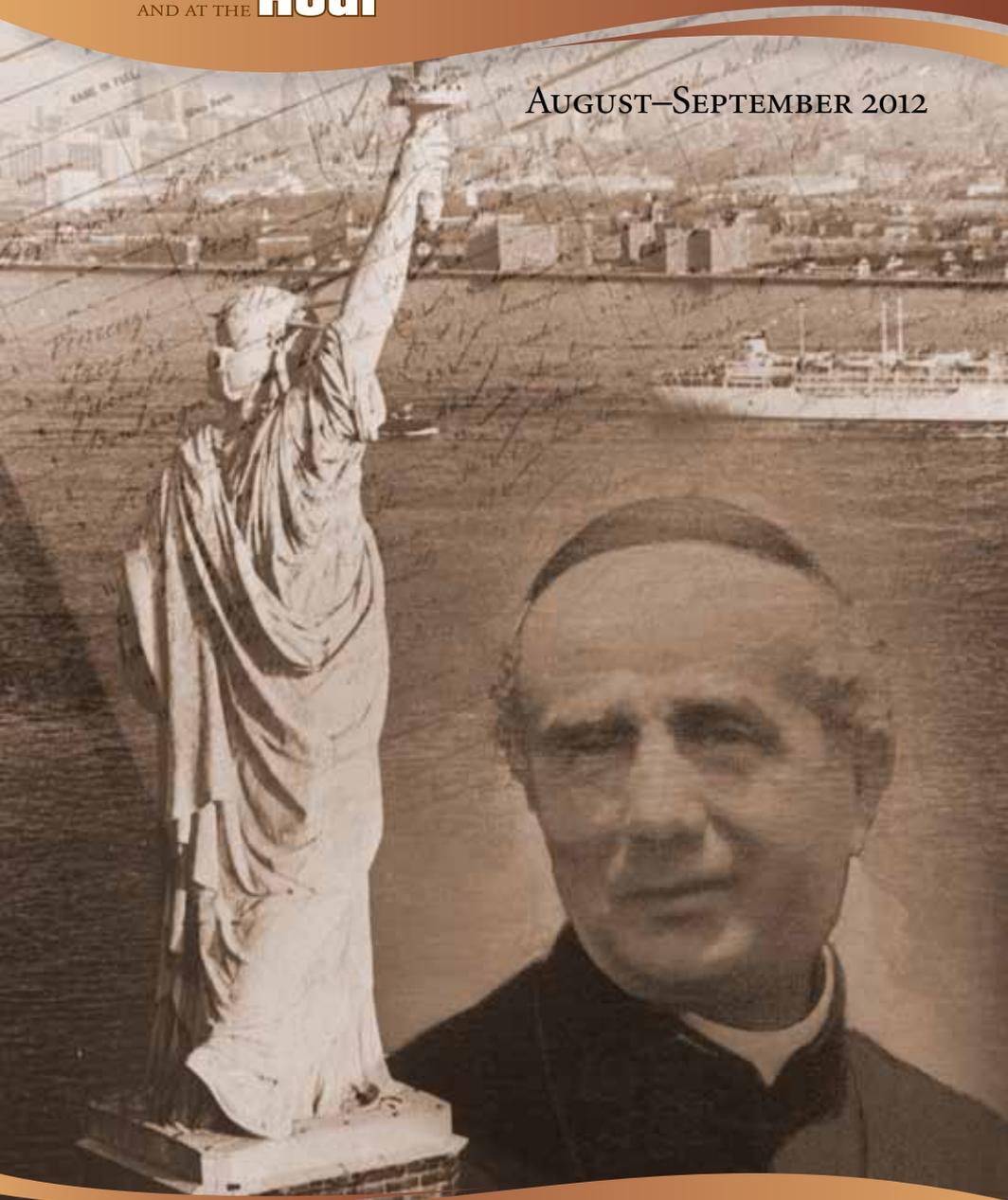


The Voice of Providence

now HOUR
AND AT THE

PUBLICATION OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY

AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 2012



Featured Story: Fr. Guanella – Pilgrim to America, page 18

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Oh Father! Oh Mother!**

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

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Mission:

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

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

Labor Day

AN EVOLVING CONCEPT

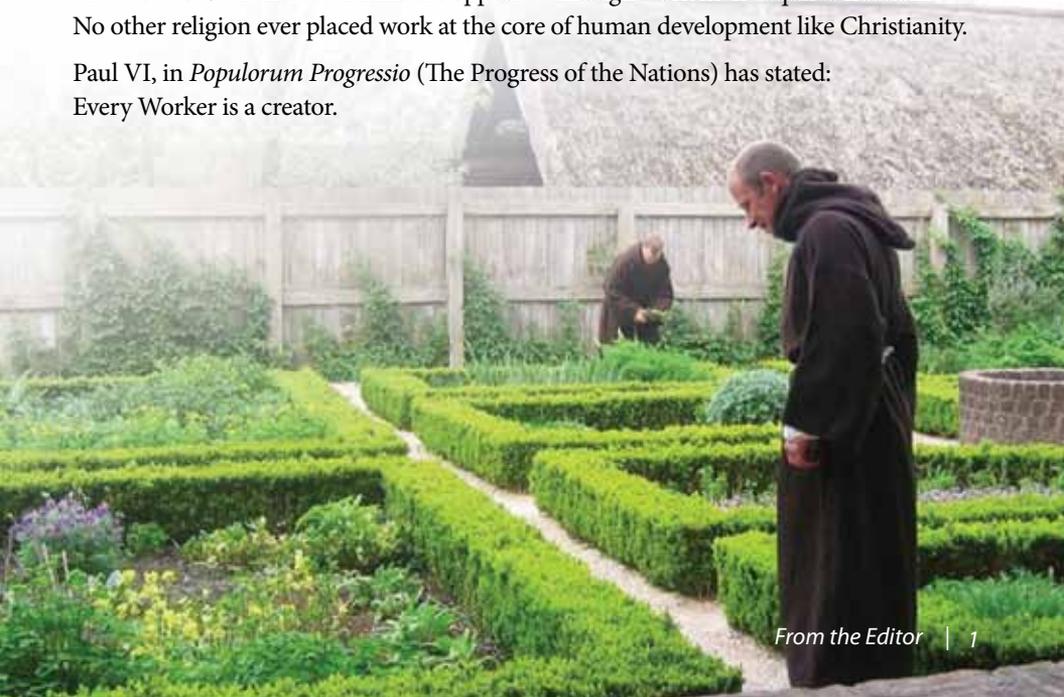
REFLECTION BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SdC

Labor Day is the celebration of the American worker. For centuries mankind has progressed with the knowledge that human labor was the origin and the means of wealth. Today this concept has been substituted by the idea that the origin of wealth is financial speculation. It is not necessary to work anymore if one can make money in another way. Through financial speculation, one can become rich in a few days. Speculators rely on their luck, skills and total lack of morality.

This reversal of the connection between work and wealth has a perverse impact not just in the financial world, but also in our way of thinking and way of life which affects our families, even if we do not realize it. How much money do we spend on lotteries, scratch and win cards, casinos, sports bets and many other games? We are looking for wealth not connected with honest work.

This new mentality and way of life is also very dangerous for the Christian faith. We believe that God created the world, but wanted us to use it for our maintenance and well being with the work of our hands. If we do not place manual work at the center of human existence, we will face dangerous consequences for the financial world and Christian civilization. In the *Pray and Work* of St. Benedict, work is placed at the same level with prayer. This was a Christian revolution in the Greek-Roman world where work was for the slaves, while the free men dedicated themselves to philosophy, reading and the arts. St. Benedict affirms the opposite: through work man acquires freedom. No other religion ever placed work at the core of human development like Christianity.

Paul VI, in *Populorum Progressio* (The Progress of the Nations) has stated:
Every Worker is a creator.



KEEP YOUR SOUL OPEN TO GOD, AS MARY IN SOUL AND BODY

BY ST. LOUIS GUANELLA



How dear is the little child to his father who comes to offer him everything his small hands can hold? Yet how dearer still if he comes to his father willing to obey him always? That child would be most dear if he would hand his soul to his father, willing to sacrifice himself and die for his affection. Are you such a child, ever ready to offer yourself to God? Most holy Mary offered herself every moment with full affection to the Most High. During Mass, at the offertory the priest lifts the host in his hands to offer it to God. Likewise, Blessed Mary offered her soul to the Lord.

God takes care of us continuously. He protects us when we are most in danger, at the point of our death. We see this in Blessed Mary, the Immaculate Virgin, consumed by a fire of heavenly love; she was already on the threshold of paradise. During her last moment on earth, she looked inside and prepared herself to enter into it. Aware of the near departure of their Mother, the Apostles hastened to take leave from her. They were in reverence of the mother of the Savior, when she raised her hand to bless them. She then raised her eyes above, seemingly pointing the way she was going to follow in ascending. Then she bowed her head, closing her eyes for the sweetest sleep. The soul of the Virgin from the embrace of the apostles had already moved into the embrace of God, Most High, in paradise. Soon the angels brought her body, too, into paradise, since it would not be right for the sinless body that gave flesh to the Incarnate Word to become the prey of worms.

Just as with Mary, the souls of the just are in the hands of God when they approach their moment of death. What comforts the just in death is the treasure of the good works they have performed in their past. Almost sensibly they feel the presence of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and of their holy guardian angel. What comforts them in their hour is the sight of paradise which they see opening wide before them. While the evil ones are tormented by a triple chain of sorrow, (their sinful past, their present threat, and their future suffering), the just find themselves secure in the hands of the Most High.

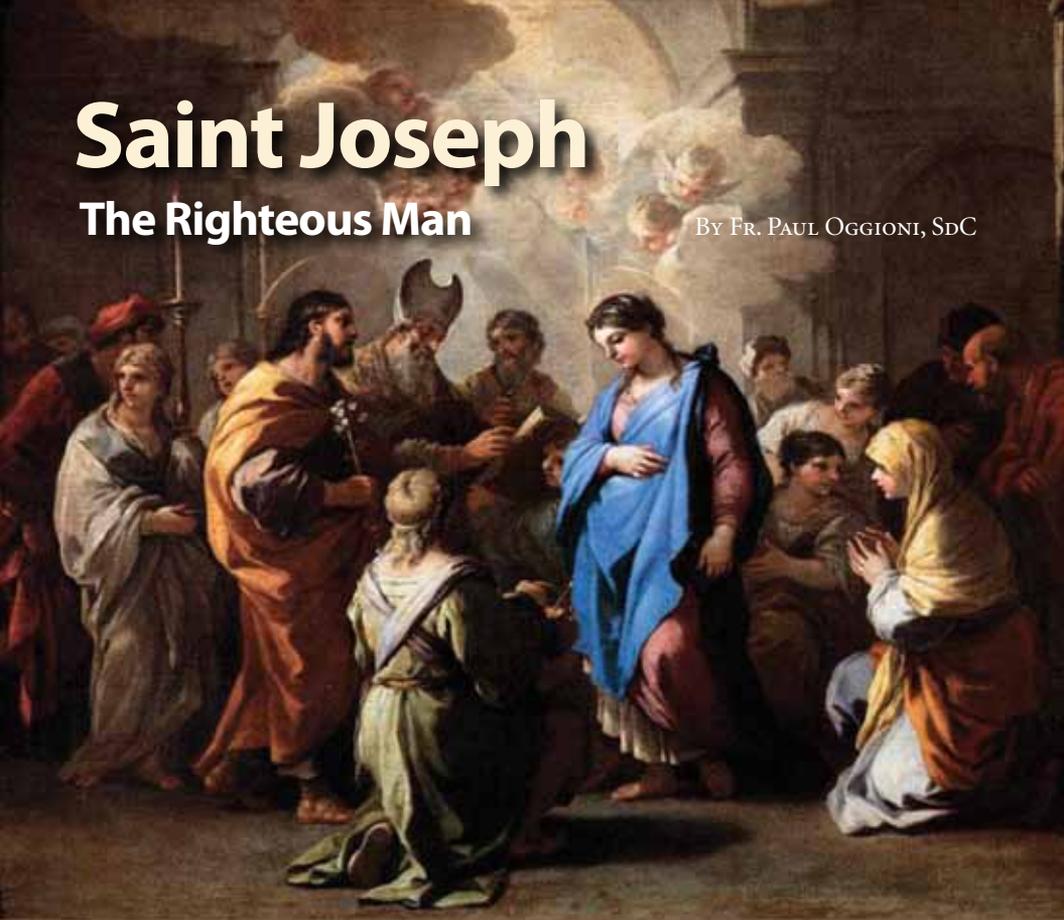
Excerpts from St. Louis Guanella's spiritual work, *In the Month of Flowers*,
The 31st Day, pp. 303–04

(The Assumption Is Celebrated August 15th)

Saint Joseph

The Righteous Man

BY FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SdC



If we dig, just a little, under the surface of a devotion that is more traditional than supernatural, we will discover that people are not fully aware of the important role that God had reserved for Saint Joseph since eternity for the salvation of mankind. Who is Saint Joseph?

The Gospel of Matthew says that the will of God is to save the chosen people and, in fact, it begins as follows: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (1, 1).

The purpose of the Gospel of Luke is, on the other hand, to make known the good news that God wants every single human being to be saved. He writes in (3, 23) that “Jesus was the son, as was thought, of Joseph,” the Savior of sinful mankind that originated from Adam and Eve.

It is interesting that both genealogies (one from Abraham to Jesus and the second from Jesus to Adam) are underlining the fact that God had created and kept the relationship, man-woman, not only as a way of transmitting human life, but also as a necessary element to hand down divine grace to fallen human nature.



“JOSEPH OF NAZARETH IS THE LAST LINK OF
A RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE THAT HAD BEEN
PREPARED FOR THE RIGHT TIME SO THAT THE
GOOD NEWS OF SALVATION BROUGHT BY JESUS
MIGHT BE WELCOMED AND BE FRUITFUL.”

The genealogies are a clear example of the male culture rooted in a patriarchal society in which fatherhood was more emphasized than motherhood. Besides that, it is necessary to keep in mind the atmosphere of faith that surrounded and sustained the religious experience of the people of God identified in Abraham, father of the covenant, and in Adam through whom every single human being is a sinner.

Joseph of Nazareth is the last link of a religious experience that had been prepared for the right time so that the good news of salvation brought by Jesus might be welcomed and be fruitful.

Joseph in the genealogies appears as a 'father,' like his predecessors; a man within a male culture, betrothed first and then married to a woman; a righteous man. However, the Gospel records that Jesus is the son of Mary, something very different from the other men who come from another man.

Joseph, like every other Jewish man, had the vocation to get married. However, his being husband and father takes shape inside a determined plan of God, inside another vocation.

Matthew describes Joseph as a righteous man, a word that today has lost its biblical and spiritual meaning, while for Joseph it was a life experience. Of course he prayed Psalm 1 numberless times, the psalm that opens the door to the confident and fruitful prayers expressed by the Psalms. We too should discover that to be righteous means to walk in the way of the Lord.

*Blessed indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;
nor lingers in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponders His law day and night.*

*Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they like winnowed chaff
shall be driven away by the wind.
When the wicked are judged they shall not stand,
nor find room among those who are just;
for the Lord guards the way of the just
but the way of the wicked leads to doom.*



By following the way of the Lord, Joseph is made aware that his vocation is to be at the side of Mary as her husband, and to be the guardian of the Son of God, born in the flesh and considered his son, so that the prophecies of old, that announced the redemption of mankind, may be fulfilled.

This biblical ‘righteousness’ is not our modern ‘justice,’ but the assent to God’s plan; a plan already set for each one of us too; a plan that Saint Joseph had freely accepted by an act of faith and abandonment.

He identified himself with God’s will shown to him at the annunciation of the angel Gabriel: “Joseph, do not be afraid to take Mary home...”; “Get up and get the child and his mother and escape into Egypt...”; “Get up and go back to the land of Israel...”

Like Abraham and the prophets of old, Joseph does not ask for explanations. He puts his trust in the Lord; he does not say a word and walks in the way of the Lord. His silence shows his faith. He does not make any inquiry because he had put all his trust in God. It is enough for him to understand what God is revealing to him through a personal revelation and through the events that are happening around him.



Elizabeth welcomes Mary by saying, “Blessed is she who believed.” We could paraphrase and say, “Blessed is he who kept silent!”

Silence is the language of faith in its fullness: blind faith that leads to blind obedience. It is a faith that believes that it is God who does; a God who is always present and working in history; a God who leads His creatures along paths that He had made and belong to Him; a God that makes us ‘righteous’ in front of Him.

The words of Saint Paul to the Ephesians has become a practical exhortation to walk according to the advice of Psalm 1: *“In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit.”* (Eph 6, 16.18)

Is this not the best way to imitate Saint Joseph?

The Value of Suffering

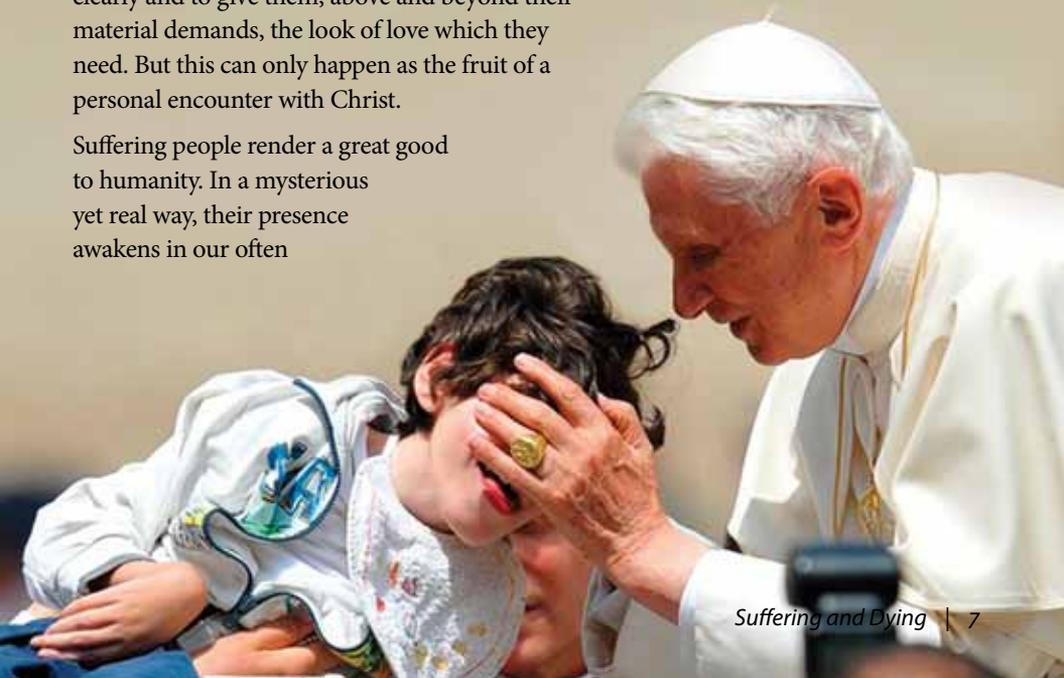
By FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SdC

During the World Youth Meeting in Madrid, 2011, surrounded by the smiles of mentally and physically handicapped youth, Benedict XVI affirmed that life is grand, even when afflicted by suffering.

“Youth, as I have said more than once, is the age when life discloses itself to us with all its rich possibilities, inspiring us to seek the lofty goals which give it meaning,” the Holy Father said. So when suffering appears on the horizon of a young life, we are shaken; perhaps, we ask ourselves whether life is still something great, even when suffering unexpectedly enters it. Pope Benedict already answered this question through the Encyclical *Spe Salvi* in which he wrote that the measure of humanity is determined in relation to suffering and those who suffer.

Jesus and, in His footsteps, His Sorrowful Mother and the saints, are witnesses who show us how to experience the tragedy of suffering for our own good and for the salvation of the world. No suffering can cancel out the divine image imprinted on humanity. Because the Son of God wanted freely to embrace suffering and death, we are also capable of seeing God’s image in the face of those who suffer. This preferential love of the Lord for the suffering helps us to see others more clearly and to give them, above and beyond their material demands, the look of love which they need. But this can only happen as the fruit of a personal encounter with Christ.

Suffering people render a great good to humanity. In a mysterious yet real way, their presence awakens in our often



hardened hearts a tenderness which opens us to salvation. Society, which all too often questions the inestimable value of life, of every life, needs the example and the acceptance of their suffering as Jesus did. The lives of the suffering people surely touch human hearts. For that reason we are grateful to the Lord for giving us the opportunity to meet them and show them compassion and loving concern, just as God Himself did. In a decisive way, people affected from any illness of mind or body help to build a civilization of love. What is more, they play a leading role in that civilization. As sons and daughters of the Church, they offer the Lord their lives, with all their ups and downs, cooperating with Him and somehow becoming part of the treasury of compassion so greatly needed by the human race.



“SUFFERING PEOPLE RENDER
A GREAT GOOD TO HUMANITY.
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Suffering is truly a supernatural and at the same time human element. It is supernatural because it is rooted in the divine mystery of the Redemption, that is the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord; it is likewise deeply human because in it the person discovers himself, his own humanity, his own dignity and his own mission. The mystery of the Redemption of the world is in an amazing way rooted in suffering, and this suffering in turn finds in the mystery of the Redemption its supreme and surest point of reference.



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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.





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to St. Joseph with your family and all
those who God brings into your life

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Give blessed St. Joseph Medals to family & friends	\$5.00 each
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Share a copy of the Holy Cloak with a friend	\$5.00 each
Share copies of the Voice of Providence	\$1.50 each

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brochures of the Pious Union of St. Joseph?*

*Let's generously celebrate the Year of our Founder's
Canonization by spreading devotion to our dear St. Joseph.*

*Please use the envelope in the center of the magazine
to make requests and send donations.*



From the Mailbag

Dear Sister,

This is a prayer I wrote to
St. Joseph which I say every day.

*St. Joseph up in Heaven
Will you reach down to me
And as you did with baby Jesus
Hold me on your knee.
I have many roads to travel,
Some of them quite hard,
But with you there to guide me
I'll find my way to God.*

Denis Scanlon, New York

Dear Fr. Rinaldo,

I have had a special devotion to St. Joseph for a long time and many of my prayers have been answered through his intercession. Whenever there was a need, great or small, one Novena to this special Father and it was a done deal.

With two specific prayer requests in mind, I started a novena to St. Joseph on March 1st using the prayers in *The Holy Cloak in Honor of St. Joseph*. One of the requests was answered very quickly, and not coincidentally, on his Feast Day.

May St. Joseph, Mother Mary and Jesus continue to bless you and the Pious Union and all the people you serve.

Yours in Christ, Nancy in Florida

Hi my name is Margaret,

I have the *Holy Cloak in Honor of St. Joseph* Pamphlet. I have prayed this four

times for 30 days in memory of the 30 years of St. Joseph's life. I have received many blessings. Thank you St. Joseph.

Member in Memphis

Hi Sr. Margaret Mary!

I hope you are well. I just wanted to get back with you from our meeting last week when you and Fr. Fortunato prayed for me, for my family and job situation.

Simply put: I'm having very good success with getting the word out to others about my business, and have already been asked for appointments! Please continue to pray for me, and my family, and for the job which I have created as a financial planner. I also would like to stay in touch with you as it relates to the Pious Union. I feel that our meeting and yours and Fr. Fortunato's prayers, along with St. Joseph's intercession, have been a huge lift and grace to me and my confidence for the future.

Thank you so much! I'm in the midst of the Novena to St. Joseph with his Feast Day approaching, and I pray for additional graces to help me weather the Devil's attempts to keep me from being a part of my children's lives and to be the best man God wants me to be. Please keep me in your prayers!

Best, RW

St. Louis Guanella and Blessed Clare Bosatta:

Two Charisms For One Mission

By FR. NINO MINETTI, SDC

LET US GO TO THE FATHER

FAMILIAR INVITATIONS
TO PRAY
THE OUR FATHER
WELL

— 1980 —

— CHURCH, 1980 —

The first contact between Father Guanella and Sr. Clare took place by mail just one month after Father Guanella arrived at the parish in Pianello. That year Sr. Clare was in Gravedona preparing for her teaching certificate test.

Father Guanella desired to know all his parishioners and sent her a letter with his recently published booklet, *Let us go to the Father*, as a Christmas present. Clare answered the following January 3, 1882, expressing her appreciation and hoping to meet him soon, apologizing for the late reply.

The following summer Sr. Clare returned to Pianello and had the opportunity to meet Father Guanella and attend the annual retreat he was preaching. Sr. Clare liked what she heard and believed he was the priest that she was looking for. He was a gentle teacher, patient and austere for a disciple open to climb Calvary for the love of God. She chose him as a confessor and spiritual director.



From that time on, between the two, began a period of intense collaboration in the service of charity, but most of all a period of a spiritual and formative dialog that would last until her death, only five years later. When she needed to move away for some time from her “best father,” as she often called him, she was sad because she would be deprived of his counsel and guidance. “Accompany me always with your blessing,” she wrote in March 1886. “I miss your presence, your word, your encouragement and your support; find another way to make up for your absence. You know everything; you know the needs and the longing of my poor heart and I entrust myself completely to you.” And again two months later, “My heart finds rest only where it is allowed to see,



“CLARE WANTED GOD; SHE WANTED TO BE ABLE TO HUG HIM PHYSICALLY AND SEE HIS FACE IF SHE COULD, BUT NOT BEING ABLE TO DO THAT, SHE EXTENDED HER HUGS TO THE CREATURES WHO COULD ATTRACT HER TO HIM...”

converse and learn heavenly things, that is, close to the one I can directly address, who is my comfort after the Heavenly Father.”

Father Guanella reciprocated with the same respect and trust. He placed her in charge of all the activities of the first House opened in Como, the House of Divine Providence. He wrote that she is the “main wheel” of the whole operation in the House and the referral point of all the residents in the House.

Father Guanella was totally amazed and edified by the high spirituality of his collaborator. In fact if Sr. Clare appeared to be fully absorbed in her educational work, in reality her life was completely recollected in God. Father Guanella wrote about it, “Clare wanted God; she wanted to be able to hug Him physically and see His face if she could, but not being able to do that, she extended her hugs to the creatures who could attract her to Him and from whom she could draw a drop of water that could quench her heart which was always thirsty for God.”

For her vitality and inner grace, he wanted her at his side with a primary role within the nascent congregation. She was given the responsibility of religious formation beginning from Novitiate, as Mistress of the Novices and then as a spiritual leader of all the sisters.

After her death, to keep her memory and make known the progress of her spiritual journey, Father Guanella wrote two biographies, as the pattern for future writings.

In the history of the relationship between Father Guanella and Sr. Clare it is interesting to highlight how different their personality and character were. Clare is remembered as shy, reserved, contemplative and prone to tears. She showed a sense of inferiority and at times of guilt; not inclined to socialization, she passed on to her sister, Sr. Marcellina, all social activities. Father Guanella, on the other hand, was all for action, at times

aggressive and decisive. He was tireless, courageous and energetic; self assured and strong, he was always open to relationships and friendships.

They were also spiritually different. Sr. Clare was inspired by Christ crucified and was called to a mystic life. Her mysticism was purified by harsh challenges and interior suffering that opened her spirit to the encounter with God the groom, Father Guanella saw God as father and moved toward Him through abstinence, penance, and sacrifice, “like the Gospel grain of wheat” he wrote, “which must be buried in the ground to die and be transformed into wheat ready to be ground and baked for the table of the King.”

As different as they were, it was not easy to understand each other. Father Guanella admitted it candidly. He had to be firm toward Sr. Clare’s uncertainty and hesitations about the responsibilities entrusted to her. He had to mitigate his personal severity, acquired in his early education, especially when counseling women.

Father Guanella dedicated himself to the study of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross to properly direct the spirit of the humble, mystic sister. He did not fully understand how God was operating in the soul of Sr. Clare; he perceived only the depth of its mystery. He certainly understood that Clare was placed next to him to become **the cornerstone** of his institutions, a model for all who followed her in the consecrated life among the Guanellian Family.

Even more, Father Guanella understood that Sr. Clare was a gift of Grace for the whole Church, which also recognizes her on earth as Blessed; and we pray that soon she will be recognized as a saint.







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S.S. *La Provence* sailing from *Adore*

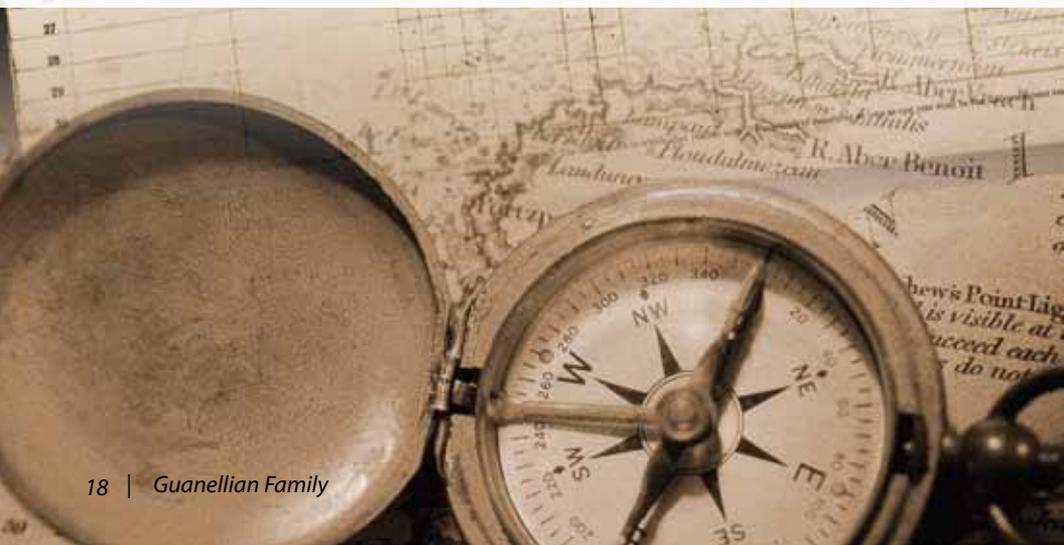
NAME IN FULL		Age	Sex	Calling or Occupation	Religion	Nationality (Country of which citizen or subject)	Place or People	Country	Qty or Tons	*Last Permanent Residence	The name and complete address of nearest relative in the country whence also came
Family Name	Given Name	Yrs. Mos.	M	F							
<i>Conkovic</i>	<i>Katharina</i>	<i>16</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>
	<i>Anna</i>	<i>12</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>
	<i>Franc</i>	<i>21</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>
<i>Pincenzi</i>	<i>Bianca</i>	<i>30</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>
<i>Gregori</i>	<i>Felice</i>	<i>18</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>
<i>Guanello</i>	<i>Luigi</i>	<i>18</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>
<i>Guanello</i>	<i>Jean Baptiste</i>	<i>18</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>housewife</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Polish</i>	<i>Adore</i>	<i>U.S.A.</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>Maria Conkovic</i>

PART ONE

FATHER GUANELLA: PILGRIM TO AMERICA

By FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC

This year, the Guanellian Family celebrates the centennial of Father Guanello's pilgrimage to the United States. America had been on Father Guanello's heart and mind since his childhood.



Some members of the family were forced to emigrate to faraway lands. Emigration to make a living was a painful phenomenon which Louis witnessed too often. He would always remember the farewell scene, when his widowed aunt, Ursula Levi (Guanella), was forced to emigrate to the United States amid the tears of relatives. Many of Father Guanella's relatives and neighbors settled in the Township of Genoa, near Lacrosse, WI.

He had been looking for an opportunity to cross the ocean and establish his institutions in the United States. During a visit to the Holy Father, Pius X, together with the Scalabrinian Fr. Vittorio Gregori, he expressed his desire to the Pope who greatly encouraged him and gave him a Personal Letter of presentation to the Catholic Hierarchy in the United States.

“Fr. Guanella undertakes this journey to explore the possibility of beginning a foundation directed by his Sisters to assist the mentally and physically disabled of every age and social background in order to care for them and look after their needs. We bear witness that these dear Sisters here in Rome and anywhere else are very appreciated because of their committed ministry and obedience to the holy charism of their institute. They perform miracles of true charity.” (Pius X, Vatican City, December 2, 1912).



With the support of the Pope, Father Guanella felt called by God and decided to travel to America. With faith in Divine Providence, he said, “I go because I am called. Perhaps for weakness and timidity I did not come here sooner. I’ve had this desire for more than ten years, but I had to wait for the call from above.”

Father Guanella started his journey with extraordinary energy, despite his mature age of seventy. He traveled by train to Paris, France and from there to the seaport of Le Havre where, on December 15, 1912 he boarded the liner *Provence*.

The ocean was rough. He was forced to his cabin assailed by sea sickness. “The interminable voyage, disturbed by nausea, which gave no truce, would have been a torture, if I did not have Fr. Gregori at my side, who revealed himself to be a friend.” Father Louis had few words, as if he wanted to forget the hours that had no end; he recounted the anguish that gripped his physique. “We passed the days in conversations. Father Vittorio read chapters from his recent books. The recitation of the Divine Office followed more meditation and friendly conversations as true friends and brothers. He

showed great interest about our plans and promised broad support at the beginning of our works in the United States, but he trusted greatly in the Autograph of Pius X.”

Father Gregori reported that, in those days, he could see the suffering and admire the acceptance of Father Louis. He had been near him; he had seen his face turn white, refusing meals. He discovered his look lost in anguish, but he understood that he offered every frailty to unite his misery to the sufferings of Christ. He did not miss the opportunity to visit the poor emigrant passengers in steerage. He prayed for them and with them. There were people from almost every nation in Europe. He asked where they came from and if they had someone waiting for them and if he could do something for them, especially the children.

Then finally on the evening of December 21st, *Provence* docked at the pier of New York.

Father Guanella felt a sense of gratitude for this country that gave hospitality and welcomed all the poor of the world.

He brought his charism and his spirituality: God the Father loves all his children especially the poor and the abandoned.

The Guanellian family celebrates in thanksgiving one hundred years of the presence of the Guanellian Charism in the United States. It is a Gift of God to the people of the world who recognize in each creature the image and likeness of God. It is a charism that brings together all people of good will who are called to witness the love of God for all, especially the poor.

Entering the New York Harbor, Father Guanella read the words on the Statue of Liberty, *“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”* He could not agree more. His plan was to serve and assist this very group and witness among them the Love of God the Father for all especially the poor.



St. Louis Guanella (top) and his travelling companion, Fr. Vittorio Gregori (bottom).

Nature's Cry

to God and Man

By FR. SOOSAI RATHINAM, SDC

Today humanity is facing a greater and more serious problem that is the cry of the afflicted and wounded universe. It is relevant to speak of a response to this cry.

“Cry” is the expression of a concrete situation of grief, despair, helplessness and utter misery. In the Bible, there are quite a few expressions of ‘crying out’. “The blood of your brother is crying out to me” (Gn. 4, 10). Can we think of a universe which is crying out? The Bible talks of a universe which cries out and the response that this cry evokes in mankind.

The Bible shows the elements of the universe as persons. In the book of Psalms, the earth reeled and the foundations of the mountains trembled (Ps. 18, 7) like humans. We see the heavens telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaiming the handiwork of God (Ps. 19, 1). The psalmist calls all the earth to make a joyful noise to God. The whole earth is called to say to God that awesome are His deeds and because of His great power the enemies cringe before Him (Ps. 66, 1–3). The same psalmist affirms that all the earth worships Yahweh and they sing praise to His name. The earth is called to rejoice and the coastlands are invited to be glad because Yahweh is the King (Ps. 97). We find that the earth can sing the praises of God, and it is fitting that following the Biblical tradition we bring before our mind the earth raising up its cry. In many cultures, the



earth is personified all the more with reverence and called 'mother earth.' This human personification of the earth may be due to the fact that human kind originates from the earth and it is this earth that gives life and sustenance to the humans.

The human cry is an urgent need of the crier. The denial of this need is life threatening. Usually the person in need, the rejected, adopts this form of communication, an outcry to seek and to initiate the process of obtaining his or her need. Usually the cry is addressed to some higher power that is in a position to satisfy the crier with the need. The cry sometimes is raised up to God. In these cases, crying is a human, emotional communication of a life-threatening situation by which the crier struggles to be liberated by the mercy of higher powers to which he lifts up his voice.

Reasons for the cry of humankind are as numerous as the criers themselves. The people of Israel cried to God their liberator in order that they be delivered from the hands of their oppressors. The psalmist cries out on account of bodily and spiritual affliction which has alienated him from his own fellow beings and has cast him into loneliness. Psalm 22 is a typical cry which burst forth in the agony of Jesus on the cross when He realized that He was alienated from His own Parent God, a cry which shook the foundations of the unjust world. A supplicatory cry is found in the letter to the Hebrews (5, 7) where the eternal High Priest Jesus offers His prayers and supplications with a loud cry and tears.

The cry of the human is followed by the cry of the universe. Like a common cry of the oppressed, we see a cry of the natural forces since all elements of nature are interconnected. The atmospheric pollution, puncturing the Ozone valley, the consequent global warming, the melting of the ice in the Antarctic, the rise in the sea level and the submerging of the coastal regions, etc., are all a collective cry of the Universe against the oppressive nature of humans. Humans are the oppressors and the universe is the oppressed. The extraordinary natural calamities are the loud cries made against the oppressors. The oppressive nature of the vulnerable human species is clear by the way it depletes the natural resources, makes the forests barren and desert-like. The wild life having a peaceful existence is threatened by humans and they become homeless and enter into the nearby hamlets with cries demanding for their rights to exist. Every cry is not only an expression of agony; it is also a revelation of the inner feelings and of the unjust structure which lies hidden. What would be the response of mankind to these cries? Is it engaged in recognizing its oppressive nature or is it engaged in finding ways and means to make itself deaf, unable to hear these cries emerging from the various corners of the Universe?

Jesus felt alienated at His death, but He identified Himself with the thief who recognized Him as the Messiah (Lk. 23,42). Today the universe is alienated and abandoned in many ways. There are many who would enjoy the beauty and freshness of the hills, flowers and rivers. But as in humanity, there are zones from which humankind has alienated itself gradually. The polluted rivers, the garbage heaps, slums and industrial smoky areas



“THE WORLD TAKES CARE OF HUMANS BY PROVIDING FOOD AND NOURISHMENT, AND HUMAN SOCIETY NEEDS TO IDENTIFY ITSELF WITH THE DISFIGURED WORLD AND ATTEMPT TO RESTORE ITS DIGNITY.”

wear an abandoned and deserted look for no fault of their own. It is humankind which has disfigured these rivers and it is humankind whose laziness and easy going mentality that has produced the garbage heaps. The world takes care of humans by providing food and nourishment, and human society needs to identify itself with the disfigured world and attempt to restore its dignity.

Natural elements can reveal God's plans. In the desert, Moses cried out to the Lord for water for the stubborn people. The water from the rock was a symbol of God's patience and tolerance with the people He chose (Ex. 17, 4); for Elijah, the silence of the gentle breeze carried the presence of God (1 Kg. 19, 13). Christians, however, have not developed a sense of reverence towards the elements of Nature. The strange phenomenon we observe in nature can be interpreted as the struggle of the universe to adjust itself to the ecological imbalances created by humankind. The natural catastrophes that are befalling the universe, a world covered with carbon and chemical smoke, the rivers turning to garbage-heaps, with rare species disappearing, the invasion of unidentified ailments in humans, animals and birds, the depletion of drinking water, consumables with chemical ingredients are a loud prophetic cry which calls man to denounce unhealthy attitudes towards God, nature, neighbor and towards himself.

Cry is a human, emotional communication of a life-threatening situation by which the crier struggles to be liberated by the mercy of higher powers to which he lifts up his voice. The cry of the Universe is a non-human, commotional communication of a life-threatening situation by which the universe struggles to liberate itself and all it holds by the prudential behavior of the humans to whom it raises its cry. It is the time for every Christian to love, appreciate, uphold, esteem every element of nature and propagate this reverence to every person we meet.



IMMIGRATION

At the Center of American Political Debate

BY JOSEPH YEKULIS

The United States is a nation of immigrants, with the earliest wave from Europe known as “Pilgrims,” arriving at Plymouth Rock and establishing their first colony in 1620.

These “Pilgrims” were separatist Puritans who came to our shores seeking religious freedom. Our country has certainly evolved since the early 17th Century, and since that time, many more waves of immigrants have come to our shores; both willingly and unwillingly through slavery. In today’s world, with the population of the United States approaching 313 million people, the topic of immigration continues to be a very difficult subject that most politicians are reluctant or unwilling to address.

The Center for Immigration Studies reported that our total immigrant population, both legal and illegal reached a record level of 37.9 million in 2007, and the Pew Hispanic Center reported in 2010 that there were 11.2 million unauthorized persons living in the United States.



With so many poor people searching for their slice of the “American Dream,” what is our response as a church and a society?

The Catholic Church’s position on Immigration was recently articulated by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in January 2011 and reads as follows: “The Catholic Catechism instructs the faithful that good government has two duties, both of which must be carried out and neither of which can be ignored. The first duty



is to welcome the foreigner out of charity and respect for the human person. Persons have the right to immigrate and thus government must accommodate this right to the greatest extent possible, especially financially blessed nations: “The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him.” Catholic Catechism, 2241.

The second duty is to secure one’s border and enforce the law for the sake of the common good. Sovereign nations have the right to enforce their laws and all persons must respect the legitimate exercise of this right: “Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants’ duties toward their country of adoption. Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.” Catholic Catechism, 2241.

In his book, *Prayer and Suffering – The Legacy of Father Louis Guanella*, Fr. Tito Credaro, SdC writes, “The faith and piety of Father Guanella led not only to a contemplation and elevation of his soul to the heavenly Father, but had become an inner urge to bring aid to those in need in their body and soul. Even in his prayer his charism of charity surfaced when he opened his heart to the poor whom he could not physically reach through his apostolate. Through his prayer, he widened the horizon of charitable activity.” (p. 102). In keeping with the Church’s call to “welcome the foreigner out of charity and respect for the human person,” the Servants of Charity carry out St. Louis Guanella’s care for the poor, and have extended their charitable outreach to minister to the Hispanic population living near their home in Springfield, PA.

Their newest mission is to provide a pastoral presence to those in need in the poorest areas of Chester, PA. at a spiritual center they've established called the "Holy Family Center." Out of their desire to present the Holy Family as an inspiration for migrant families to live their commitment to God by keeping families together, the Servants of Charity are going door-to-door sharing their faith in family homes, providing spiritual retreats, prayer meetings, Bible studies, and ministering spiritual care to the sick. This is all part of the "New Evangelization" called for by the Holy Father, to invite all to listen and accept the invitation of the Lord to be more committed in their personal, family, and community life.

The U.S. Conference of Bishops has recommended that we be welcoming to foreigners, and that our rule of law should be respected by our new crop of immigrants. As to the former, the Servants of Charity are certainly doing their part in Chester, PA., by caring for the bodies and souls of the poor whom they are reaching out to; giving them "Bread and the Lord." As to the latter however, with our Presidential Election looming in November, it will be interesting to see how the rest of America responds. As of May 2012, our U.S. Budget Deficit reached an all time high of \$15.6 trillion, and with illegal immigration costing us \$113 Billion annually, many are of the opinion that something needs to be done immediately to stem this tide. According to a Fox News study, 300,000 illegal immigrants are still crossing our U.S. borders every year. The issue of immigration, both legal and illegal, will remain a centerpiece of our political debate as the clock ticks down to November 6, 2012.



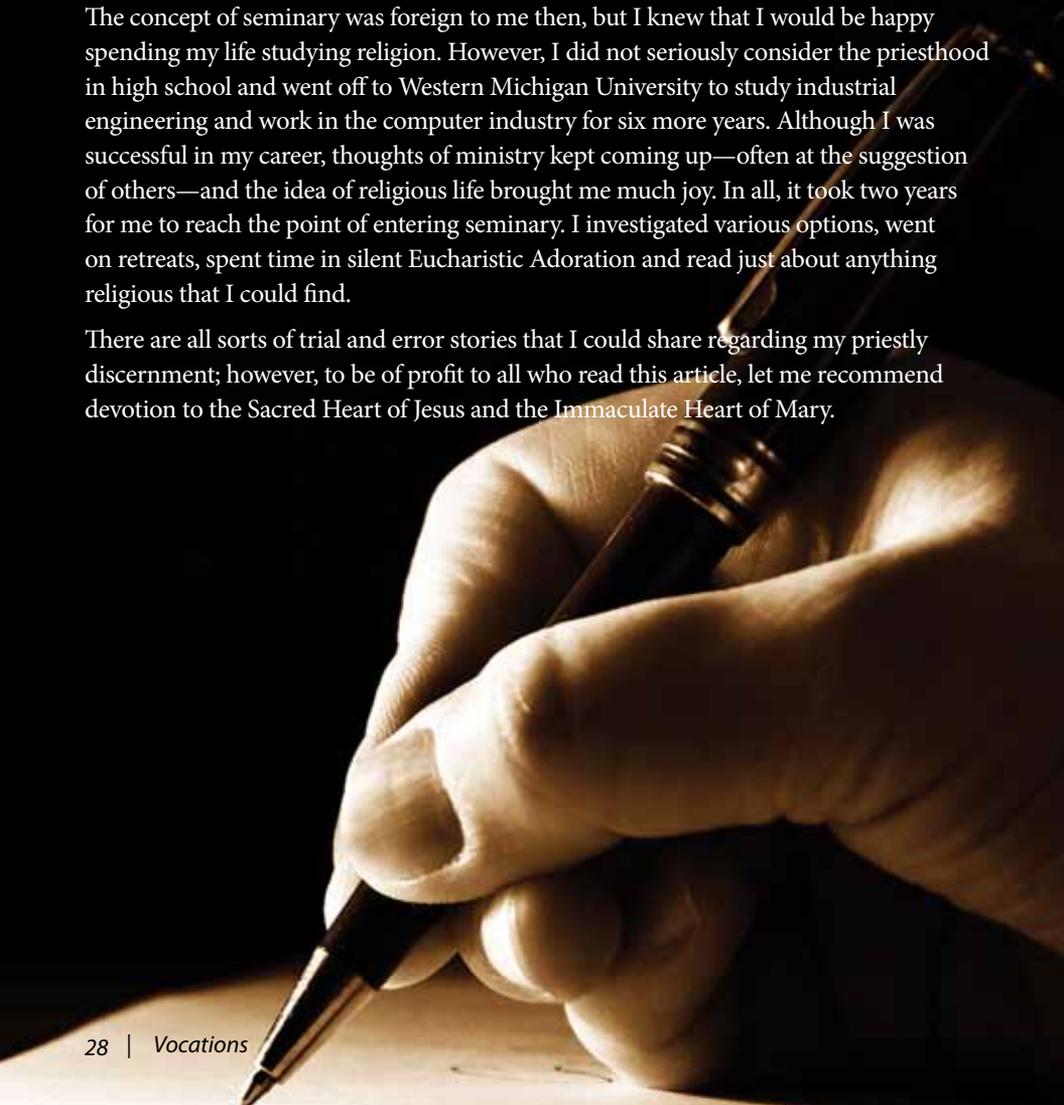
What's My Story?

REV. GORDON P. REIGLE, DIOCESE OF LANSING, MI, CLASS OF 2005

I can remember wanting to be a priest as far back as age eleven. Growing up at Queen of the Miraculous Medal Church in Jackson, MI, I greatly admired our Vincentian priests and was intrigued by the beauty of our faith.

I can remember sitting in church, enjoying the silence, and thinking to myself that it would be great if I could find a way to go to school and just learn about church stuff. The concept of seminary was foreign to me then, but I knew that I would be happy spending my life studying religion. However, I did not seriously consider the priesthood in high school and went off to Western Michigan University to study industrial engineering and work in the computer industry for six more years. Although I was successful in my career, thoughts of ministry kept coming up—often at the suggestion of others—and the idea of religious life brought me much joy. In all, it took two years for me to reach the point of entering seminary. I investigated various options, went on retreats, spent time in silent Eucharistic Adoration and read just about anything religious that I could find.

There are all sorts of trial and error stories that I could share regarding my priestly discernment; however, to be of profit to all who read this article, let me recommend devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



“THE MORE I REFLECTED ON JESUS’ BROKEN HEART, THE MORE THE PRIESTHOOD BECAME ATTRACTIVE TO ME AS AN AVENUE OF MERCY TO SINNERS, A WAY TO CONSOLE THE SACRED HEART.”

The signs and experiences that I encountered on my journey may not be repeatable, but we can all learn from the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

I was re-introduced to the Sacred Heart devotion during my time of discernment through the diary of St. Maria Faustina Kowalska (1905–1938), *Divine Mercy in My Soul*. In Jesus’ private revelations on the subject of Divine Mercy, I seriously considered—perhaps for the first time—God’s view of salvation. God, as the essence and perfection of love, creates us with the capacity for love, makes a radical sacrifice to redeem us when we fall into sin and calls us to an eternal union of life and love. And what kind of return do I make for the precious blood of Christ shed on my behalf? Sadly, my response is often marred by indifference, disobedience, ingratitude and selfishness. What kind of return is that? Jesus only wants to reconcile us, and yet he frequently suffers the pain of rejection and unrequited love. The more I reflected on Jesus’ broken heart, the more the priesthood became attractive to me as an avenue of mercy to sinners, a way to console the Sacred Heart.

And then there is the Blessed Mother. If we want to learn to love and serve Jesus, who could be of more help than Our Lady? In short, I spent a lot of my discernment time reading books and articles about devotion to Jesus and Mary, and I would highly recommend this path to anyone, whether discerning a vocation or merely trying to live out one’s calling.



Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Andrew Parish in Saline, 2005

Perhaps this explains part of my motivation and calling to serve, but what about the fear of loss and sacrifice? As a lifelong musician—who had to quit several bands to enter seminary—I did not want to give up my music, and I also knew that I wanted a family of my own. The joke was on me, of course. God does not waste anything. For starters, I have more spiritual children now than I can count. I loved my first assignment at St. Andrew the Apostle Church in Saline, a large and youthful parish, and now I am chaplain to nearly 500 students at Lansing Catholic High School. I have kids...lots of kids! And, as for my love of the piano, it took a matter of hours for the seminary staff to figure out that I was musical, and then I was signed up for everything. Even at Lansing Catholic, I co-teach the jazz band elective, accompany the choirs, and provide musical entertainment from time to time. In short, I have a wonderful and fulfilling life. I get to spend my days sharing the love and mercy of God with others. The priesthood has been more of a blessing than I can tell.



Fr. Gordon playing the piano in a hotel lounge in Krakow, Poland, 2009 during one of his annual pilgrimages.



Lansing Catholic HS visited the St. Louis Center and Pious Union this last April.

The Pious Union of St. Joseph's Library

Oh Father! Oh Mother!

Father Guanella wrote these reflections for the feasts of the Lord and of the Blessed Mother during three consecutive years for a Catholic newspaper in Milan, Italy. Later, he published them in this book for all to enjoy, pray and meditate. These contemplations are touching and inspiring, leading souls closer to God.

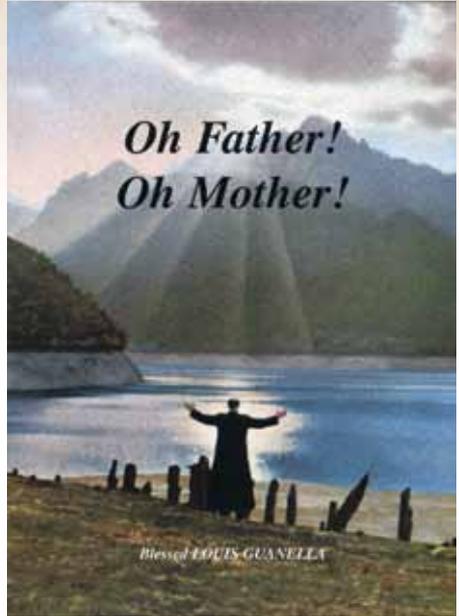
Each reflection starts with a theological explanation of the feast day. The second part deals with the spiritual benefits from the contemplation of the mystery in the life of Jesus and the Blessed Mother.

Each meditation concludes with practical suggestions for a more intense Christian life, through pertinent and provoking questions.

In these reflections I discovered aspects of the Life of Jesus and Mary that I have never considered before. There is prayer and food for the soul at the same time.



Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC



The Holy Cloak in Honor of St. Joseph continues to be available with a donation of \$5 or more. Please note on your donation envelope the books that you would like to receive.

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There is room for many others; those needing help and those who want to help.

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

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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.

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