

The Voice of Providence

now HOUR
AND AT THE

PUBLICATION OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY



AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 2010

Featured Story: *Fifty Years of Guanellian Service*, page 7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1Sins Crying to Heaven
for Vengeance
Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC
- 2Mailbag
- 3The “Yes” of St. Joseph To
Love and Service
Fr. Paul Oggioni, SdC
- 6Shrine Report
*Sr. Margaret Mary Schissler,
DSMP*
- 7Fifty Years of Guanellian
Service
Joseph Yekulis
- 9The Guanellian Cooperators:
In The Experience of the
Founder
Fr. Domenico Saginario, SdC
- 12An Opportunity to be
Charity in the World
Lauren Hill
- 14The Dimension of
Covenant and Grace
Fr. Dennis Weber, SdC
- 18The Blood of Martyrs, Source
of Grace and Spiritual
Fruitfulness
Fr. Paul Oggioni, SdC
- 22The Sign of the Cross
Thomas Herron
- 24My Vocation Story
Fr. Battista Omodei, SdC
- 28Divine Providence
Community Home:
50 Years of Loving Service
Sr. Janet Kosman, DSMP
- 30Dedications & Memorials
- 31Guanellian Press:
The Bread of the Soul
(Volume 2)

PUBLISHED BY:

The Pious Union of St. Joseph
Patron of the Suffering and Dying

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, Kelly
Flaherty, Sr. Margaret Mary Schissler DSMP

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

PHOTOS: St. Louis Center Archives, Joseph
Yekulis, Kelly Flaherty, Gero Lombardo,
Sr. Sharon Williams, DSMP

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 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.

Sins Crying to Heaven for Vengeance

A REFLECTION BY
FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC



I travel more than I like for my religious family, the Servants of Charity. I see and hear more than I want to see and hear. However, what saddens me most is the horrifying condition of millions and millions of workers all over the world. Farm workers in our country, women and children in the rice fields of India, fishermen in the deep waters of the Pacific, truck drivers from Africa in Europe, domestic Filipino women all over the world. The list could go on forever. The treatment, lodging, schedule and compensation of these uprooted workers, most of the time, are less than acceptable if not altogether inhuman. We are celebrating Labor Day, but I am not sure what it means anymore. There are so many unemployed in our midst. The Unions seem more at peace with losing jobs than giving up some benefits. Our economy is lagging and the national debt is growing.

My old Catechism teacher, Sr. Agnes, hammered in our head many things, but I was mostly taken by the Sins crying to Heaven for Vengeance. They are one of the few things I still remember: 1 – Willful murder. 2 – Sodomy. 3 – Oppression of the poor. 4 – Defrauding laborers of their wages. It is quite a list that screams for God's intervention, because we do not do anything or enough for our brothers and sisters in need of help. When I look at those four crimes and place them next to our present situation, the score is very low. Murder is rampant in many large and not so large cities. Sodomy has been legalized. The poor are ignored altogether, under the disguise that we pass many laws on their behalf. Underpaying and abusing the worker is seen as good business.

Whatever happened to love one another as I have loved you? Or, do unto others what you want to be done to you?

I pray for our Country and all the so-called civilized countries. God is not a vengeful God. In history, however, we see that sometimes He takes things in his hands and becomes a surgeon. He cuts, hurts and makes us bleed before healing us. Lord have mercy!

Mailbag...



Dear Father,

Thank You! Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Joseph!!! God knew our “Pot O Gold” was empty so He blessed Johnnie with his first job that will pay tuition toward an MA degree. Miracles happen!

Many months back, you blessed me with a copy of “The Way of the Cross.” Thank you! Thank you!

Love and prayers, Grandma T (Only 79!)

Dear Sr. Margaret Mary,

You say you read all your mail so as to get to know us better so I will share a little of myself with you.

I came to Catholicism late in life—I was 45. I was raised Protestant. My husband-to-be was Catholic and I started attending Mass with him. At the Catholic Mass I felt the unity of the congregation and closeness to God.

In His mysterious ways, God was leading me down a path. He knew I would need this closeness and faith. My husband died when I was 49, living in a foreign country where I didn’t know the language. Having no children, I was truly alone. It was my faith that got me through the darkest times and led me to a new life which has value and worth. In the lonely times I knew I wasn’t alone. God was and is with me.

It was in my classes, learning about Catholicism, that I was introduced to St. Joseph. I felt an immediate connection and devotion. He has become my special friend and has never failed me. My friends say that when they have a problem they come to me to ask me to pray for them to St. Joseph because I have a “direct line” to him. Please pray for my intentions.

Devoted to St. Joseph in Portugal

Dear Devoted,

God bless you and thank you for reading my letter so carefully and responding so generously.

That goes for every one of you who writes to us at the Pious Union. I truly want to know each of you, who is so devoted to our dear St. Joseph, so that I can add you to my daily prayers in a special way.

*In Joseph and his Son,
Sr. Margaret Mary Schissler*

The “Yes” of St. Joseph To Love and Service

By FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SDC

“With joy you will draw water at the fountain of salvation” (Is 12, 3). Pope Pius XII quoted these very words from Isaiah in opening his encyclical letter *Haurietis Aquas*. The letter invites believers to enter into the mystery of God’s love, to deepen and live more and more in their relationship with Jesus by welcoming Him into their lives in fullness. By contemplating the Heart of Jesus, from which blood and water flowed out, we truly understand and experience His love. Through the same Heart we come to know the intensity and extension of God’s love manifested through His Son Jesus. When fixing our eyes on Him, we will feel His presence closer to us.



John Paul II says: “Close to the Heart of Jesus, our human heart can learn the true and only meaning of life and of our own destiny. It can increase our understanding of the value of a truly Christian life. It can avoid the heart’s perversions. It can unite the love of God to the love of our neighbor. We can only build on that—on the ruins caused by hatred and violence—the civilization of the Heart of Jesus. This is the true reparation requested by Jesus.”

We are almost captured and overwhelmed by the knowledge that St. Joseph, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, had truly lived this ideal intimate union with the mystery of grace that was exploding in their

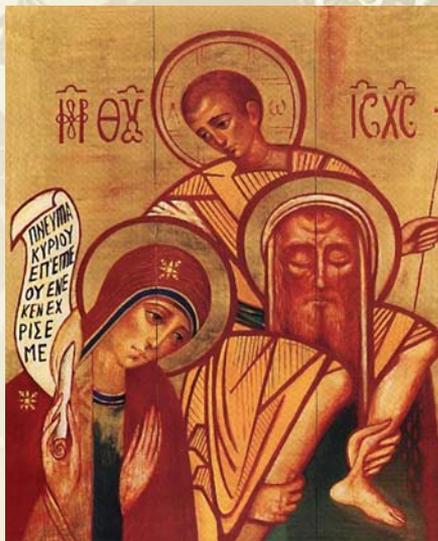
life. They were the privileged instruments that God used to carry out the plan of salvation that He had in mind since eternity, and was brought to success through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

We can truly say that St. Joseph, in his heart and mind, knew, experienced and bore witness to the Heart of Christ, the vivid expression of God's love. Joseph knew God, the God that by His merciful love, by visible signs and by revelation had accompanied the history of the people to which he belonged. Joseph understood that God could not deceive His people. For that reason, he hoped and waited for the coming of the Savior.

Joseph nourished his faith and his waiting by listening and meditating on the holy word of God every Saturday, in the section of the synagogue reserved for men, while Mary was in the one for women. He matured his human vocation by following the tradition of his people who wanted him to marry a woman. Who was that woman?

He did not go too far to meet her. God Himself put her on his path of life. His dealing with her was already established from eternity. His answer was coherent with the plan of God.

St. Joseph experienced God's presence from the beginning of his life. He was a member of a chosen people, a sinful people, but always the favorite one in the eyes of God. Within that people, he was called to discover his identity and mission.



“JOSEPH NOURISHED
HIS FAITH AND HIS
WAITING BY LISTENING
AND MEDITATING ON
THE HOLY WORD
OF GOD EVERY
SATURDAY..”

Because he agreed to walk on the path established by God, St. Joseph was able to see first-hand how God was leading his steps in an attitude of dialogue first with Mary and later on with Jesus, upon whom he was called to exercise his vocation of husband and father carried out according to divine will.

God keeps his faith alive when he welcomes Mary in his home. God reveals to him the mystery of the birth of a son that keeps his mother virgin. God leads him and helps him in his discernment: Jesus is truly his son according to the Law of Moses, but He does not belong to him. Jesus must belong exclusively to the Father in heaven, and to Him alone He must obey.

His spousal relationship with Mary becomes an experience of spiritual intimacy that goes beyond mere physical intimacy. There is a love that makes them “one” in their human love, a love that is sublimated in that eternal love expressed in the Incarnate Word in the womb of Mary.



To understand the meaning of a love that becomes a gift without reserve and ready to accept its consequences, we have to go to Joseph and Mary and to their mutual love, constantly ascending to higher supernatural levels.

In His great plan of love, God the Father predestined both of them to form the loving family of His Son made flesh. Scripture was to them not only the revelation of God, but also the source of their life and their choices. From Scripture, they gradually understood and accepted the mission of that “special Son.” Many times they had heard from the prophet Isaiah, “... ours were the sufferings He bore, ours the sorrows He carried. He was pierced through for our faults, crushed for our sins...” (Is 53, 4-5).

Mary kept what her son said and did, reflecting on them in her heart.

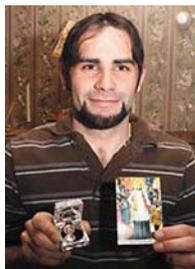
Joseph kept silent and contemplated. Their mission was to accompany the human growth of the Son of God, the Son that by His shameful death on the cross will have saved humanity from sin, and from whose pierced heart salvation will have flowed.

Shrine Report:

Great News to Share!

With much joy and gratitude we here at the Pious Union/Shrine of St. Joseph have long awaited good news to share with each of you. We have been offering our prayers and sacrifices since March 2002 for this special event. We thank you also for your prayers joined with us in this great celebration.

On July 1, 2010 Our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI declared the validity of the miracle attributed to the intervention of Blessed Louis Guanella (1842–1915), the founder of the Servants of Charity and the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence. This special day was the final authorization needed leading to the canonization of Blessed Louis Guanella. Now we all look forward to the date to be set by the Vatican for the Canonization of Blessed Louis Guanella.



With a series of 16 decrees made public on July 1, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints has advanced the causes of 41 candidates for canonization or beatification.

At a private audience with Archbishop Angelo Amato, the prefect of the Congregation, Pope Benedict XVI authorized the release of the decrees, which recognized 31 martyrs, authenticated 5 miracles, and attested to the “heroic virtue” of 6 candidates for beatification.

The Vatican will have a Consistory Meeting in February of 2011 to announce the date of the actual Canonization. Please follow our future issues for more information on the plans for the trip to the Canonization of Louis Guanella. Blessed Louis Guanella, soon to be Saint, pray for us!

Sr. Margaret Mary Schissler



Fifty Years of Guanellian Service in the USA

By JOSEPH YEKULIS

The transition from the Agrarian 19th Century into the Industrial 20th Century brought both opportunity and heartache for the thousands of European immigrants who came to America during one of the largest immigration waves in our country's history. Our Blessed Louis Guanella however, possessed a keen world view, and knew that fellow Italians were experiencing poverty and prejudice in America and needed his help.

By 1912, Fr. Guanella had established his religious orders in Europe, and decided to visit the United States at the age of seventy. Noting that, "We can never stop as long as there are poor to be assisted," Fr. Guanella was deeply moved by a letter he had read from an Italian immigrant in America. "Tell our Bishop that we remember his advice; but ask him to pray for us and send us a priest so that we shall not live and die like beasts." Fr. Guanella was moved by the cry of his poor countrymen who sought fortune, but instead found misery, isolation, solitude and homesickness.

In December 1912, Fr. Guanella set sail for the United States carrying a letter of introduction from his good friend Pope Pius X to the bishops of several

Left: Monsignor Thomas Riley, Father Paul Saltarin, and Father Louis Frangi at the groundbreaking ceremony at the Don Guanella school site, May 3, 1960.

Right: Maurice Brisson, age twelve, is greeted by Father Joseph Legnani at the opening of St. Louis School in August of 1961.



large American dioceses. During his visit, he had a chance to see several large cities in the U.S., and upon his return, decided to assign six sisters to travel to America. On May 3, 1913, these Daughters of St. Mary of Providence left Naples, Italy on board the ocean ship Ivernia, and traveled to Chicago, IL., to establish their first permanent Guanellian presence in the U.S. at Addolorata Church in Chicago, Ill. Thus, these religious sisters became the first permanent presence of the Guanellian charism in America.

Later, the year 1958 became significant in the expansion of the Guanellian charism in the United States, as two American Cardinals felt that the time was right to develop new facilities for boys with developmental disabilities in the Archdioceses of Detroit and Philadelphia. Contact was made with the Servants of Charity in Italy to invite them to run programs in Pennsylvania and Michigan, which they readily agreed to do. Edward Cardinal Mooney of Detroit and John Cardinal O'Hara of Philadelphia created the vision, and Don Guanella School in Springfield, PA was opened on October 24, 1960. Then on August 28, 1960, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for St. Louis School in Chelsea, MI and the first building was dedicated on September 24, 1961. Due to the death of Cardinal Mooney, John Cardinal Dearden presided over the opening of St. Louis Center on that day.

In time, the Servants of Charity established their presence at Sacred Heart Parish in East Providence, R.I. in 1984, and then in 1995, broke ground for the headquarters of the Pious Union of St. Joseph (U.S.) in Grass Lake, MI. As part of the Divine Providence Province, linking the U.S. with the Philippines and India, the Servants of Charity are currently making plans for their next fifty years in America through the guidance of Christ, Our Savior and the intercession of Blessed Guanella.

Left: Father Peter DiTullio at the dedication of the Blessed Louis Guanella youth center in E. Providence, RI.



Right: Fr. Germano Pagararo and father general, Father Nino Minetti, at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Pious Union of St. Joseph.



The Guanellian Cooperators In the Experience of the Founder

Part 1: The Beginning

By FR. DOMENICO SAGINARIO, SdC

The subject of the Guanellian Cooperators' experience while the Founder was alive is so vast and important that it would need a book. For easy reading, I will break it down into three consecutive parts for this magazine: *The Beginning*, *The Discipleship* with St. John Bosco, and *The First Foundations*.

Since *The Beginning*, Father Guanella lived his priesthood with a style of intense participation with the laity. However, he lived in a time of **overheated social unrest** marked by persecutions and wars. In 1866, the soldiers in Como had occupied the theological seminary and during the ceremony of his Ordination the newly ordained Father Guanella could hear the rumble of weapons from the two fighting armies around the besieged city. The Diocese of Como had been without a Bishop for many years because the Masonic government refused him a residence permit. Deacon Guanella was ordained by a Bishop from South Italy who had been torn from his Diocese and incarcerated in Como. Father Guanella never forgot the courage and the faith of this man.

Father Guanella was open and friendly by nature. He loved to work and live in communion with other people. In his ministry, he followed the Benedictine theme of "Prayer and Work." Since his childhood he revealed a reflective and expansive character. *Reflective*, especially in prayer. *Expansive*, actually creative and daring when it came to fun and charity. When he was a seminarian, he came home for the summer.

The children and their parents loved him. He entertained them with games, trips and programs, and told them stories of their mountains, and of Jesus and the Saints.

When he became a priest, he went as a parochial vicar to Prosto, a town on the Swiss border, for a few months. Then he was appointed Pastor of Savogno, a mountain village like his own native Fraciscio. Right away he went to work with great religious zeal combined with an impressive imagination. Besides his ministry duties of Mass, prayer, the sacraments, catechism, spiritual direction, the sick, the poor, etc., he dedicated a lot of energy to improving the general condition of the village. In eight years, he was able to give a new face to the village. With the help of the Parish Council and the available manpower he doubled the size of the church and, in front of it, built a large square supported by massive walls. Along the trails crisscrossing the mountains, he built devotional little chapels where people could stop, rest, say a prayer and move on. He remodeled and enlarged the public laundry by adding more containers and regulating the flow of water. The whole area was covered by a large roof for protection from the sun and the rain.

There was an interesting episode involving the **slate pit** for the construction of the new cemetery. Father Guanella designed it to the smallest detail and asked an architect friend to look at it and sign it so that he could present it to the competent office to obtain a construction permit. He had to work hard to receive authorization from both the religious and the hostile civil authorities. However, the main problem was the lack of material needed for construction, considering the transportation to the heights of the village and the poverty of the faithful. One day he was preaching in Villa di Chiavenna, a town on the Swiss border. As he was starting the two hour climb to Savogno it began to snow. He sprinted up focused on a courageous idea for building the cemetery at a reduced price. He collected all the men he could muster and explained his plan. Higher up on the side of the mountain there



was a slate pit. With a few picks it was easy to remove them and slide them on the snow all the way down to the cemetery site. The men became charged with enthusiasm. They spread the word: at the sound of the bell at sundown, all available men would climb to the pit site. They worked hard guiding the slate down on the snowy trail. Unfortunately, a boulder escaped and landed on a tree, which was damaged, but the owner was compensated and everyone was proud of their work. They stopped at midnight, happy for starting a project which would become a monument for the whole village.

All this was possible because Father Guanella had **the style and the charisma for working together**. People loved Father Guanella; he was an affable man who even in his personal life could unite a lively faith with practical talent. They understood that

his heart belonged to God. He prayed long and with intimate conviction, faithful to his own schedule. His words were simple and convincing.

He was leading people to prayer with suavity, showing them that being with God is like children at home with their parents. At the same time his spirit possessed an exquisite sensitivity toward the needs and the suffering of his people. Those simple people of the mountains were impressed by Father Louis' passion to solve the problem of educating the disabled. He proposed to the civil authorities that he would open a school for the children of the village at the rectory, next to the church, and he would teach them since he had a teaching certificate. He obtained the license and called his sister Catherine to teach the girls. Thus the school was open with general amazement and admiration.

His tenderness toward the sick and disabled was touching, along with his attentiveness towards their families. He even took care of several cases with severe disabilities by accompanying them to The Cottolengo of Torino. Later on he would call them "My Good Children." He would then return to Savogno and dream of other projects.

But God's plan for him was different and he was called to a new ministry, a new challenge, his true vocation. People loved their pastor and he loved his flock. However, one day, after intense meditation and prayer, he was inspired by God, and he left for a different mission.



An Opportunity to be Charity in the World

BY LAUREN HILL

Sr. Margaret Mary once said to me, “I want to give people the opportunity to be Charity in the world.” Her words return to me as I reread the words of our Founder, Blessed Guanella, and subsequent writings about his work of charity, which endures in many poor countries throughout the world.

She reminds me that true opportunity can present itself to us with a whimper and not a roar. It may even take someone outside ourselves to recognize it and offer it to us. There is no rank or status, wealth or popularity gained from this opportunity. In fact, it may present the opposite; we will rarely be called a success or a winner and we will most likely be ignored rather than adored when we seize this opportunity.

When so many are climbing the ladder of success, some are reaching out, taking care to hold on tight to the ones who are left behind or in danger of falling.

Blessed Guanella and his religious orders and lay cooperators have embraced the opportunity to become God’s Providence, His love, His Charity in the world. They serve with a particular “style” that is simple, dynamic and inspiring, springing from the very heart of their spiritual father, Blessed Guanella, who lived and taught that: “It is God who works.”

What would it look and feel like to imitate Blessed Guanella’s virtue and adopt the style of Guanellian charity? Imagine, yourself, beginning each day with complete confidence in God who is working and not with the self-confidence that we can mistakenly strive to attain.



*A volunteer in
Thalavadi, India
assists one of the
‘Good Children’ at
Nazareth Illam.*

Professional and assisting staff and volunteers in the Guanellian institutes are drawn to God's work, giving medical care and comfort, guidance and practical assistance: Their particular Guanellian style is made visible by:

Simple, cheerful giving that surrounds and uplifts: Blessed Guanella taught that it was important to make a place at the table rather than to give a handout. His religious and lay cooperators continue to make homes, clinics and schools for orphans, abandoned children and elderly and disabled in poor countries like India and Philippines.

Humble giving: with "a recognition of one's limits, both human as well as professional." Staff and volunteers in the Guanellian institutes learn that "Fr. Guanella was convinced that truly humble souls are the ones who mostly succeed in the greatest and most difficult undertakings." That, "Humility means not depending on our own gifts but knowing that we need others." And learning to "accept serenely the distress that arises from a sense of impotence and frustration when faced with difficult situations..."

Spiritual giving: Bread and Lord, is central in the institute, inspired by the Founder who taught his Priests and Religious never to neglect the spiritual lives of the residents in their homes. Sacraments and prayer, especially Mass and the Holy Rosary are a regular part of the life of Guanellian Homes.

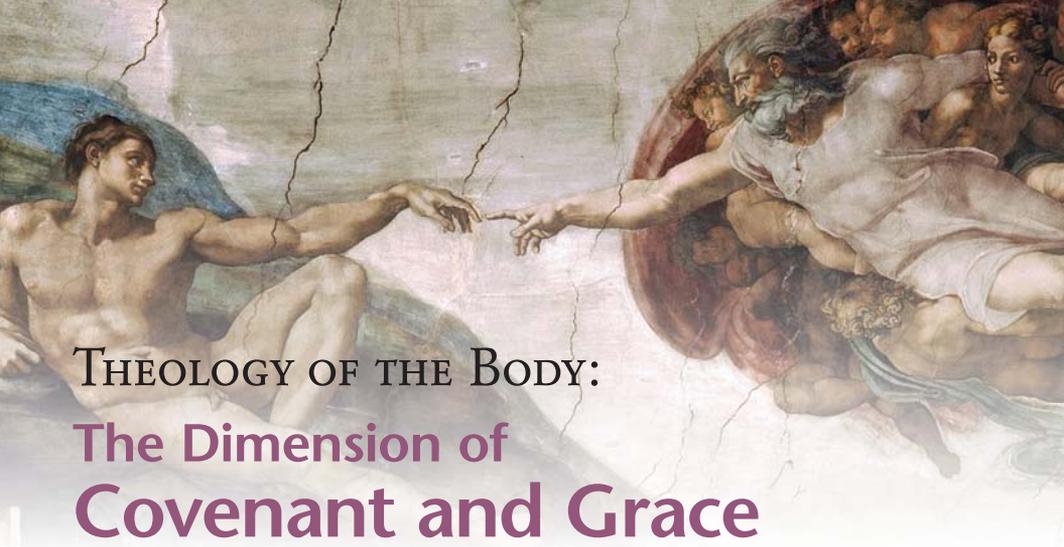
Active giving from an awareness of the physical needs of the poor: Food and drinkable water, rehabilitation, education, social and vocational activity. Washing, feeding, loving the people and caring for and expanding their facilities.

Within the body of the Guanellian Family the heart of the Founder is still beating; it continues to be Charity in the world.

I love the words of Pope Paul VI when he spoke of Blessed Guanella: "He, himself, did not help us, or oblige us to see in him anything other than an effect of Divine Bounty, a fruit and a sign of Divine Providence." It is the Christian attitude which aims to make of us, as St. Paul says, "Collaborators of God" (1 Cor. 3,9)

If you are thinking that you're unable to work because of illness or age, remember to take up the blessed opportunity to pray for others, becoming Charity in the world through prayer.

If you are shy about volunteering, be inspired by Blessed Guanella to seize every opportunity to become Charity, while remembering that *it is God who works*. Our job is only to show up with a smile and willing hands and hearts.



THEOLOGY OF THE BODY: The Dimension of Covenant and Grace

The journey through Pope John Paul II's "Theology of the Body" continues with part two of these catecheses of papal audiences and chapter one of that part entitled "*The Dimension of Covenant and Grace*." In this part, the Holy Father further "unpacks" the "theology of the body" by a profound commentary on St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians 5, 21-33. He sees this passage as the "crowning" of the first three chapters which presented Christ's words and the keywords associated with these chapters: "beginning", "heart", and "future resurrection."

The pope begins by looking at the verse, "Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord." (Eph. 5, 22)—a verse which is culturally sensitive to many. However, he urges us to understand this verse in light of the verse that precedes it—"Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ"—and in the verses that follow which connect the relationship between Christ and the Church with the relationship of the husband and wife. And what is that relationship between Christ and the Church? St. Paul very simply, yet profoundly says, "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her" (Eph. 5, 25). So, in summarizing these concepts, Pope John Paul II sees the verses in this way: "Reciprocal submission "in the fear of Christ"—a submission born on the foundation of Christian *pietas* (*reverence for holiness*)—always forms the deep and firm supporting structure of the *community of spouses*, in which the true "*communion of persons*" is realized...the reciprocal relationship between the spouses, husband and wife, should be understood by Christians *according to the image of the relationship between Christ and the Church*." The relationship, therefore, between Christ and the Church is the relationship which models the relationship for the spouses.

The pope then further specifies this relationship in the context of this passage of Ephesians by saying: "St. Paul, writing the letter...shows how the

“Redeemer”, who is the firstborn Son and from ages “the beloved of the Father,” reveals at the same time that his *saving love*, which consists in his gift of self for the Church, is *a spousal love by which he marries the Church* and makes her his own Body.” Christ’s love is no ordinary love. It is a love that is a total and complete “gift of self” to the Church and its members; a love that is a model for the spousal love of a husband and wife; a love that is “saving” and redemptive.

St. Paul, in this passage from Ephesians, broadens the understanding of Christ’s relationship with the Church when he says, “Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her, **in order to make her holy**” (Eph. 5, 25-26) and the pontiff says “The essential goal of the love of Christ for the Church is her *sanctification*.” I believe that we can say, in paraphrasing the pope, that the essential goal of the spousal love of husband and wife is their sanctification and salvation. This goal for the spouses leads us into the sacramental nature of marriage which was confirmed and instituted by Christ and which Pope John Paul II explains in this chapter.

The Holy Father says that “Christian spouses are called to shape their life and vocation on the sacramental foundation” and states further “When Christ, in the presence of his interlocutors in Matthew and Mark (see Mt. 19; Mk. 10) *confirms marriage as a sacrament instituted by the Creator “at the beginning”*—when he accordingly requires its indissolubility—he thereby opens marriage *to the salvific action of God, to the powers flowing from the redemption of the body,*” which help to overcome the consequences of sin and to build the unity of man and woman according to the Creator’s eternal plan.” The sacrament of marriage can deepen the spousal relationship with Christ through the grace communicated in the sacrament and which in turn deepens their relationship of spousal love. The sacrament also serves the purpose, as the pope states, of helping “to overcome the consequences of sin and to build the unity of man and woman according to the Creator’s eternal plan.” We know that the eternal plan of the Creator has, as a desire of the Creator, for all to be joined with Him in eternal happiness in heaven. Those spouses who, through an understanding of the “theology of the body” as presented by Pope John Paul II, model their relationship on Christ’s sacrificial and salvific love for the Church have that sure and certain hope of eternal happiness in heaven, of their sanctification.





The Blood of Martyrs, Source of Grace and Spiritual Fruitfulness

BY. FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SDC

I hold in my heart a wish, a longing: to go back to India and have another opportunity to travel again over the paths of grace that the spiritual children of Blessed Louis Guanella are walking together with the local Christian community. That community is rooted in the faith brought by St. Thomas the Apostle, the first to have preached the Gospel in India. The idea that most people have of India is of a country filled with mysteries, colors, traditions, dances and exotic fragrances that enchant travelers. India is so different from other cultures! It is truly a fantastic world that draws our curiosity. Personally, I was fascinated not only because of all the above, but especially because of the faith that the Church is able to stir up in the heart of people in spite of the many difficulties that she experienced since the beginning of proposing the faith in that society.

The Indian culture is soaked in a spiritual fatalism that today, still inspires a very particular way of life; especially respect toward creation and generosity. But also indifference toward what is mere appearance. Together with its expressions, rites and beliefs, the common idea that holds the Hindu religious faith is that salvation is reached by carrying out a life devoted to detachment from the world, self-control, sincere relationships, and observance of ritual prescriptions.

I was already aware that one of the greatest evangelizers had been St. John de Brito. However, I could never have imagined having the opportunity to visit the place of his martyrdom. It is up on a hill, a place already corroded by time and by the devotion of numberless people who, before leaving, take with them a small amount of sand that their faith says was soaked by his blood. It is reddish sand that we can find only in that location, while the ground around shows a softer color.



The sand that pilgrims take with them becomes a kind of visible help in the trials that they encounter in witnessing their faith. The same sand also becomes a vehicle to get united with the supernatural, a reality that they feel very close to culturally and spiritually. It is like a relic they treasure because; by praying to the Saint, they remember his example and from him they receive the strength to live their Christian faith faithfully until the end.

St. John de Brito was born in Lisbon (Portugal, Europe) in 1647 from a noble family. He grew up with the future king of Portugal, Peter II. As a child, he was struck by a deadly disease. His mother entrusted him to St. Francis Xavier, the great Jesuit missionary that evangelized India. He had died 100 years before; however, his holiness and miracles were already well known around the Church. His mother asked the grace of a healing, but she also promised that for one year John would wear the Jesuit black robe. John was healed and for a year the dignitaries of the court saw that boy, wearing a priestly robe, playing with the king's son. His parents, meanwhile, were pondering God's plans for their child. His father was dreaming for him honor and glory in politics and diplomacy. At the age of 15, John asked to join the Jesuits and to wear their black robe forever. At 20, he asked his superiors to let him go to India as a missionary and to follow the example of the saint that interceded for his recovery; the same saint that inspired his desire to be a member of the Society of Jesus and a missionary of the gospel.



Ordained a priest in Goa, he declined a teaching career and asked to give himself totally to the priestly ministry and exercise of charity. The love of Christ and the souls of the poor urged him to be totally self-giving. No intrigues, no threats, no trials, no prisons frightened him; not even the possibility of martyrdom. Yet, all of it gave him more courage and energy, glad to have the opportunity to imitate the Master until the final sacrifice. His mission territory was Tamil Nadu, in Southern India; a land already blessed by the zeal of his Patron Saint, Francis Xavier. The Christian community grew in number day after day and had reached ten thousand people when Raja Tadayya asked to be baptized. Being married to many women according to the local tradition, before Baptism he renounced all except one.

Such a decision unleashed the wrath of the other women. They denounced Fr. de Brito to Tadaya's uncle, the nearby powerful Raja. He put Father de Brito in jail and then decreed his death. Fr. de Brito was beheaded on February 4, 1693. His body was impaled on the top of a hill and left to the scorn of people, a warning to the Christians. The many trials suffered by the first Christian community are a powerful testimony to their perseverance in the faith brought by that courageous missionary.

In my pilgrimage, I visited the temple in which he was imprisoned for two months. I walked on the roads on which he walked in chains, scourged and scorned like Jesus on his way to Calvary. I reached the top of the hill where he was killed. I took with me a handful of red sand. I prayed in the church dedicated to him. On the altar, built on the spot where the head of the Saint stopped after rolling down the hill, the Eucharist is celebrated; the mystery of the Body and Blood of Christ is constantly immolated for our salvation.

*The shrine church of
St. John de Brito in
Sivagangai, India.*



In union with the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, the blood of martyrs is also a source of grace and spiritual fruitfulness.

The Servants of Charity are now ministering in Sivagangai, the same place of the martyrdom of St. John de Brito. They too are called to bear witness to a God who is love, by following their Founder. Let us raise our prayer to God for the grace of having Blessed Louis Guanella declared a Saint.

Next Issue: A report on our Guanellian activity in Sivagangai.

The temple where the saint was imprisoned for two months



The Sign of the Cross

“And then ye bless you with the sygne of the holy crosse, to chase away the fiend with all his deceytes.” (Myroure of our Ladye, c 1450)

BY THOMAS HERRON

As a young boy I was intrigued by the story of Constantine, who on the eve of battle with his rival, saw a cross in the sky with the words, *“In hoc signo vinces,”* (In this sign you will conquer.) As time went on and I reflected on the episode, I saw the intervention of God in man’s life, not as dramatic as in Constantine’s case, but present nonetheless. As Constantine won the battle and elevated Christianity to legal status in the empire, so we too can win the battle against “the world, the flesh, and the devil” by the Sign of the Cross.

Jesus lives within each of us and helps us with our cross continuously. It is up to us to converse with him, as did the disciples on the way to Emmaus. It is up to us to call to him for help, as did Peter as he was floundering in the Sea of Galilee. It is up to us to ask for forgiveness, as did the good thief on the cross on Good Friday. It is up to us to pray with him, as he requested his sleepy apostles in the Garden of Gethsemane.

A frequently used prayer by Catholics is the “Sign of the Cross.” For many Catholics the Sign of the Cross is the first prayer taught at their mother’s knee. It was the first prayer taught to me and my classmates by the Sisters of Mercy at St. James School in the 1930’s.

One way to make the Sign of the Cross is to hold the right hand open with the five fingers together, slightly curved, touching the forehead, then the breastbone, then the left shoulder and finally the right shoulder and saying at the same time the words acknowledging the Trinity. “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” Do this with reverence.



By this simple act we acknowledge to ourselves belief in one God in three persons, we recognize the paschal mystery (the suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ), and publicly acknowledge we are a Christian.

For Catholics we frequently begin and conclude our prayers with the Sign of the Cross. The priest begins the Mass with the Sign of the Cross. The Sacraments are given and received with the Sign of the Cross. As Christians, followers of Jesus Christ, the cross is a visible sign recognizing Christ's unfathomable mercy and love for us. The cross reminds us of Jesus' words: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." (Mt. 16, 24)

When Satan and his minions try to envelope us in the darkness of despondency, loneliness, or despair, when we are tempted to lose heart, be discouraged, or feel hopelessness, think of Jesus on the cross Good Friday and speak his prayer to the Father, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The power of the cross will comfort you. The cross will be your bulwark against any snare the evil one has in mind.

Furthermore, keep in mind the words of John Paul II, "When God permits us to suffer because of illness, loneliness, or other reasons, he always gives us the grace and strength." It was St. Ephrem in the fourth century who gave counsel on the use of the Sign of the Cross:

"Mark all your actions with the sign of the life giving Cross. Do not go out from the door of your house until you have signed yourself with the Cross. Do not neglect that sign whether in eating or drinking, or going to sleep, or in the home or going on a journey. There is no habit to be compared with it. Let it be a protecting wall round all your conduct, and teach it to your children that they may earnestly learn the custom."

The Sign of the Cross is a beacon that leads us to Jesus Christ. It reminds us to be stalwart, Christ-centered in whatever we are doing at the time. The Sign of the Cross leads us to the Way of the Cross, to imitate the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (Jn.14,6)



My Vocation Story

BY FR. BATTISTA OMODEI, SdC

I believe that I experienced my vocation as early as eleven or twelve years old. As it developed I discovered even deeper roots. No one talked about it in the family. Every evening we gathered around to recite the Rosary; my brother and I took turns in reading a page of the Gospel.

I remember that I missed Mass once. My father and I took the train to visit my brother who was at a summer camp in the mountains and the train was late. It was August 15, 1951, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. Those days there was no Vigil Mass.

I soon became an altar server, but either the assistant pastor never spoke of vocations or, I was not paying attention.

One early morning my mother walked with me to serve Mass and my pastor spoke to me about going as a Missionary to Alaska. I did not know where Alaska was and did not answer.

After fifth grade, my classmates had to decide whether they wanted to enter a minor seminary. I remember that some of my classmates agreed to it. I was not interested and continued to attend the schools in town.

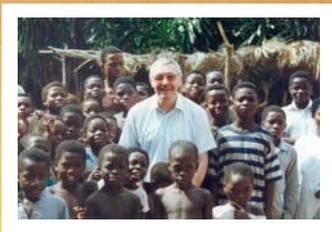
The grace of God, however, was working its way into my heart. One of my cousins studied in a Comboni seminary and had come home to organize my father's library. He spoke of the missions with enthusiasm. I still remember him carrying a large crucifix stuck in his sash and how



Fr. Battista in Renca, Chile at the Blessing of a wedding in 1980.



Fr. Battista with a group of our children in Coyhaique, Chile in 1984.



Fr. Battista on a visit to the missions of the Servants of Charity in Abor, Ghana in 1996

My pastor started to look for a missionary order and the first one was that of the Comboni Fathers. The tuition they asked, however, was too high for my family. We were eight altogether: my parents, grandfather, four brothers and one sister. I was the oldest. My father told the pastor that he could not afford my studies at the seminary.

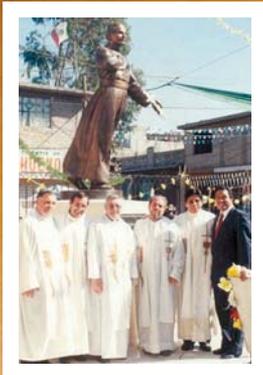
The Providence of God came to the rescue. In my town there are no Guanellian ministries, but Fr. Battista Liborio was a Guanellian priest from my town. He talked to my pastor about his congregation having missions in America. My pastor asked my opinion and I accepted. Africa was in my dreams, but I agreed to enter the seminary of the Servants of Charity. I told myself that there wasn't much difference between the missions in Africa and those in America. After all Alaska is in

America. On October 16, 1952, I entered the seminary in Anzano del Parco, accompanied by my pastor and my father. I was twelve years old and was admitted to seventh grade. We were received by Fr. Antonio Fontana who was preparing to leave as a missionary for Latin America. I was greatly impressed. He left in January 1953, and I still remember the letters he sent from the ship that was taking him to Argentina. Our prefect would read them to us during mealtime.

solemnly he prayed before and after each meal. At home we prayed only before meals.

I started to think about becoming a missionary. I mentioned it to my pastor and he talked to my father. My Father told me that it was better to wait and decide after eighth grade. But I had already made up my mind and asked him if I could enter the seminary now.

“AFRICA WAS IN MY
DREAMS, BUT I
AGREED TO ENTER
THE SEMINARY OF
THE SERVANTS
OF CHARITY.”



On a visit to Mexico, Fr. Battista assists in the blessing of a statue of Blessed Guanella.

In time and with the grace of God, I finished my theology studies and was ordained a priest. On October 5, 1968, the statue of Father Guanella was placed at the atrium of the Shrine of the Blessed Mother of Pompeii in Naples. I was there and at the end of the Ceremony, our Superior General, Fr. Armando Budino, approached me and said, “I want to talk to you about America.”

I had been waiting for it a long time. Our sisters, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, had also departed from Pompeii to North America. I went to South America. In about twenty years, I went through Argentina, Paraguay and Chile. It was not exactly Alaska, but the dream of a twelve year old came through.

In South America I worked mostly in the formation and education of young men who wanted to become priests. They too had a dream like I had, a long time ago. We always need to be ready to pay a price for our dream to come true. It was not easy for my family and I. Trust in God and fidelity to my vocation helped me to overcome the difficulties that always arise in our daily life.

After this memorable experience, God called me to an even more challenging responsibility. At the General Chapter, my confreres elected me to the General Council. This new position totally changed my life, as it was unexpected and so different from what I had done before. Leadership is a little bit like climbing Calvary. The higher you climb, the heavier the cross becomes. It was at this time that I felt the cross become heavier. My health suffered a blow and I had to slow down in my activities and responsibilities.

“TRUST IN GOD
AND FIDELITY TO MY
VOCATION HELPED
ME TO OVERCOME
THE DIFFICULTIES
THAT ALWAYS ARISE IN
OUR DAILY LIFE.”

“GOD’S WAYS ARE MYSTERIOUS AND HE
LEADS US SLOWLY AND SURELY TO THE VOCATION
HE GAVE US WHEN HE DREAMED OF US.”



Children greet Fr. Battista at a celebration in Legazpi, Philippines in 2006.

they witness their faith and crowd the churches. Even in countries where they are not allowed to worship publically, they find a way to get together to be the people of God.

God’s ways are mysterious and he leads us slowly and surely to the vocation he gave us when he dreamed of us. I am grateful to God for my family, my vocation and the Congregation of the Servants of Charity, my religious family where I am called brother, father and friend.

“And from his fullness we all have received grace upon grace,” (Jn. 1, 16).

As my health improved, I was invited to join the leadership team in the United States and that of the newly constituted Divine Providence Province. Now I am in the Philippines working with and for the poor. The Filipinos are an amazing and generous people, with a history of suffering and oppression; a people of strong faith and great human resources. They are becoming the missionaries of the faith. Wherever they go,



Staff and residents rejoice at the blessing of the new Grotto in Legazpi.

Divine Providence Community Home: 50 Years of Loving Service

By SR. JANET KOSMAN, DSMP

Divine Providence Community Home in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota has experienced significant changes over the years in providing services to our seniors, commonly called our “grandfriends.” It is now home for fifty-eight men and women who are continuing life’s journey with the help of family, friends, and professionals in all areas of long term care.

Additionally, we have twenty-one apartments, which are considered “independent housing for seniors.” One of the hallmarks of living here is having the availability of daily Mass and Rosary, Bible study, and weekly Religious Services for persons of other faiths. Our Guanellian Cooperators are very involved with the well-being and happiness of the residents. This is often why the elderly of the Sleepy Eye community wait until there is an opening at “Divine Providence” when they are choosing an alternative life style.



Our Sisters first arrived in Sleepy Eye on September 30, 1960 and Divine Providence Community Home opened its doors on October 23rd. It was the vision of Fr. Stephen Adrian that Sleepy Eye have a Catholic nursing home to provide for the spiritual and material needs of its residents. The Ladies’ Auxiliary was founded before the doors ever opened, and worked tirelessly to help make this vision a reality.

The original home had 40 beds, but within 17 years the need was seen for expansion. In 1977, Mary Hall was built, providing room for 18 additional residents, as well as a large room for activities. Another addition was built in



1987, this time including the Chapel, the Marian Conference Room and the Therapy room. Within another five years, as regulations and resident needs changed, the need was felt for a new nursing home. It was completed in 1993, and looked much as it does now. When the residents moved into the new home, renovations began on the old building, converting it into what is now Lake Villa Maria, with 21 apartments designed for senior independent living, and also a cafeteria opened to the public. One hundred employees, several with over 25 years of service, assist the Sisters in continuing our Guanellian mission.

The endearing term “grandfriends” came from the inter-generational aspects of Divine Providence. We have “little people” from ages two to five years old at DPCH each week. They are learning early the family values that involve caring for our elderly. They come with gleeful voices, lots of energy, and are always ready “to play” with their grandfriends. Likewise, the grandfriends awaken to the childlike energy and enthusiasm, love and care, and they share their love and wisdom with these little ones, who are the future. School children visit us regularly and create special holiday treats and entertainment.



Daily Mass and Rosary are often attended by Sleepy Eye residents, who volunteer to assist in transporting residents to Chapel and meals. Volunteers also assist in the office, greeting visitors and answering the phone. The Auxiliary Members provide for monthly birthday parties and Bingo. Local groups provide entertainment. Our Activity Department provides for community involvement and Family Nights. One of the Sisters teaches CCD in the Parish and is a Eucharistic Minister. Children from the Parish School assist in May Crowning as well as weekly adoration time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Each change over the years has made DPCH more beautiful and more serviceable to our community, especially its older members. Whether visiting or attending events and services, you are humbled by God’s love that pours forth from everyone, creating a haven of Christian love and commitment that speaks loudly of the dignity of life.

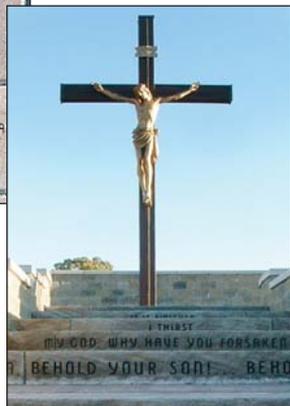


Remember Your Loved Ones...

...by Making a Dedication or Memorial in their name.

- Dedicate a step of the Holy Stair \$5000
- Dedicate a Bench \$1000
- “I am the Resurrection and the Life” Memorial Wall \$500
- Dedicate a tile near the Calvary \$250
- Become a Shrine Forester, Plant a tree \$150
- Dedicate a leaf on the Tree of Remembrance
in the Shrine \$500

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



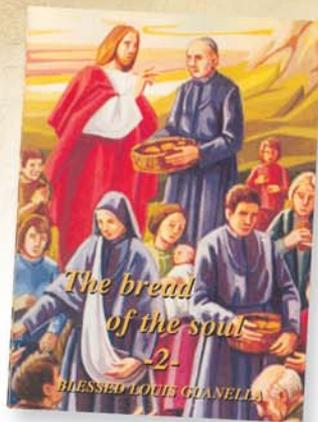
For more information or to make a pledge, please call the Pious Union of St. Joseph Office Monday–Friday at 517-522-8017.

Send email to piousunion@pusj.org.

THE BREAD OF THE SOUL

VOLUME 2

Blessed Louis Guanella is a Saint and a Founder. However, deep in his heart he was first a pastor. He cared, with all his spiritual and physical strength, for the spiritual, moral and material well being of his people. He wrote more than twenty books in defense of the people's religious freedom against the persecution of the Church by a Masonic government. For this he suffered immensely, but never gave up.



The *Bread of the Soul* is a three-volume work intended to feed spiritually the people of God through the whole year.

Fr. Guanella, for every Sunday and Holiday of the year, gives a meditation, reflection and prayer inviting the reader to contemplate the love of God for his people and to respond to His love accordingly.

Volume Two offers a **Liturgical and Hope** perspective. He encourages and illustrates the benefits to live the values of a Christian life.

I am using it in my homilies and I would like to share with you this treasure chest of Faith, Hope and Love. Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC'.

Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC

The spiritual writing of Fr. Guanella contained in *The Bread of the Soul* is now available through the Pious Union of St. Joseph. This summer, another special booklet of prayers is also being made available to our readers; *The Holy Cloak in Honor of St. Joseph*. 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 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:**

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

► **Daughters of St. Mary of Providence**

Sr. Brenda McHugh
953 E. Michigan Ave.
Grass Lake, MI 49240
srbrenda@pusj.org

INDIA:

► **Bangalore**

Fr. Samson Rajasekaran
Guanella Preethi Nivas
Geddalahalli, Kothanur (PO)
Bangalore – 560 077
Karnataka – India
Tel: 080/28445501
Email: gpnbangalore@yahoo.com

► Chennai

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

► Cuddalore

Fr. Paul Arockiara
St. Joseph's Seminary
Samupillai Nagar
Cuddalore 607 001
Tamil Nadu – India
Tel: 04142/296788
Email: sjseminary@yahoo.co.in

► Vatluru – Eluru (A.P)

Fr. Charles Boromeo
Guanella Karunalaya
Vatluru, West Gothavari
(Dt) 534 007
Andhra Pradesh – India
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 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

Pious Union of St. Joseph

953 East Michigan Ave.

Grass Lake, MI 49240

Phone: 517-522-8017

Email: piousunion@pusj.org



NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT 58
TROY, MI