gospels. Favorite short prayers can differ from individual to individual depending on their state in life, their particular needs, and spiritual yearnings. Some are universal. When tempted say: “Make haste to help me, O Lord” (Ps 70, 2). You might choose your own favorite or reflect on the affirmation: “Who will separate me from the love of Christ?” (Rom 8, 39).

For meditation on the four last things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, there is the beautiful antiphon found in Morning Prayer: “When shall I come to the end of my pilgrimage and enter the presence of God?” Or we can pray for our loved ones with the familiar: “Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.”

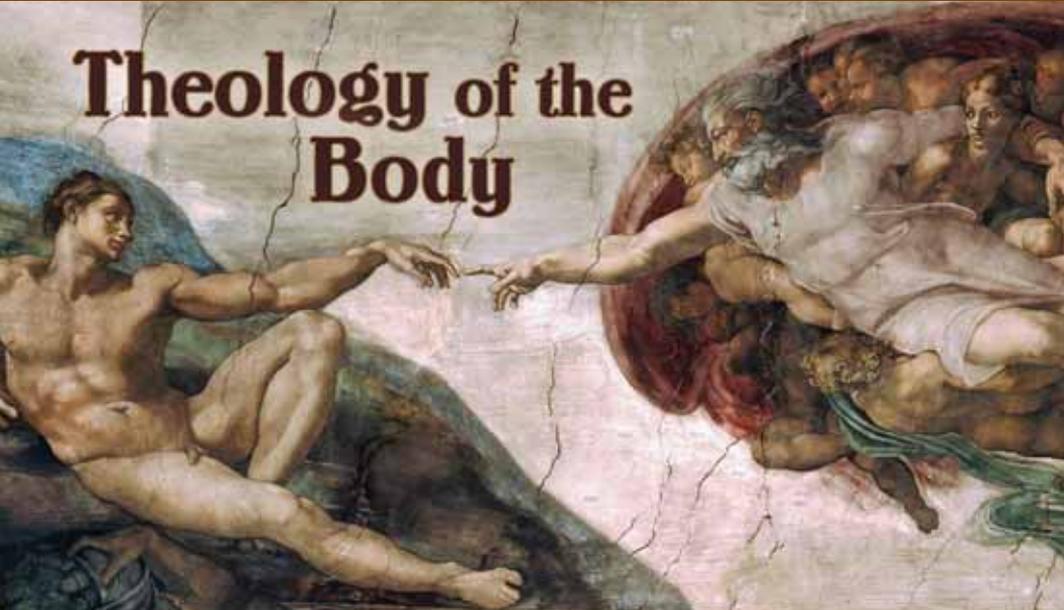
The Jesus prayer can be our lament at anytime: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me a sinner.” Or the shorter version may be preferred: “Jesus, have mercy on me a sinner.” This is reminiscent of the tax collector in Luke 18, 13. What a beautiful prayer to have ready on our lips at the time of death.

The lives of the saints are a rich source for brief prayers. We need to remember the beautiful prayer from Saint Faustina of Divine Mercy: “Jesus, I trust in you.” One of my favorites is from St. Augustine: “Thou hast made us for thy self, O Lord, and our hearts will not rest until they rest in thee.” And there is always the favorite utterance of John Paul II found throughout the Bible: “Be not afraid.” The saints in the New Testament offer us memorable prayers. Two, spoken by Peter to Jesus, are as follows: “To whom should we go, you alone have the words of eternal life?” (Jn 6, 68). And we can say with Peter: “Lord you know everything, you know that I love you” (Jn 21, 15-17).

Short prayers can be a regimen for a busy life. Jesus gave us the example of uttering short prayers by his seven last words on the cross. There also he gave us Mary, his mother. “Woman, behold your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold your mother.” We can always pray these words as we ask Mary for her help.

Finally, don’t forget to pray daily for the dying: “O St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus Christ and true spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, pray for us and for the dying this day and night.”

# Theology of the Body



## *And the Word Became Flesh...* *(John I, 14)*

BY FR. DENNIS M. WEBER, SDC

**T**heology of the Body: on the surface, this seems to be a peculiar use of words since the words “theology” and “body” do not seem to have a connection. “Theology,” in its strict sense, is the study of God and the word “body” has many uses and meanings none of which seem to be associated with theology. Yet this term, Theology of the Body, is one that Pope John Paul II himself used to describe a series of talks that he gave during his Wednesday General Audiences over a period of five years. Beginning on September 5, 1979 and ending on November 30, 1984, the Holy Father broke open for us, in 133 audience addresses, a unique, monumental and, some might say, “revolutionary” perspective on marriage and the family, human sexuality and the very meaning of life.

The Pontiff himself makes the link between “theology” and “body” for us in his General Audience of April 2, 1980. The Pope referred to the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus, in answering the Pharisees’ question



about divorce, went back to the beginning of Sacred Scripture and quoted the second chapter of Genesis: “That is why a man leaves his mother and father and clings to his wife, and the two become one flesh” (cf Mt 19, 3-5). Then the Holy Father said that this “is the beginning of the theology of the body. The fact that theology also considers the body should not astonish or surprise anyone who is aware of the mystery and reality of the Incarnation.

Theology is that science whose subject is divinity. Through the fact that the Word of God became flesh, the body entered theology through the main door. The Incarnation and the redemption that springs from it became also the definitive source of the sacramentality of marriage.”

It is the Incarnation of Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man, which allows the Holy Father to couple the words “theology” and “body.” Pope John Paul II further emphasized the connection when he said in the same General Audience, “Modern bio-physiology can supply a great deal of precise information about human sexuality. However, knowledge of the personal dignity of the human body and of sex must still be drawn from other sources. A special source is the Word of God himself, which contains the revelation of the body, going back to the beginning.”

I would like to present a series of quotes from Christopher West, a theologian and the foremost proponent of Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body in the United States. He amplified the above meaning of this theology by saying the following: “John Paul II’s theology of the body is most often cast as an extended catechesis on marriage and sexual love. It is certainly that, but it is also much more. In short, the theology of the body is one of the Catholic Church’s most critical efforts in modern times to help the world become more ‘conscious of the mystery and reality of the Incarnation,’ and, through that, to become more conscious of the humanum, of the very purpose and meaning of human life.” In addition he said, “his theology of the body is nothing but an extended

*“The theology of the body is one of the Catholic Church’s most critical efforts in modern times to help the world become more ‘conscious of the mystery and reality of the Incarnation,’ and... of the very purpose and meaning of human life.”*

commentary on this fundamental truth: Christ fully reveals man to himself through the revelation – in his body – of the mystery of divine love.” Finally, I would like to offer this: “Through reason, man can discover the workings of his own body as a biological organism, often with great precision and benefit to humanity. But the human body is not only biological. It is also, and even more so, theological. Only to the degree that we know what our bodies ‘say’ do we know who we really are and, therefore, how we are to live.”

Admittedly, Pope John Paul II’s catechesis on the Theology of the Body is of great personal interest to me. However, I believe it is sorely needed today given the context of a world which has, to a great degree, devalued our human sexuality and love, diminished the institutions of marriage and family life and

divorced the meaning of life and of the human person from Love, Truth and God Himself. John Paul II’s Theology of the Body can only support us in valuing our human sexuality and love, assist us in building-up the institutions of marriage and family life and help us to “marry” the meaning of life and of the human person to Love, Truth and God Himself.

Annunciation, by Titian





# VIOLENCE AND OUR FAITH

BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC

**I** read with dismay the news about a mother who killed her three-year-old baby and buried him under the sand in the playground. How can a mother kill her own baby?

“Why did you do it?” they asked the 23-year-old mother.

“I did not want my son to grow and live without love as I grew and lived without love,” replied the homeless mother.

Many families are torn by violence. Our communities are devastated by violence. Our faith is tested by violence. Violence in the world, all the way down to our country, our city streets, our schools and our homes is destroying the lives and the hopes of millions of people.

Fear of violence is paralyzing our communities, especially the elderly, and polarizing our neighborhoods. We are building more fences, changing door locks, and installing sophisticated alarm systems. We are hiring security guards.

The celebration of violence in the news media, entertainment industry, and video games is poisoning our children.

Beyond the violence in our streets is the violence in our hearts. Hostility, hatred, despair and indifference are at the heart of a growing culture of violence. Verbal violence in our families, communications, and talk shows contribute to this culture of violence. Pornography assaults the dignity of women and contributes to violence against them. Our social fabric is being torn apart by a culture of violence that leaves our children dead on our streets and families afraid in their homes. Our society, instead of a commitment to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” is caught up in the elusive pursuit of protection rather than happiness.

It does not have to be this way. It was not always like this. We can turn away from violence. We can build communities of greater peace. It begins with a clear conviction: respect for life. Respect for life is not just a slogan or a program. It is a fundamental moral principle flowing from our teaching on the dignity of the human person. It is an approach to life that values people over things. Respect for life must guide the choices we make as individuals and as a society. What we do and will not do, what we value and consume, whom we admire and whose example we follow, what we support and what we oppose. Respect for human life is the starting point for confronting a culture of violence.

The Catholic community cannot ignore the moral and human costs of so much violence in our midst. We are called to a personal conversion and to mutually embrace a common framework for action. The Catholic community can bring strong convictions and vital experiences to the dialog on how to best overcome the violence that is tearing our nation apart.

Words cannot stop weapons and statements will not eliminate hatred. Yet commitment and conversion can change us and together we can change our culture and communities. Person by person, family by family, neighborhood by neighborhood, we must take back our communities from the evil and fear that comes with so much violence. We believe our faith in Jesus Christ gives us the values, vision and hope that can bring an important measure of peace to our hearts, our homes and our streets.

We can start by praying for peace in our hearts and our world. We have to learn how to feel the pain, anger and frustration that come from violence. We have to examine our own attitudes and actions to see whether they contribute to or diminish violence.

We can actively join advocacy groups strategically confronting the violence of abortion, the scourge of human trafficking and the easy availability of deadly weapons. We can support community efforts to attack the roots of crime and violence such as poverty, substance abuse, lack of opportunity, racism and family disintegration. Finally, we must convince ourselves that violence is unacceptable and learn again the lesson of Pope Paul VI: "If you want peace, work for justice."

Let us hear and act on the words of Jesus: "Blessed are the peacemakers, they shall be called children of God" (Mt 5, 9).



# Our Lady of the Workers

BY FR. DOMINIC SAGINARIO, SdC

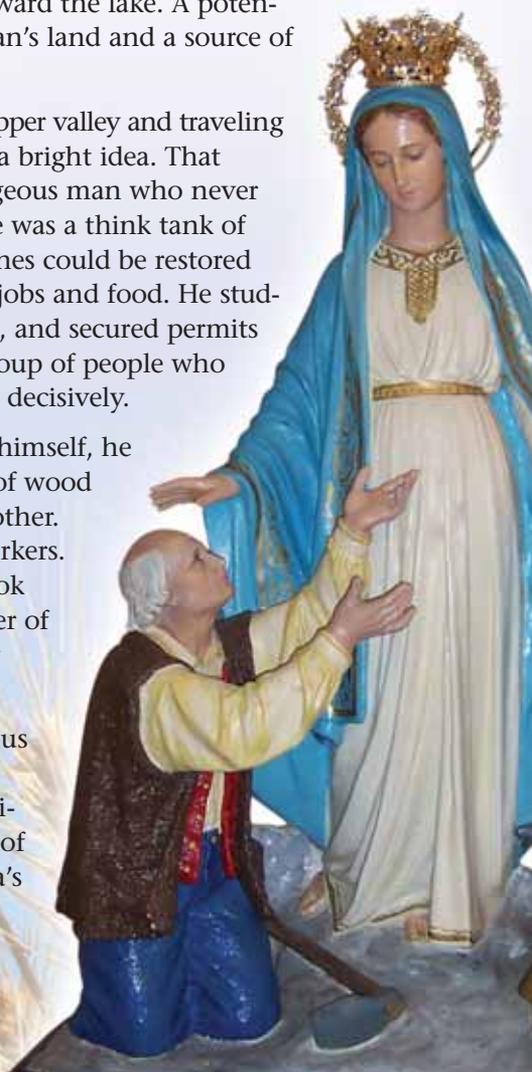
**T**he history of the Icon and the title Our Lady of the Workers makes an extremely interesting story. It sounds like a fairy tale, but it is a true story of real people and real events.

At the north end of Lake Como there was a large stagnant area of low land, locked by Alpine mountains that had turned into a putrid swamp and marshes fed by storm water and melting snows. Reeds, weeds and brush obstructed the flow of water toward the lake. A potentially fertile land had become a no-man's land and a source of malaria.

One day, a saintly priest, born on the upper valley and traveling through those lands quite often, had a bright idea. That priest was Fr. Louis Guanella, a courageous man who never gave up when faced by challenges. He was a think tank of projects and believed that those marshes could be restored into fertile land capable of providing jobs and food. He studied the possibilities, consulted experts, and secured permits and assistance. Then he gathered a group of people who believed in the project and moved on decisively.

Since he worked for God and not for himself, he first built a small and modest chapel of wood on a knoll in honor of the Blessed Mother. Next, he built a few shacks for the workers. At sunrise and at daybreak they all took time for a prayer to the Blessed Mother of God and started to address her as Our Lady of the Workers.

It was hard, unpleasant and dangerous work. However, in a few years, with the help of benefactors, experts, engineers, workers, his priests and a few of his special residents, Father Guanella's dream came true.



The marshes and swamps turned into fields of corn and pasture. The putrid smelling bogs gave way to gardens, trees, roads and drinking water pipelines.

The neighboring farmers and owners, skeptical at first, now joined in the effort. At this point even the government intervened with a plan that included the entire region.

The small chapel of the Virgin Mary remained always at the heart of the whole project. A very meaningful group sculpture in wood was added. The Blessed Mother is standing at the center gently bowed toward a farmer kneeling in prayer while, on her other side, a worker, also on his knees, kisses her cloak.

For the first time, on May 4, 1901, they celebrated the Feast day of Our Lady of the Workers. Since then this celebration has been held on the first Sunday of May.

The message and the meaning of Our Lady of the Workers are powerful. The background is an historical event of redemption. Where death and stagnation sprawled now stands a town of dignified life and employment.

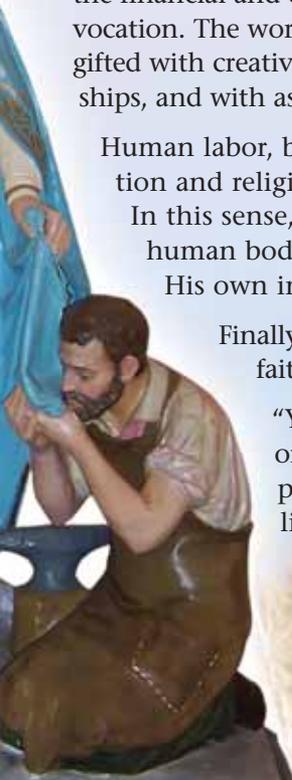
In the statue, work is strictly connected with faith and the Mother of God. Because human labor reaches beyond production, it cannot be limited to the financial and commercial aspects. Human work has the dignity of a vocation. The worker is not a production machine, but a spiritual being gifted with creativity, with family and social responsibilities and relationships, and with aspirations that transcend the business contract.

Human labor, besides production is also beauty, art, creation, imagination and religion. It cannot be confined to an exchange of goods.

In this sense, human labor is reduced to prostitution where the human body performs for money. The Creator who made him in His own image and likeness has sealed the dignity of man.

Finally, the image of Our Lady of the Workers inspires intimacy, faith and tenderness.

“You are not alone” she says. Whatever our experience of life, we will always have a mother close to us. It is a presence of love, a presence that knows the turmoil of life, but also offers the way to overcome it. Have faith!



# Guanellian Lay Movement

Spreading the Good News

Throughout the World

**T**he Michigan Chapter of the Midwest Guanellian Lay Movement has been meeting for several months. Encouraged by the message we received at the National Conference of the Guanellian Lay Movement last year, we have formed a Steering Committee to get us started and obtained valuable feedback from other Lay Groups, brainstorming about what it is that will bind us together.

The need to provide information and encourage participation, were topics of discussion at recent meetings. A decision was made to continue publishing articles in the *Voice of Providence* and the *Shrine of St. Joseph Pastoral Bulletin* and we are now planning to circulate a brochure.



J. Yekulis

Guanellian Family gatherings, sponsored by the Michigan Chapter of the GLM will take place on the 4th Friday of the month at the Shrine of St. Joseph in Grass Lake. The first was held on July 27th. We plan to use this column to notify you of future gatherings and formation topics.

## The 2009 4th National Conference of the Guanellian

**Lay Movement** will be held Friday, October 2nd through Sunday, October 4th in the Chicago area, hosted by the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence. The theme, chosen for this year, is "The Vocation of the Laity in the Church." The Midwest chapters: Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, and South Dakota will attend and Chapters from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and

Vancouver, BC have also been invited. Social activities are being pursued in Chicago in conjunction with the Conference.

**You are invited to attend.** Because many of you are involved in works of Mercy – praying for suffering and dying people, visiting the sick, feeding the poor, working with the handicapped, and caring for the aged – you are already members of the Guanellian Family through your relationship with the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and the Servants of Charity. Let's join together to move forward with a commitment to Blessed Louis Guanella, our Founder, fulfilling and continuing what he started many years ago. Your participation, input, and new ideas are encouraged and welcome.

**Registration is easy.** Just contact Joe Yekulis at St. Louis Center in Chelsea, Michigan, 734-475-8430 or e-mail him at [joeyekulis@servantsofcharity.org](mailto:joeyekulis@servantsofcharity.org). Or, you may contact Sister Sharon Williams at Mt. St. Joseph in Lake Zurich, Illinois, by phone 847-525-0324 or email [rssharonw@aol.com](mailto:rssharonw@aol.com).

## *You're Invited*

# *4th National Guanellian Lay Movement Conference*

*"The Vocation of the Laity in the Church"*

*October 3-4, 2009 • Chicago, Illinois*

### **For more information:**

*Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC • 734-475-8430*

*Sr. Sharon Williams, DSMP • 847-525-0324*

### **To register:**

*Joe Yekulis, 734-475-8430 or email*

*[joeyekulis@servantsofcharity.org](mailto:joeyekulis@servantsofcharity.org)*



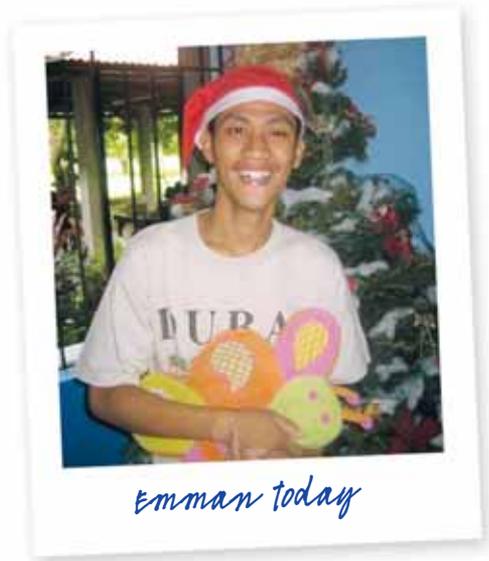
# Emman, Beloved of God

BY SEM. CESAR ESTILLER

**H**e was staring with awe and wonder at this bearded man in front of him with a crucifix hanging on his neck, gently looking at him and compassionately patting his head.

Holding the crucifix, the man was speaking words he hardly understood. But, after what seemed an eternity, the first word that the boy uttered was “JESUS?” It was more a recognition rather than a question, as he kept gazing at the face of this big yet gentle person in front of him. And Fr. Luigi de Giambattista, deeply moved by the child’s trusting utterance, bent down to embrace this innocent boy who associated his face with that of our Savior. That event, in a crowded prison-like drop-in center for abandoned children in Quezon City, Philippines, was turned into a moment of grace... an encounter of God’s presence in both ways. “Yes, this boy is beloved of God and from now on this child will be called Emmanuel” Fr. Luigi thought to himself.

Emmanuel used to be a face without a name, no different from the hundreds or maybe thousands of other nameless children roaming around the crowded and often dangerous streets of Manila eking out a living by wiping the windshields of some luxury cars caught in the chaotic traffic of the city. Or sleeping on the pavement wherever they can find a space safe enough to squeeze their little bodies into and spend another night in their young lives. Yet, this once nameless child – hardly able to talk, with knock-knees, severe mental retardation and multiple personality



disorder – is a lot luckier than most other street urchins in the Philippines. A police officer found him scavenging for food in Cubao, one of the bustling commercial districts in Quezon City. He took heart and provided him with a piece of bread and a bottle of soda; and later placed him in the custody of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) that runs a Drop-In Center in the area. Efforts were made by the government agency to learn his identity and locate his family, but to no avail. No one knew who his parents were, where he came from or even who he was. Thus, he was entrusted to the Servants of Charity where he found a loving home and a nurturing place to grow up.

The Servants of Charity in the Philippines, now celebrating the 20th year of God’s providence and their humble work of caring for the poorest of the poor, especially the most abandoned, strive to fully live their call to be always and at all times an “open tent of charity for all.” The seed of Divine Providence that was planted in June of 1989 with the arrival of Don Mimi Saginario, SdC, the first Guanellian to arrive in the Philippines, is now becoming a large tree that offers shade and nourishment to the growing family of “God’s special children.” Today, our Mother House in Quezon City serves as the Formation Center for young people who feel the call and desire to nurture their vocation to become

*“God’s special children” and staff at  
Shelter-Home in Quezon City, Philippines.*







*Our Lady of the Workers*

Guanellian priests and brothers, Good Samaritans of Jesus among His little ones. The Blessed Guanella Center, located in the same compound as the seminary, has for the past sixteen years been a genuine home, a caring place, a conducive place for learning, a shelter for hundreds of needy people and differently-abled persons. Also opened in 1996, our Shelter-Home for abandoned and mentally disadvantaged male children is a place where Emman and other special children find a family that celebrates the common dignity of being “Children of the same Father.”



*"Gentle" Fr. Luigi de Giambattista (right) and his friends enjoying a bit of recreation in Querson City.*

It's been eight years since the boy without an identity took the name Emmanuel and joined our family, the Servants of Charity. Today Emman, as he is fondly called, has metamorphosed into a gentle and loving young man with a vivacious personality, amusing and entertaining everyone by his distinct dancing prowess. At twenty-one, he remains an innocent child afflicted with severe mental retardation, yet, treasured and deeply loved.

His name literally means "God is with us." Yes, Emman's finding a home with us mirrors God's abiding presence to us all and captures the mystery hidden behind our call for a loving reciprocity. For it is in touching and nurturing a fragile human life that we, in turn, are blessed by the transforming love that only comes through ministering to the least, the last and the lost; the little ones of God.



# Filled with Joy

BY SR. NANCY McLENNON, DSMP

I believe that the story of my vocation began as does life itself... with my mom and dad. I don't believe that they actually ever prayed that I would become a religious sister, but they laid the foundation so that when the Lord chose to call me, I would be ready. When that time came, they were completely supportive in my decision to follow Him. Mom and Dad raised me and my brother and sisters in a warm, loving Catholic family. I am sure that many sacrifices were made, which we kids were never aware of, in order to send all of us to Catholic schools, assuring us a good foundation in our faith formation.

We were not an especially "holy" family, but an occasional family rosary in the months of May and October and daily Mass during Lent were encouraged. We always assisted at Sunday Mass as a family. It wasn't a "rule," it was just what we

did. Grace at meals was as normal as bread on the table. Many joy-filled celebrations with our very large Irish Catholic family, including the annual anniversary Mass after the death of my grandfather and the breakfast at grandma's afterwards, emphasized the importance of family and faith.

Mom was a convert to the faith. She liked to help us with our religion homework so that she too could learn more. During elementary school, I remember that every once in awhile, the sisters would ask: "who is



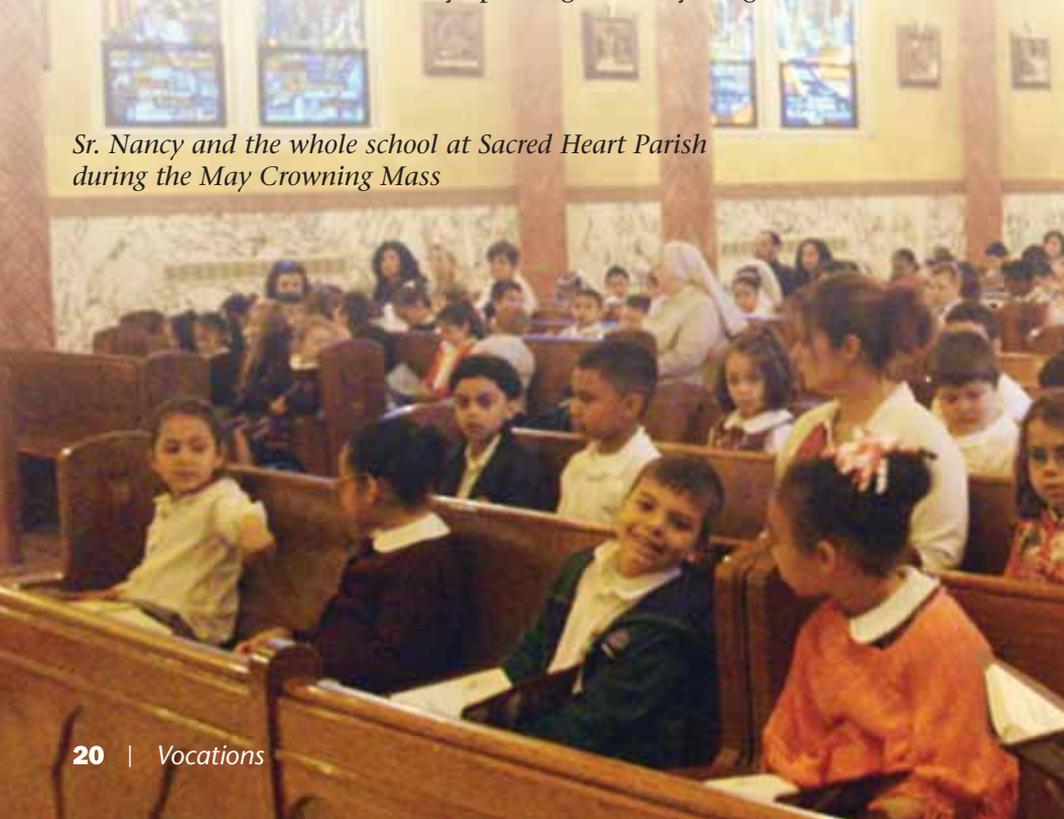
*Sr. Nancy with two second graders at the annual Father-Daughter dance*

going to be a sister when you grow up?" I would invariably raise my hand, as did many of my classmates, without any real understanding of what we were saying, but perhaps the seed was being planted.

When I was in high school, I joined the Legion of Mary with some of my friends. It was a club devoted to the Blessed Mother. We would meet once a week, pray together and share stories about good works that we were supposed to do during the week. My best friend, Sandy, who also joined the Legion, suggested that we volunteer at St. Mary of Providence, a residential facility in Chicago that cared for and educated girls with developmental disabilities.

I remember well the first Saturday that Sandy and I went to St. Mary's. I was impressed by the sisters we met. They were unlike any sisters I knew. I had been taught by the Sisters of Mercy for over 10 years. I certainly admired and respected them, maybe even had a healthy fear of a few of them, but I never felt I could get close to any of them and have a normal conversation. I remember going home that first Saturday from St. Mary's and telling my mom and dad at dinner that I had met some sisters that day who were actually "human." They had seemed so genuine and easy to talk to. Not only was I impressed by the sisters, but I also fell in love with the very special girls and young ladies at

*Sr. Nancy and the whole school at Sacred Heart Parish during the May Crowning Mass*



St. Mary's who, despite their handicaps, were absolutely magnetic. Slowly, the Blessed Mother was revealing to me the path that her Son desired for me.

I never considered myself to be "holy" or different from any of my friends. I had a very full and normal life as a teenager. I loved sports (still do!!) and participated actively in many, especially basketball, baseball and swimming. I loved parties and went to many. I dated several boys, including one who was very special to me throughout grade school and high school, and always enjoyed their company.

However, none of those things filled me with the same joy I felt when I was with the sisters and special girls at St. Mary's. I believe this joy was the Lord's way of telling me what I was to do with my life. I spent extra time with the Lord before the Blessed Sacrament that last year in high school asking Him what He wanted of me. Asking to enter the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence was just the right thing to do. I entered the Community in the fall, after graduation. That was a little over 46 years ago, and though there have been some "downs" to go with the many "ups" during this time, I have never regretted saying "yes" to the Lord, and I feel that my life has truly been filled with joy.





# Ministry of Fatherhood

BY FR. TARCISIO STRAMARE

“**S**t. Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood. It is precisely in this way that he ‘cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation’ and is truly a ‘minister of salvation.’” (GR, 8) These very words could be defined as the heart of the Apostolic Exhortation *Guardian of the Redeemer*, written by John Paul II about St. Joseph, who he believed held a special mission in God’s plan of salvation.

Joseph’s vocation created him as, not only, the worthy husband of Mary, the “suitable partner” (Gn 2, 18), according to the degree demanded by the dignity of his wife who was chosen to be the Mother of God, but also created him with the heart of a father. Because of his vocation the incarnated Son of God could see in Joseph, as in a mirror, the love of his Father in heaven. St. Joseph has been described as the “shadow” of the Father.

“St. Joseph is called father of Jesus in the same way he is called spouse of Mary: not according to the flesh but according to the married union, wrote St. Augustine. Jesus is united to his earthly father more than in a mere adoption.” Neither is Joseph an adoptive father, nor Jesus an adopted son. The people of Nazareth were not the only ones who considered Jesus “son of Joseph” (Jn 1, 45. Lk 2, 23). Long before and in a deeper way, it was the same Jesus who considered himself a son within his earthly family; a family that he himself had chosen and purposely formed for his Incarnation as foreseen by the plan of Redemption.

Joseph’s fatherhood was recognized by the Holy Spirit in Scripture, and was honored by Jesus’ obedience during his earthly life (Lk 2, 51). Joseph also honored his fatherhood by making it “a service, a sacrifice to the mystery of the Incarnation and to its redemptive mission. He used his legal authority within the Holy Family as a total offering of himself, life and work to Jesus and Mary” (Paul VI).



St. Joseph, more than any other father on earth, was aware that responsible fatherhood is a service, a ministry. His fatherhood constituted an appealing example to all fathers (and also mothers). Fatherhood and motherhood do not have any property rights on children. Each child already has his “highest” father, who is God. Human fatherhood has its origin in divine fatherhood. Therefore, fatherhood has to be exercised as a service (the highest service in creation) that gives the opportunity to the child to fulfill his/her vocation according to God’s plan and not according to a plan imposed by a man, even though it may be a worthy and righteous one.

By choosing the word “Guardian,” John Paul II wanted to make a point: to underline St. Joseph’s “ministry,” in the service he provided for Redemption. “Minister of salvation” is the role that God entrusted to Joseph regarding the Savior; a ministry carried out by Joseph through the exercise of his human fatherhood.

Because of that, he is an example within and to the Church that she should “keep his humble, mature way of serving and ‘taking part’ in the plan of salvation” before her eyes. (GR, 1)

He is the example and model of fathers (mothers): a father should never be a father-boss or a father-creator, but a humble “father-guardian.”



# In Suffering, Trust God, Pray with St. Joseph

**Excerpt from a speech given by Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to the sick and suffering people of the Cardinal Paul-Emile Leger Center in Cameroon, Africa.**

**I** have been looking forward to spending this time with you... I am happy to be able to greet you. I wish to bring a word of comfort from the Lord... and invite you to turn towards Christ and towards Mary, whom he has given to us as our mother. She knew suffering, and she followed her Son along the path to Calvary, preserving in her heart that love which Jesus came to bring to all people.

Faced with suffering, sickness and death, it is tempting to cry out in pain, as Job did... Even Jesus cried out, shortly before his death. As our condition deteriorates, our anguish increases; some are tempted to doubt whether God is present in their lives. Job, however, was conscious of God's presence; his was not a cry of rebellion, but, from the depths of his sorrow, he allowed his trust to grow. His friends, like each of us when faced with the suffering of a loved one, tried to console him, but they used hollow and empty words.

For us, when we are in the presence of such torment, we feel powerless and we cannot find the right words. Before a brother or sister plunged into the mystery of the Cross, a respectful and compassionate silence, a prayerful presence, a gesture of tenderness and comfort, a kind look, a smile, often achieve more than many words. This was the experience of



a small group of men and women, including the Virgin Mary and the Apostle John, who followed Jesus in the depths of his suffering at the time of his Passion and his death on the Cross.

...Every person who suffers helps Christ to carry his Cross and climbs with him the path to Golgotha in order, one day, to rise again with him. When we see the infamy to which Jesus was subjected, when we contemplate his face on the Cross, when we recognize his appalling suffering, we can glimpse, through faith, the radiant face of the Risen Lord who tells us that suffering and sickness will not have the last word in our human lives.

Since the Resurrection... there have been countless witnesses who have turned, with faith and hope, towards the Savior of mankind,

recognizing his presence at the heart of their suffering. The saints have given us a fine example by living lives entirely dedicated to God. Saint Teresa of Avila, who placed her monastery under the protection of Saint Joseph, was healed from a particular ailment on the very day of his feast. She said she had never prayed to him in vain, and she recommended him to all who claimed not to know how to pray: "I do not understand," she wrote, "how anyone can think of the Queen of angels and of all the trials she suffered during the early years of the divine child Jesus, without thanking Saint Joseph for the perfect devotion with which he came to assist them both. May anyone who lacks a teacher of prayer choose this admirable Saint as a master, for under his guidance no one need be afraid of going astray." Saint Teresa saw in Saint Joseph not only an intercessor for bodily health, but also an intercessor for the health of the soul, a teacher of prayer.

Dear friends who are sick, we too can choose him as a teacher of prayer, whatever our state of health, and all families can do the same. I am thinking especially of hospital staff, and all those who work in the field of health care. By accompanying those who suffer, through the care and attention you offer them, you accomplish an act of Charity and Love that God recognizes: "I was sick, and you visited me." All of you, doctors and researchers, have the task of putting into practice every legitimate form of pain relief; you are called... to protect human life, you are the defenders of life from conception to natural death. For every person, respect for life is a right and at the same time a duty, since all life is a gift from God. With you, I would like to give thanks to the Lord for all who, in one way or another, work in the service of the suffering. I encourage priests and those who visit the sick to commit themselves to an active and friendly presence in their hospital chaplaincy, or to assure an ecclesial presence in the home, for the comfort and spiritual support of the sick. In accordance with his promise, God will give you a just reward, and he will recompense you in heaven.

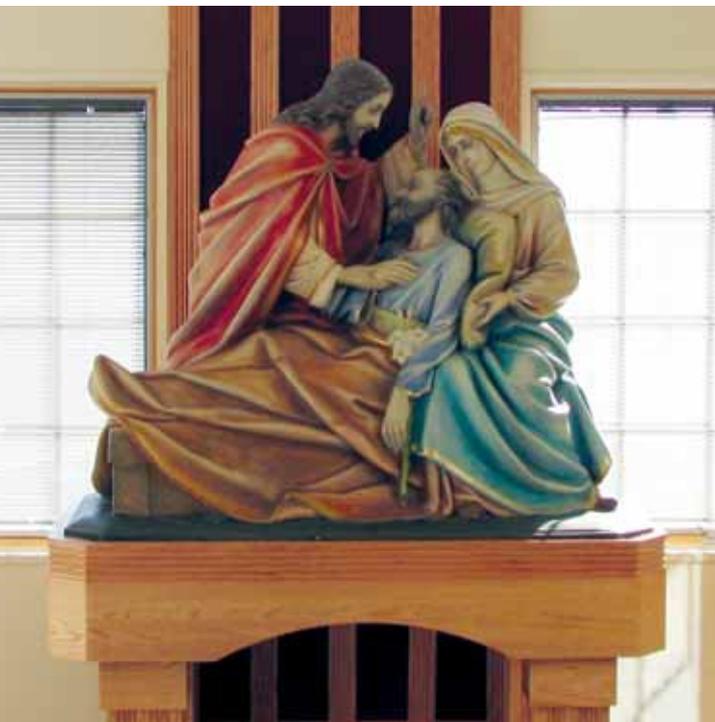
I would like to assure each of you of my affection and my prayer. I also want to express my wish that none of you should ever feel alone. In fact it is the task of every human person, created in the image of Christ, to be a good neighbor to those around him. I entrust all of you to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, our Mother, and to the intercession of Saint Joseph.

May God grant that we become bearers for one another of the mercy, tenderness and love of our God.



As heirs to the spirituality of Blessed Guanella, we learn not to worry. We can all be grateful for this powerful reminder of our dependence on God and reliance on the intercession of our dear patron, St. Joseph. We thank God for volunteers and for your generous donations which take care of our Priest and everything from removing snow (so that Mass can be offered throughout the winter) to planting trees, cutting the grass and maintaining the Shrine itself.

Although some larger projects are slow to materialize, such as the walkways and gathering space for Mass at the foot of Calvary and additions



L. Hill

to the Grotto, some improvements have been made possible this year by your generosity. Jesus, in the Tabernacle, was moved from the small side Chapel into the center of the main Sanctuary, to the center of our devotion, and the statue of the Death of St.

Joseph was moved to a small votive chapel. The statue of St. Joseph and Jesus was brought into the Sanctuary and a new statue

of our Blessed Mother with Jesus in her arms was placed near the tabernacle along with a statue of the Sacred Heart. This was accomplished with your help, with the help of local benefactors and by the gifts of time and carpentry talents cheerfully given by the Campbell, Parrish and Zangara families.

You may recall reading that a beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was given to the Shrine by St. Mary Parish in Spring Lake Michigan, with their donation of the beautiful black marble altar for

Calvary. The statue was in need of major repair and after the hands were modeled by Suzanne Trevino, a pilgrim from Indiana, Andy Abro and Celia Rossi organized a campaign to raise funds for restoration. This beautiful statue of Jesus, with arms outstretched in blessing, now stands inside the vestibule.



L. Hill

You have also contributed to the printing of two important Guanellian prayer books this year: the Guanellian Way to Pray the Rosary, which some of you have already received and the primary devotional booklet of the Pious Union of St. Joseph, The Holy Cloak in Honor of St. Joseph, which will soon go to print. There are many beautiful writings of Blessed Louis Guanella that we hope to print for you when funding becomes available.

As the saying goes, “many hands make light work” and it is equally true that there is might in small things that are gathered together for the good. Many small offerings gathered together for St. Joseph under the stewardship of the Servants of Charity heap honor upon our dear patron, little by little.

If you are traveling in Michigan and plan to visit the Shrine, please call the office so that we can greet you and offer the hospitality of the community.

*Please note that shortly after Labor Day construction will begin in the Shrine. St. Joseph Builders will be installing a new ceiling and everything will be moved out for several weeks. Mass will be offered in the Holy Family Pastoral Center during construction.*



## Dear Father,

Back in October 2008 I purchased a St. Joseph Home Sale Kit from a Hallmark religious store. At the time my husband and I had to get the house on the market and sold or we would have to end up walking away... As we are soon to retire, this was not an option.

St. Joseph has always been part of my family growing up. Being Italian, my mother, at the age of 88, to this day celebrates St. Joseph day with all of the Italian tradition brought over by her mother in the early 1900s. So, praying to him each day and asking to have our home sold was not going to be a hard task. I prayed harder than I think I ever have, except for when my husband had his accident and the Virgin Mary helped me as I prayed my Rosary. I asked each day for St. Joseph to bring the right family to our home. Someone who would love and care for it as much as we did. My husband spent many hours making this home beautiful and loving. Soon we received three offers; but all of them were speculators who were only looking for a quick deal. I prayed harder and asked St. Joseph to please find us a family as time was running out... and he did.

St. Joseph truly sent them. They had a bid on another house and the wife kept saying to her real estate broker that something didn't seem right... So, the agent brought them to our house. The wife walked through the door and said, "This is it. This is my home."

It happened that the agent made a trip to Israel with a Catholic tour group. At the closing, the agent was showing us her pictures carrying the cross along the pathway that Jesus walked and dipping herself in the Jordan River... She told us, "I knew this was the right family to come to this house and the right family to give this house." She handed us both a Rosary that had been blessed from the waters of the Jordan River. One Rosary now hangs in the home I left and one in the home I am now in. St. Joseph is still buried in the front yard waiting for the ground to thaw, but the new buyer will find him and he will reside in the home, a blessing for them as long as they are there.

God does work in mysterious ways and St. Joseph is there if you believe.

May God bless you,  
JB – Whitmore Lake, MI





## Hail, Immaculate Virgin of Lourdes

The third book in volume five of the writings of Blessed Guanella is *A Salute to the Immaculate Mary of Lourdes*. It was dedicated to the great events of faith that took place around the apparition of Lourdes in 1854. Even today Lourdes continues to draw large numbers of praying people closer to the Immaculate.

As a pilgrim to Lourdes, himself, Blessed Guanella brought back a similar statue that he enthroned in another Grotto at the Mother House in Como, Italy. Now all Guanellian establishments have a Grotto, including the Shrine of St. Joseph in Grass Lake, Michigan.

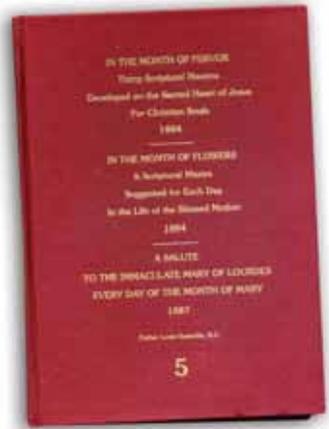
For each day during the months of May and October, this book includes a meditation, the narrative of a miracle and a prayer. The whole work is a faith insight into the people, events, location and reactions to the apparition at Lourdes.

Father Guanella looks deep into the soul of Bernadette, and her inner circle. He analyzes the behavior of the people, the civil authorities, the police, the King, the press and non-believers.

As I read this book, I felt as though I knew the main characters, experienced the faith of the pilgrims and shed tears of joy and pain. Most importantly, I felt the love of the Blessed Mother who wants us to love Jesus as much as He loves us.

I pray that you will experience the presence of Mary and Jesus as I did.

Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC



*A Salute to the Immaculate Mary of Lourdes* is available through the Pious Union of St. Joseph office. Send your request and a donation to The Pious Union of St. Joseph, 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake, MI 49240.

Call the office at 517-522-8017 for more information or for purchasing quantities of more than ten copies.

# 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 **Guanellian Lay Movement** 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:**

## **UNITED STATES**

### ► **Servants of Charity Formation House**

Fr. Dennis Weber

1795 S. Sproul Rd., Springfield, PA 19064

tel: 610-328-3406 – fax: 610-328-1019

fr.dweber@chs-adphila.org

### ► **St. Louis Center**

Fr. David Stawasz

16195 Old US 12, Chelsea, MI 48118

tel: 734-475-8430 – fax: 734-475-0310

frdave@stlouiscenter.org

### ► **Don Guanella Center**

Sr. Rhonda Brown

37 Nichols St, Chelsea, MA 02150

srrhonda.dgc@verizon.net



## INDIA:

### ► Bangalore

Guanella Preethi Nivas  
Geddallahalli, Kothanur (P.O.),  
Bangalore – 560 077.  
Tel: 080/28445501  
Email: gpnbangalore@yahoo.com

### ► Chennai

Don Guanella Major Seminary  
Karayanchavadi, Poonamallee  
Chennai – 600 056.  
Tel: 044/26274795  
Email: guamaj@yahoo.co.in

### ► Cuddalore

St. Joseph's Seminary  
Samupillai Nagar, Cuddalore – 607001  
Tamil Nadu. Tel: 04142/296788  
Email: sjcseminary@yahoo.co.in

### ► Vatluru – Eluru (A.P)

Guanella Karunalaya  
Vatluru, West Gothavari (Dt.) – 534 007  
Andhra Pradesh. Tel: 08812-244474  
Email: gkarunalaya@yahoo.com

## PHILIPPINES:

### ► Servants of Charity House

Fr. Charlton Viray  
Centerville Subd – Pasong Tamo  
Tandang Sora – 1107 Quezon City  
Tel: 2-931-5549  
Email: coviray@yahoo.com

Please consider  
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**Pious Union of St. Joseph**  
953 East Michigan Ave.  
Grass Lake, MI 49240  
Phone: 517-522-8017  
Email: [piousunion@pusj.org](mailto:piousunion@pusj.org)

To become a member of the Pious Union of St. Joseph or to extend membership to prayerful friends and relatives, please send name and address to 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake, MI 49240 or email [piousunion@pusj.org](mailto:piousunion@pusj.org)

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### **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

**Benediction:** Wed 4:45 p.m. • **Divine Mercy:** 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](mailto:piousunion@pusj.org)

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