

The Voice of Providence

now HOUR
AND AT THE

PUBLICATION OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY

FEBRUARY—MARCH 2009

FEATURE STORY:

*Companions on the
Journey of Hope*

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ST. JOSEPH:

*You, Joseph, Are to
Name Him Jesus*

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PUBLISHED BY:

The Pious Union of St. Joseph

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PHOTOS: Servants of Charity, Servire,
La Santa Crociata

The Voice of Providence:

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

Mission

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

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

Hope

BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC

We all know what Faith is, and even better, what Love is. What about Hope? Its concept is somewhat blurry. Out of the three, Hope is the forgotten virtue. Like in the Holy Trinity, we know God the Father, we know even better God the Son, but the Holy Spirit is often the forgotten God.

Hope is the yearning to obtain from God all that He has promised us with respect to eternal life. Seek first the Kingdom of God and its treasures (cf. Mt 6, 19-21).

Prayer is a manifestation and interpretation of Hope. Nowhere is Hope more admirably expressed than in the Our Father, which, St. Augustine declared, contains all that we should hope from God. In this prayer the heavenly Father is asked to grant us eternal life and also all the means to attain it.

Hope necessarily supposes Faith. Faith gives to Hope the divine plan we need to follow, and leads us on the road to God. Without Faith, there could be no Hope. However, Charity is the most perfect of the three. Faith and Hope put us in contact with God, but it is Charity that unites us with Him. In our journey of salvation, Faith begins, Hope follows and Charity concludes.

Hope can exist without Charity, for Charity is lost by mortal sin. Therefore, sinners can hope for the forgiveness of their sins and the salvation of their souls. However, without Faith, Hope collapses, because Faith is the root and foundation of it all.

We believe Jesus' promise and words. We believe in Jesus' love for us. We believe in the crucified Jesus and his resurrection. We hope to live eternally with Him, the Blessed Mother, and our beloved ones who went on before us or will follow us. This we believe.



Christ Made Himself Poor for You (2 Cor 8, 9)

EXCERPT FROM THE MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
BENEDICT XVI FOR LENT 2008

“Each year, Lent offers us a providential opportunity to deepen the meaning and value of our Christian lives, and it stimulates us to rediscover the mercy of God so that we, in turn, become more merciful toward our brothers and sisters... For this year’s Lenten Message, I wish to spend some time reflecting on the practice of almsgiving, which represents a specific way to assist those in need and, at the same time, is an exercise in self-denial that frees us from attachment to worldly goods... Almsgiving helps us to overcome this constant temptation, teaching us to respond to our neighbor’s needs and to share with others whatever we possess through divine goodness.

According to the teaching of the Gospel, we are not owners but rather administrators of the goods we possess: these, then, are not to be considered as our exclusive possession, but means through which the Lord calls each one of us to act as a steward of His providence for our neighbor...

In the Gospel, Jesus explicitly admonishes the one who possesses and uses earthly riches only for self... The words of Saint John acquire the tone of a ringing rebuke: ‘How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help?’”

Pope Benedict reminds us that we should do our almsgiving in secret, for the glory of God, so we do not become the center of attention and he tells us: “If, in accomplishing a good deed, we do not have as our goal God’s glory and the real well being of our brothers and sisters... we place ourselves outside of the Gospel vision. Almsgiving, according to the Gospel, is not mere philanthropy: rather it is a concrete expression of charity, a theological virtue that demands interior conversion to love of God and neighbor, in imitation of Jesus Christ... There is little use in giving one’s personal goods to others if it leads to a heart puffed up in vainglory: for this reason, the one, who knows that God ‘sees in secret’ and in secret will reward, does not seek human recognition for works of mercy.

When we do things out of love, we express the truth of our being; indeed, we have been created not for ourselves but for God and our brothers and sisters. Every time when, for love of God, we share our goods with our neighbor in need, we discover that the fullness of life comes from love and all is returned to us as a blessing in the form of peace, inner satisfaction and joy. Our Father in heaven rewards our almsgiving with His joy. By drawing close to others through almsgiving, we draw close to God; it can become an instrument for authentic conversion and reconciliation with Him and our brothers.

...As Saint Paul writes, (He) made Himself poor to enrich us out of His poverty (cf. 2 Cor 8, 9); He gave His entire self for us. Lent inspires us to follow His example. In His school, we can learn to make of our lives a total gift; imitating Him, we are able to make ourselves available, not so much in giving a part of what we possess, but our very selves. The Lenten practice of almsgiving thus becomes a means to deepen our Christian vocation. In gratuitously offering himself, the Christian bears witness that it is love and not material richness that determines the laws of his existence. Love, then, gives almsgiving its value; it inspires various forms of giving, according to the possibilities and conditions of each person.

Let this time, then, be marked by a personal and community effort of attachment to Christ in order that we may be witnesses of His love. May Mary, Mother and faithful Servant of the Lord, help believers to enter the ‘spiritual battle’ of Lent, armed with prayer, fasting and the practice of almsgiving, so as to arrive at the celebration of the Easter Feasts, renewed in spirit. With these wishes, I willingly impart to all my Apostolic Blessing.”

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

For the complete text visit http://www.vatican.va/holy_father.

A Day to Remember

BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC

On March 25th, we celebrate the feast of the Annunciation. It is the day when the Word became flesh and lived among us, the day when the history of mankind's salvation began, the day when the Virgin Mary became Jesus' Mother and our Mother. It is a day to remember for all Christians.

March 24, 1908, is a day to remember for the Servants of Charity and for all the Guanellian family. It was the vigil of the feast day

of the Annunciation. That evening, Father Guanella and a group of his followers professed, publically for the first time, the religious vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, according to the Constitutions of the Servants of Charity. It was an emotional event that brought tears to all present. Father Guanella spoke for a long time and poured out his heart expressing his gratitude to God, the Church and his confreres for making his dream of a Congregation come true. He also spoke about his dreams for the future of the newborn Congregation.

That evening another life began as the Holy Spirit descended on the newly professed. It was a true Pentecost for the Congregation. That small flock of priests multiplied within the years and spread their work of charity throughout the world.



One hundred years later the Guanellian family is grateful to God for the gift of Blessed Louis Guanella to the Church and the people of God, especially the poor.

From the Guanellian Charism sprung hundreds of Priests, religious Brothers and Sisters as well as thousands of Guanellian cooperators. The Guanellian family has also been enriched by the holiness of Blessed Clare Bosatta and Venerable Bishop Aurelio Bacciarini. We hope and pray that by the end of next year Blessed Louis Guanella will be declared a Saint for the Universal Church.

We are closing this centennial year in a grateful and humble way. On March 24, 2009, at the Shrine of St. Joseph in Grass Lake, MI, we will offer an hour of adoration and conclude with a thanksgiving Mass for all the graces we have received during the last one hundred years. At this Mass all present will be able to receive a plenary indulgence as granted by the Holy Father.

We will also invoke another Pentecost for the Guanellian family to guide and inspire the whole Guanellian family for the next century. Two special intentions will be presented to God through the intercession of St Joseph:

- An increase in vocations to the Congregation of the Servants of Charity
- Guidance of the Holy Spirit as the Divine Providence Province prepares for the first Provincial Chapter, to be held in India from May 17 to May 22, 2009. It will be a general meeting of assessment and planning in a time when poverty is rising all over the world and religious tensions divide people rather than bond them together.

Shrine of St. Joseph
Tuesday March 24, 2009
Grass Lake, MI
6 p.m. Adoration
7 p.m. Mass of Thanksgiving
offered by the Servants of Charity

All Are Invited

Guanellian Lay Movement National Conference

BY ALEXANDER & PATRICIA ZANGARA

What a wonderful experience we had in Elverson, Pennsylvania at the October conference. The Daughters of St. Mary of Providence were most gracious in opening their facility and providing wonderful hospitality. A group of lay and religious Guanellians listened to presentations made from both the lay and religious families.

Father Luigi, the keynote speaker, gave a dynamic presentation on the encyclical, *Spe Salvi* (Saved By Hope), by Pope Benedict. He said that we should always “be ready to bear witness to the faith.” Faith is a gift and an encounter with God and Christian Hope comes from a knowledge of being embraced by God from the Womb to the Tomb. As a result, we need to open wide the door of our hearts to Jesus and to His poor, bringing evangelization to them and being a blessing to one another. We are called to see beauty where others see ugliness and continually ask ourselves how to keep the charism alive and imaginative, helping each other to become the “Home of the Lord.” Mary, the first Missionary carrying Jesus, brought Him to Elizabeth, and we need to



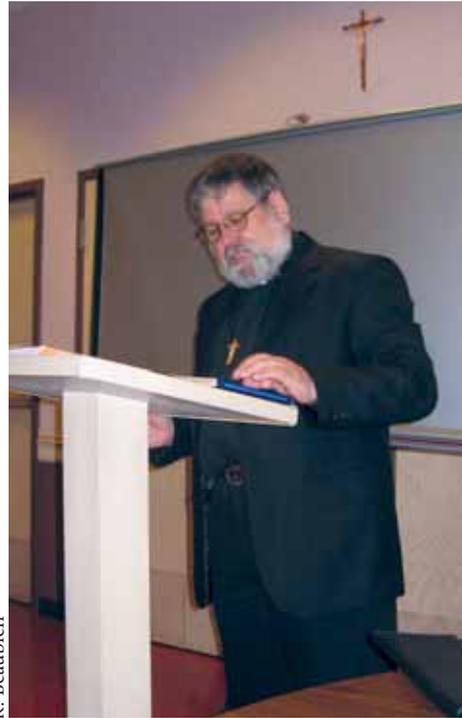
bring Jesus to others, proclaiming God's love. We are called to radiate God's presence by being lights in the darkness and by nourishing ourselves with the bread of prayer.

As Father Luigi continued, he reminded us that this cannot be done alone, or by just the religious sector. We must, as lay people, continue God's work, and the work of our Founder, Blessed Louis Guanella.

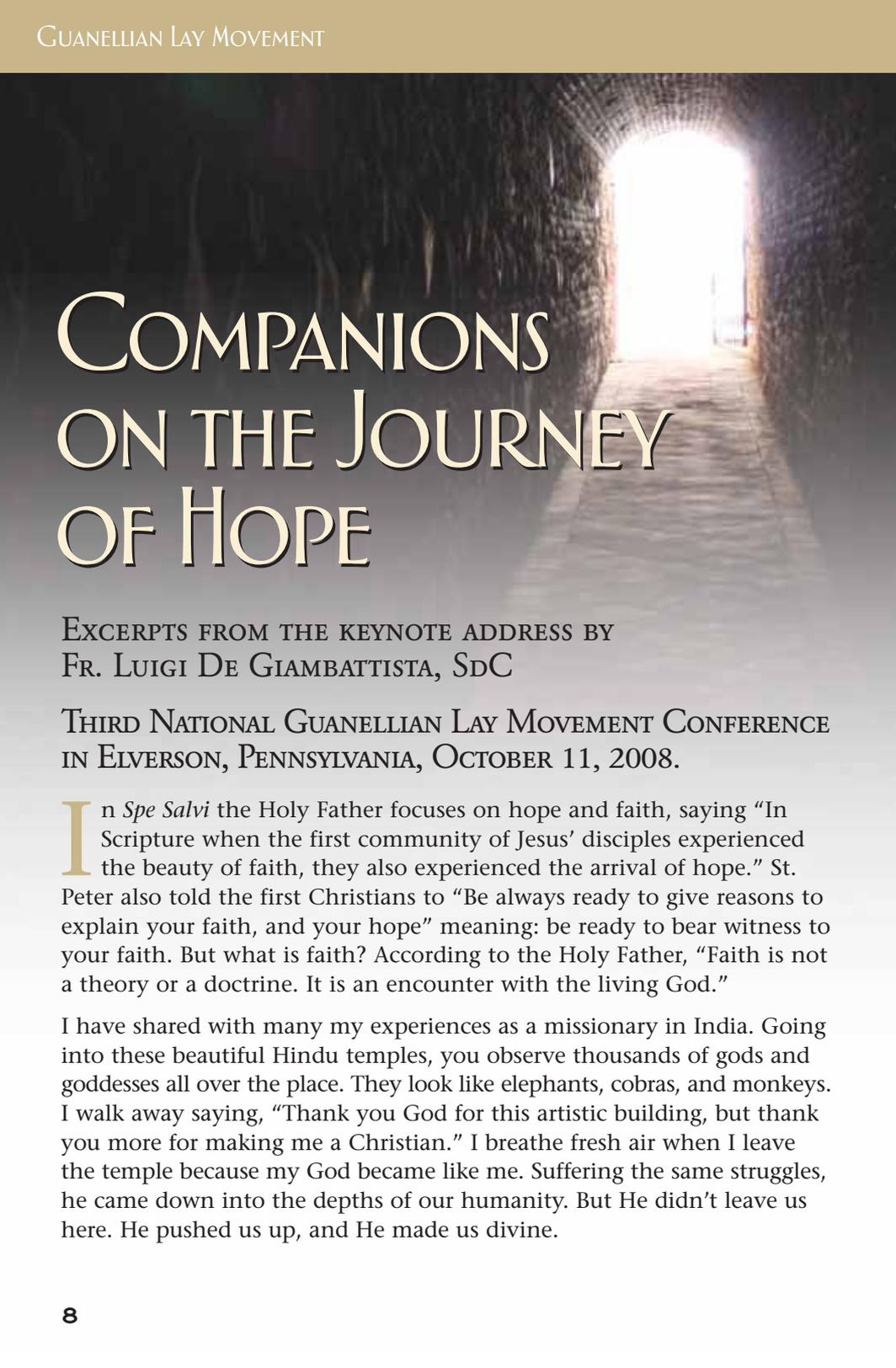
Following Father Luigi, Al Zangara made a presentation on developing a Lay Guanellian Collaborator's Group. Each Lay Guanellian Collaborator's Group must have specific elements in place to be successful. First, they need a mission statement that incorporates Father Guanella's spirit, direction, and intentions and takes into consideration the local ministries that the groups will support.

Next, the local group must recruit new members, and should create objectives for retention. Success will come through the quality of each Lay Guanellian family group. A religious person, serving as Provincial Director, should oversee the entire Province. Each local facility will need a religious Spiritual Director, providing guidance and support to the local Group. Additionally, each local Collaborator's Group will be entrusted to make their own decisions and establish their own guidelines, remembering that their direction should not conflict with Father Guanella's spirit and mission.

Finally, the local Group will provide continuous feedback to the Spiritual Director, hold regular leadership meetings, and occasionally host a gathering of all local Guanellian members. *The Voice of Providence* may be used as a communications tool, and all agreed that a Collaborator's Group is needed at each of our facilities. We need to take our "Quantum Leap" and go out to spread the word, lighting a candle in the darkness and keeping the Spirit of our Founder alive!



K. Beaubien



COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY OF HOPE

EXCERPTS FROM THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
FR. LUIGI DE GIAMBATTISTA, SDC

THIRD NATIONAL GUANELLIAN LAY MOVEMENT CONFERENCE
IN ELVERSON, PENNSYLVANIA, OCTOBER 11, 2008.

In *Spe Salvi* the Holy Father focuses on hope and faith, saying “In Scripture when the first community of Jesus’ disciples experienced the beauty of faith, they also experienced the arrival of hope.” St. Peter also told the first Christians to “Be always ready to give reasons to explain your faith, and your hope” meaning: be ready to bear witness to your faith. But what is faith? According to the Holy Father, “Faith is not a theory or a doctrine. It is an encounter with the living God.”

I have shared with many my experiences as a missionary in India. Going into these beautiful Hindu temples, you observe thousands of gods and goddesses all over the place. They look like elephants, cobras, and monkeys. I walk away saying, “Thank you God for this artistic building, but thank you more for making me a Christian.” I breathe fresh air when I leave the temple because my God became like me. Suffering the same struggles, he came down into the depths of our humanity. But He didn’t leave us here. He pushed us up, and He made us divine.

Pope Benedict says that faith is a gift that we welcome in freedom. It's something that's been given to us. We don't deserve to receive the Eucharist and call God our Father. No one is forced to carry Jesus. We embrace Him because we see great beauty in our God who comes down to lift us up. A God who enters the life of every human being and says, "You are a temple, you are sacred."

This is Christian hope. We are carried by the certainty of a loving God made human in Jesus, who accompanies us, becomes our companion here on earth, and brings us into eternity to be loved forever.

We must also look at reality. People still walk in darkness and confusion, living in hopeless situations after two thousand years of Christianity. I recently read in *New Horizons*, a magazine for southern India, that every day six thousand children die of hunger in India. Multiply that by thirty, and you get 180,000 per month. Multiply that by twelve months...

Hopelessness and darkness are still with us. These days are not only for growing together in gratitude for the mercy of God, but also to awaken us to responsibility. We cannot sleep. If faith and hope, the encounter with the living God, have happened in your life, things cannot remain the same and you cannot remain seated.

The Servants of Charity were born in front of the Altar of the Sacred Heart on March 24, 1908, during the first vespers of the Annunciation. This was not a coincidence. It was the decision of the Founder, "Tonight we are giving the Emmanuel new flesh." As Mary did, 2000 years ago; the Guanellians must become like the womb of Mary, welcoming the Providence of God, and letting Him grow first of all in us.

We cannot be missionaries of God's love if we don't first allow the love of God to become flesh in us. When we talk about organizing and

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revitalizing our lay movement, we must get back to basics. The poor will remain hungry, cold, and outcast if we do nothing more than discuss problems and make plans. We must become saints like Don Guanella.

We also know the second part of the story: with the baby Jesus growing inside of her, Mary makes haste to the mountains of Judea. Mary was a missionary. The Servants, Daughters, Guanellians, friends and Cooperators, are possessed with the fire of our mission.

I can't remain in my comfort zone saying, "How good you are to me, dear Lord," because Jesus in turn will say, "Yes I love you, but I want to love others with and through you. Have you given me flesh? Have you offered me your hands?"

"Our time," Blessed Guanella said, "is filled with falsity and lies." There are too many people selling false hopes. We know that many people, especially our young, are distracted and confused by these lies. We are to be a light that gives true hope, not the hope that gives contentment to the heart for a few seconds and then leaves you in bitterness.

"But this world will be saved by the spirit of charity." It will spread among us and through us, paralyzing the death-inducing power of the spirit of darkness. This is hope. Guanella says, "The time is come. Let us nourish ourselves with the bread of prayer." He doesn't say go out and work first. Go back to Him. Get the energy. Break the bread of the Eucharist. Kneel down in adoration. Look at the Cross. "Let us nourish ourselves with the bread of prayer and be ready to work hard to do much good." The time has come; not to sleep but to pray, then work. Pray and suffer. Courage my friends; it's not going to be easy. It's not going to be a walk in the garden, but it's our mission. And this mission will bring us to Paradise.

"LET US NOURISH
 OURSELVES WITH THE
 BREAD OF PRAYER
 AND BE READY TO
 WORK HARD TO DO
 MUCH GOOD."

THE STORY OF A MILLIONAIRE: DEXTER PACHECO

BY FR. CRUZ BENSON, SDC

When all the doors close, God opens a window. Dexter Pacheco, a resident of Harong Kan Sagrada Familia, Legazpi City, Philippines, has learned that losses in life are not miserable dead-ends but hopeful steppingstones. Dexter has encountered many “dead-ends” in his life but he is happy today because he has also experienced God’s loving mercy.

As a child, Dexter’s grandmother cared for him after he was abandoned by his parents. Difficult financial circumstances meant that he was unable to finish elementary school. At age fifteen, he left his grandmother’s home and began living as an itinerant, moving from one relative to another until deciding to go to Manila in search of a better life.

In Laguna, Manila, he was hired as a poultry helper for a short while, quitting because he was having difficulty standing on his feet all day. He found a job in Cubao working as a car-parking attendant where he earned 150 pesos a day—just enough to cover his basic needs. As his physical condition worsened, even this road of employment came to an end. *AHON Bayan Rescue Operation* found him in distress in 1989 and referred him to *Jose Fabella Center*.

While living at the Center he was diagnosed with Progressive Muscular Dystrophy. By this time he was unable to stand or walk and had to crawl everywhere. It was very hard for him to accept such a life and his simple prayer was “Lord, you have always stood up for me, help me to stand up for you.” He lived at the Center from 1989 to 1995 when he was sent to live with his Uncle Nester.



Nester was kind to him, but this arrangement didn't last long. His uncle was arrested for murder and the family was left in difficult financial straights. Dexter decided then to return to Manila and was readmitted to Jose Fabella Center and given a wheelchair.

After three years at the center Dexter requested discharge and went to Santolan where he became a street dweller, struggling to support himself, by selling cigarettes and newspapers. It was a dangerous life and eventually



he was taken to a temporary shelter. While there, a caseworker contacted several institutions, but none could accommodate him. They attempted to visit his Uncle Nester, hoping Dexter could return to his house, but discovered that he had been sentenced to life in prison. All the doors seemed closed to Dexter.

In August, 2004, Fr. Luigi De Giambattista, a Servant of Charity, learned about Dexter's situation and arranged for him to stay at Harong Kan Sagrada Familia. Dexter immediately felt at home with the confreres, staff and other residents. "Father we have nothing but we are treated like millionaires." These are the words that often pour out of his grateful heart and he is, indeed, a millionaire because he is so full of hope and gratitude.

For years, life was miserable for him but now he feels that his life is a blessing. He is sincerely grateful to Fr. Charles Pro and Bro. David Jeyaraj for their special help. When Fr. Charles arrived in Legazpi City in 2006, he began teaching Dexter how to create thread-craft cards. Then Bro. David taught him new designs for his products. Practicing his craft, Dexter, who still lives with Muscular Dystrophy, can cut and stitch like a professional and his craft is so beautiful that it has become a source of income for the whole community.

Harong Kan Sagrada Familia, which means House of the Holy Family, is a real family that welcomes people and adds to the meaning of each person's life. People like Dexter Pacheco give us a valuable example. Let us learn from Dexter to pray "Lord, teach me not to complain, even when I'm in pain."

The Servants of Charity in Springfield, Pennsylvania

BY FR. SILVIO DE NARD, SDC

Nearing the 50th Anniversary of the Servants of Charity in the United States, we take this opportunity to share the history and activities of the Guanellian ministries in the northeast, where we first began our mission in America. The Church in Philadelphia and the name of our Founder are fused together in the Archdiocesan Campus that bears his name, Don Guanella Village. Cardinal John O'Hara initiated our bond with Philadelphia when, in 1958, he formally requested that the Servants of Charity come to his Archdiocese. In October 1960, he dedicated and entrusted a new school for mentally disabled children to our care.

When the first group of children reached the age of 21 their parents persuaded both Cardinal John Krol and the Servants to establish a program for adults and, in 1976, the Cardinal Krol Center for disabled adults was established. A House of Formation for the Servants of Charity candidates was dedicated on this same campus in 1977 and became the Religious House for the local Community in 2003. In 1984, four buildings—new living quarters for the children—were added to the Campus and, in 1987, a former convent was transformed into Mary Hall, a group-home for adults. These facilities and programs compose the current Don Guanella Village.



In 2000, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia adopted the charism of Father Guanella as the inspiration for its own facilities, dedicated to handicapped people. A committee, chaired by the Servants, was established to present joint annual spiritual activities for the Archdiocesan facilities staff, serving the disabled at our facilities. The Guanellian Community serves the spiritual needs of Don Guanella Village and St. Edmond's Home (Rosemont, PA), helps in parish ministry, grave services at the local Catholic cemetery, and visits the sick. All Religious spend time every day visiting and praying the Rosary with the residents of area group homes, the Cardinal Krol Center, Don Guanella School, and St. Edmond's Home.

Father Dennis Weber, SdC, is the Director of Catholic Mission Integration for the Archdiocese, within these facilities, and provides the staff with religious and moral education. All administrative staff participates in a three year program of formation in Catholic and Guanellian identity, led by the Servants of Charity, and offered so that they may live and work according to Catholic and Guanellian principles. Fr. Dennis chairs the Ethics Committee addressing ethical and moral issues, and provides an educational foundation for Catholic teaching for committee members, staff and families. The Servants of Charity are the custodian of the Catholic and Guanellian identity of the Archdiocesan facilities for the disabled.

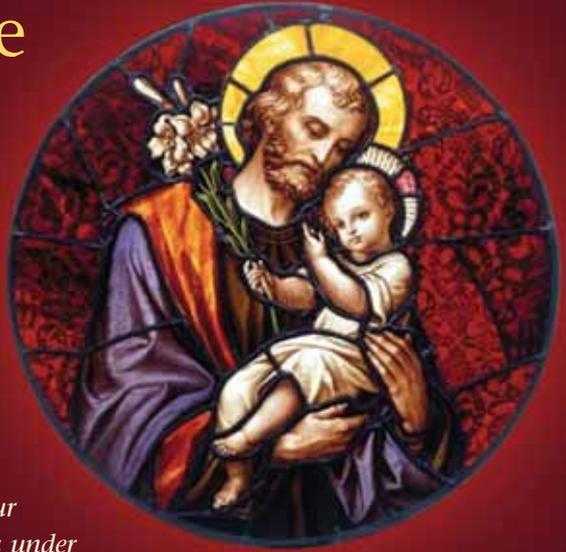
Father Paul Oggioni, SdC, is involved with the Latino population of Delaware County, which brings new challenges and richness to the local Church. He also ministers among the homeless of Philadelphia at St. John's Hospice.

Father Silvio De Nard, SdC, is in charge of the formation of candidates to the Priesthood and Religious Life for the Servants of Charity. He expands and guides the candidates in their understanding of issues regarding the vocation to the Priesthood and religious life, the history, spirit and charism of the Founder, theology of Religious Life, and the Rule of the Servants of Charity, Documents of the Church, Canon Law, Scripture, prayer, meditation and spiritual life. During the Novitiate year he meets with the Novices daily. Their time is spent in adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament followed by practicing self-giving to the Lord and neighbor through ministry with residents of Don Guanella Village. Two gentlemen are presently in formation. Please pray for them.

We are grateful to serve in God's mission to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

MARCH 19TH ❖ FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH

Prayer Before St. Joseph's Altar



O glorious St. Joseph, we stand before your Altar with joyful and grateful hearts. We lovingly present to you the labor of our hands and the dedication of our hearts that have fashioned this Altar in your honor. We again place ourselves under your powerful protection. Help us follow your example of complete trust and faith in Divine Providence. Open our minds and hearts to love and serve the poor, the suffering and those rejected or ignored by society. Teach our hearts to love and honor each member of our family with the love and reverence you gave to Jesus and Mary. Inspire our nation to conform our will to the will of God; to live in peace with all nations of the world so that in our day we may experience the fulfillment of the prayer of Jesus. Peace be to you.

Remember, most pure **spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary** and our sweet protector, St. Joseph, that no one ever had recourse to your protection or implored your aid without obtaining relief.

Lord Jesus, bless this Altar, these candles, this food, those who prepared it and all those who visit it. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

When we pray we remember our loved ones who are no longer with us and whom we miss very much. Through them we experienced St. Joseph's altar and other traditions, which we hope future generations will perpetuate.





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

You, Joseph, Are to Name Him Jesus



BY FR. TARCISIO STRAMARE

“**W**hen eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb” (Lk 2, 21).

Luke’s connection between the circumcision of Jesus and the giving of his name is not casual. Circumcision was the event during which the name of Jesus became a mystery of salvation. God’s covenant—circumcision was its visible sign—now has a name and a face, Jesus. Luke interprets the circumcision as a salvific mystery by connecting it to the name of Jesus, “the Word that He sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all” (Acts 10, 36).

The power of the name of Jesus, so exalted in the book of Acts, has its origin right at the moment of the circumcision of Baby Jesus. In this moment St. Joseph exercises his prerogative as the human Dad of Jesus and “minister of salvation.”

When the angel Gabriel introduces Joseph into the mystery of the motherhood of Mary, he addresses Joseph as “Mary’s spouse,” the one that has the duty to give the name to the Son going to be born from the Virgin of Nazareth. “It is to Joseph that the angel turns, entrusting to him the responsibilities of an earthly father with regard to Mary’s Son” (RC 3).

Gabriel appears to Joseph and tells him, “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home” (Mt 1, 20). Telling him to take Mary into his home, the angel recognizes that Joseph has a fatherly authority over the Baby, and the power to give him a name. Of course, we know that the Name of Jesus was chosen and given by the Father in Heaven, the true Father that has begotten the Son before time and space. However Joseph is chosen by the Father, Himself, to participate to the highest dignity of divine fatherhood. It is his job to give the name to the Baby that Mary, his spouse, is giving to the world: “She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1, 21). “This was a name known among the Israelites and sometimes given to their sons. In this case, however, it is the Son who, in accordance with the divine promise, will perfect the fulfillment of the meaning of the name Jesus – ‘God saves’” (RC 3).

Joseph followed the command of the angel, and “took his wife into his home ... she bore a son, and he named him Jesus” (Mt 1, 25).

Thirty years later, John the Baptist will introduce Jesus to the crowds saying, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1, 29). Undoubtedly, the man is great who officially introduced the salvific mission of Jesus, but much greater is Joseph to whom the angel reveals the beginning of the incarnation, the identity and the salvific mission of the Baby. The angel trusts to Joseph the duty and the honor of proclaiming Him to the world by naming Him Jesus.

“IN PROCLAIMING
THE NAME OF JESUS,
JOSEPH ANNOUNCES
THE PRESENCE AND
THE MISSION
OF THE SAVIOR
TO THE WORLD...”

There are some Catholics who are disturbed by the celebration of the Feast of St. Joseph in the middle of the Lenten Season. They claim that such a Feast “disturbs” the meaning of Lent. They should know better! Are they not aware that St. Joseph came many years before the Baptist, showing to the world the presence of the Messiah? Let us give him the due honor for his privilege of being the “first one” who recognized and officially proclaimed the name of Jesus, the name “that is above every other name, to which every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (Phil 2, 10).

“In conferring the name, Joseph declares his own legal fatherhood over Jesus, and in speaking the name he proclaims the child’s mission as Savior” (RC 12).

Exceptional! In exercising his right of legal fatherhood, as the spouse of Mary, Joseph adds Jesus to the family tree of Abraham by honoring Him with the title of “son of David.” In proclaiming the name of Jesus, Joseph announces the presence and the mission of the Savior to the world, and in so doing he becomes the first messenger of the Gospel.

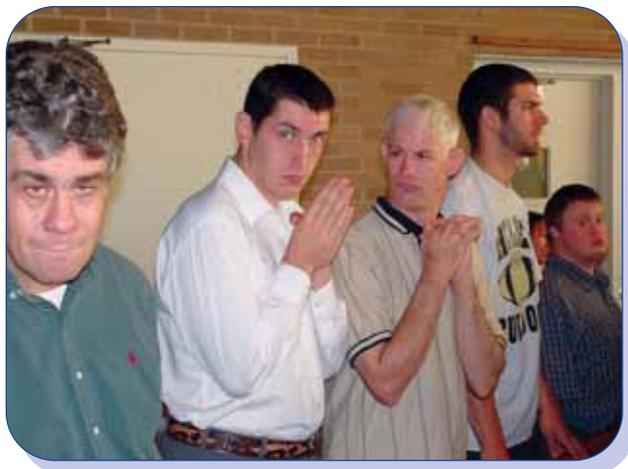
How many times must St. Joseph have pronounced that Holy Name! Those who claim that there are no recorded words of Joseph in the gospels cannot in good conscience deny him the privilege of having pronounced, for years, the names of the holiest people on earth; Jesus and Mary. May these two holy Names, that filled Joseph’s silence, bring some holy silence into our noisy life, as well!

To Grow in Communion

The Person with Disabilities in the Life and Mission of the Church

By FR. ENZO
ADDARI, SDC

In the book of Acts (Acts 6, 3) we read that the Apostles, when choosing their deacons, wanted men “filled with the Spirit and wisdom” to accomplish the charitable work of the early Church.



J. Yekulis

The Church through the centuries has always had people who, filled with Spirit and wisdom, carried out the mandate she received from the Lord. Thus, we have people who look at persons with developmental disabilities as an integral part of the Church, a part given to them at baptism into the family of God. People of Spirit and wisdom embraced those who were developmentally disabled and promoted their lives as their own. They built houses and facilities where these people could be treated as human beings, and not a “curse of creation” or a “freak of nature.”

In our most recent history, the late John Paul II made a strong push to include people with intellectual developmental disabilities as an integral part of the Church. He pointed to the mystery of the Resurrection as a criterion to consider, in theological terms, when considering the person with developmental disabilities. Only the Resurrection of the Lord can give meaning to a life marked by non-beauty or a different ability; a life fully embraced by the One who was raised between heaven and earth and who, through the resurrection, closed the gap created by sin.

“You are members of the Body of Christ: the body of the Risen One! This is the true foundation for an indestructible dignity!”

In the Great Jubilee year 2000, John Paul II felt that it was his honor and duty to spend the two great celebratory events planned for “the Jubilee of the community of people with disabilities” among them and



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he gave his time and attention to their needs with his physical presence. Once the event was over, he spoke of this jubilee day as the one he cherished most. Through writing, speaking and action, he proposed ways to improve their lives within the Church and society.

Benedict XVI has also shown great empathy and said that, “God has blessed you with life, and with different talents and gifts. Through these you are able

to serve Him and society in various ways. While some people’s contributions seem great and others’ more modest, the witness value of our effort is always a sign of hope for everyone” (April 19, 2008). His Encyclical Letter, *Spe Salvi* (2007), speaks at length about hope through suffering and of how relating to people who suffer becomes a journey of hope.

In 1978, the USCCB published a landmark document: *Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities*. It considers them ‘one of us.’ “We must love others from the inside out, so to speak, accepting their difference from us in the same way that we accept our difference from them.” People with disabilities are very dear to the heart of the Church. “Through their willingness to be present in church, they provide the church with the time to be church” (Hauerwas).

This inclusion of people with developmental disabilities stems from their baptism. “The part that people with disabilities plays within the

Church is not one that we assign to them, nor one that they assume for themselves. Rather, it is a response to the calling given to them by Christ in baptism" (Card. Hume). "Inclusion is not a place; instead, it is a lifestyle in which a person is an active participant in his or her life" (Renzaglia). St. Paul wrote: "Make room in your heart for us" (2 Cor 7, 2). This could summarize the true spirit of inclusion, for it is a movement of the heart that enables everybody to welcome, accept and consider people with developmental disabilities as human beings and full members of the Body of Christ, endowed with dignity that comes from God himself. For, they are a gift, as everyone is, to their parents and to all humanity.

Being a gift, they also become prophets of hope, giving meaning to life. People with developmental disabilities, according to the vision of people filled with Spirit and wisdom, "have their purpose in life, including the one of constantly challenging a convenient compromise with egotism and prosperity, recalling pride and presumption back to a truer measure" (Lapucci). They are witnesses, martyrs who show the way to live life to the fullest.

Even people with developmental disabilities, who need care 24/7 for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs, are full members of the communion of the Church because of the work, vision and hope of people "filled with Spirit and wisdom." People 'with

Spirit and wisdom' through their contributions and dreams, make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, enabling them to be part of the communion of the Church. They will continue to be so, for they constantly answer to the Spirit of God who inspires them to find new ways to include everyone in the making of the Church and society.



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“For I Was in Prison, and You Came to See Me”

BY FR. FORTUNATO TURATI, SdC, AND JOSEPH YEKULIS

Last fall, the Most Reverend Bishop Earl Boyea of the Diocese of Lansing said his first Mass behind prison walls as the newly installed leader of this mid-Michigan diocese. According to *Faith Magazine*, Bishop Boyea remarked “...like the migrant camps, the many lay ministers and religious serving in prison ministry are a real inspiration to me. We must count ourselves very blessed that we have such dedicated people visiting those in prison.”

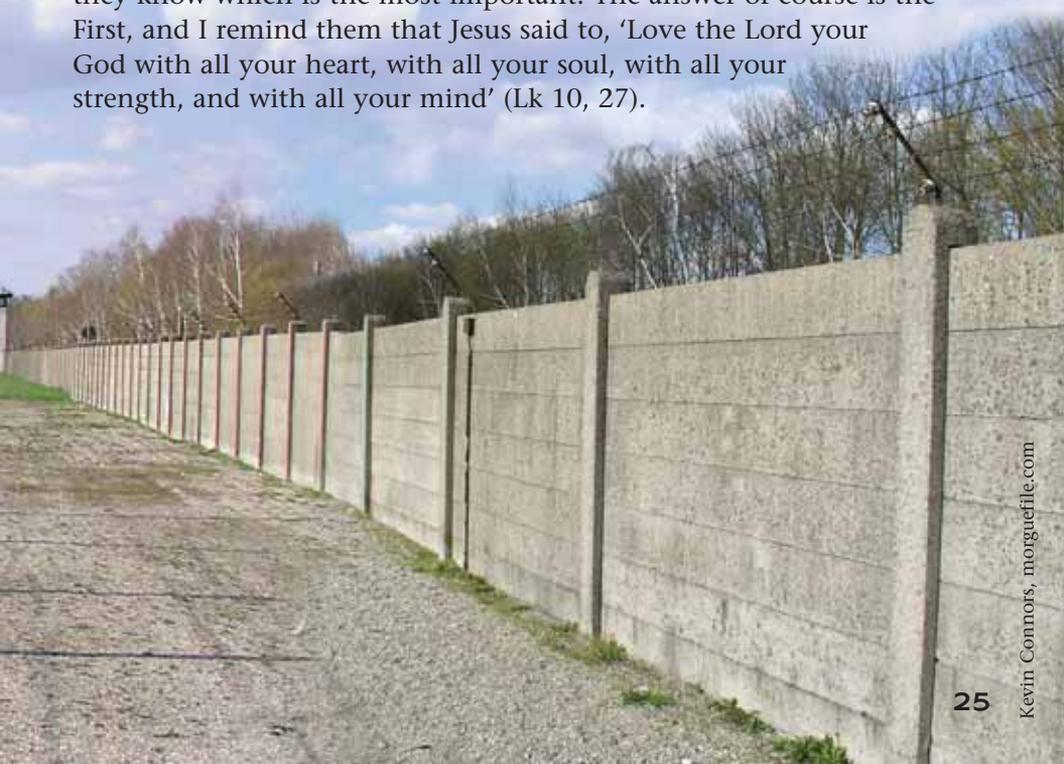
Rev. Fr. Fortunato Turati, SdC, is one such Religious priest, and has been involved in prison ministries since he came to the United States in the late 70's. Fr. Turati is a friendly, outgoing man, who may be small in appearance, but he is large in stature in the community. He is quick with a joke, but also passionately spiritual, putting those in his presence quickly at ease. While he has been assigned to St. Louis Center most of his career, he is now serving as the spiritual director of the Shrine of St. Joseph in Grass Lake, MI.

Fr. Turati's simple message that "God loves you" has brought hope to thousands of prisoners during the past forty years. "I was recruited into this ministry by a woman from our local parish who was seeking a priest for the local prison camp, because nobody else would go. I was apprehensive at first because these people were convicted criminals, but it didn't take me long to find a comfort level with them.

"We are able to do many good things with inmates, especially the young ones. When they get to the camp, they feel down, depressed, and alone. They are more open than ever to the message of Jesus. The population I am working with now is younger, between 17–25 years old, and you can really reach them at this age. If you change them now, you can change them for the rest of their lives to be good citizens and raise good families.

"I go every Sunday afternoon, hear confessions, and celebrate Holy Mass. There are usually 100 inmates in attendance. When they confess their sins, you can really see in their hearts and in their minds that they want to change their lives and be good people; for the Lord, for themselves, and for their families.

"The first thing I do is review the 10 Commandments, and ask them if they know which is the most important. The answer of course is the First, and I remind them that Jesus said to, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind' (Lk 10, 27).



Then I remind them to honor their mother and father, and to love their wives and their children.

"I've never felt threatened. They come to me and they cry. They feel that you are there for them and you are not there to try to take advantage of them in any way. Many of them wind up in prison because they stop going to church, they stop listening to their parents, and then they get into bad company. I tell them to start going back to church when you get home. God loves you, and he doesn't make trash. You have to love yourself the way that God loves you.



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"They come to confession with tears in their eyes. They talk about their mom and dad, and their children at home. They talk about how much they love them, and about how they've let them down.

"After a few weeks, I start to develop a relationship with them, and look forward to our visits. When I can't go, I really miss them. You can look into their eyes and their faces and see they are troubled. I give them Holy Cards to use when they're having difficulty, and I ask them to say the prayer on the card, 'Jesus, I trust in you.'

"In the end when it's time to go home, they thank me for coming. With love in their hearts, they ask me for a blessing, and I promise to pray for them and ask them not to give up. I never know what will happen to them after they leave, but at that moment when I look into their eyes, I know they are ready to change their life.

"For me, the time spent with them is worthwhile. I ask the Lord to bless them, and the Blessed Mother to protect them."

Jesus said in the parable of the King in Matthew 25, 33-46, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome, lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, *in prison and you came to see me*. In truth I tell you, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me."

Lessons from the Single Life, Part One



BY KIMBERLY BEAUBIEN

The single life has unique challenges and opportunities. As a single young Catholic, I am part of a small but growing section of the population. According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the marriage rate is declining. With the median age for those getting married at 25 for women and 27 for men, many young adults are putting off marriage and some may not get married at all.¹ The uncertainty of youth is extending longer as young people today face a dizzying array of options.

For many my age, it seems that single life is like an airport terminal, waiting for your plane to arrive and the real journey to begin. Or perhaps, like someone whose flight has been canceled, waiting to find out what plane will even take you to your destination. It can be frustrating to say the least.

On top of it all, many distractions can tempt young people to turn aside and pursue the wrong path. In the midst of all these distractions and frustrations, it is easy to lose track of the fact that the single life is a vocation in itself, however temporary this state may be. To be faithful to this vocation, there are several lessons that should guide young people, and coincidentally, would be good for people in all walks of life to take to heart.

The first lesson that a young person needs to learn is to trust in God. I find myself repeating this lesson numerous times every day. The first tendency for me is to think that I can plan and control everything myself. Alternatively, I tend to worry too much, wondering if I will be able to get everything done or if other people will come through. I have to get in over my head or fall into a crisis sometimes before I get on my knees and turn everything over to God again. But I now look at these occasions as opportunities for grace as I learn to rely on God more deeply.

Single people need to be open to God in a particularly important way. Some may remain single their entire life, but God is calling many single people to another vocation: either married or religious life. As single people, we need to be open to God and what He wants for the rest of our life. This can be the most difficult part of single life and requires a complete trust in God. We cannot “make” a particular vocation our own

any more than we can make a particular person marry us or a particular congregation accept us. The decision to enter religious life or married life is not up to us alone: it must be ratified by others and above all should be directed by God’s will. By trusting God in our day-to-day activities, we can learn to trust Him in the big things as well.

The second lesson I would say a young single needs to learn is to stay close to Christ. Young people frequently feel a longing for something “more” in life. This aching is often

expressed by the search for a significant other. I can’t tell you how many of my high school and college friends were obsessed with the dating scene. If they didn’t have a boyfriend or girlfriend (who totally consumed their time), they were totally consumed with wishing they did. They honestly believed that a relationship would make them happy and

“BY TRUSTING GOD
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were willing to sacrifice anything for this “happiness.”

In its refined state, one realizes that this deep desire for something more is really a desire for God. St. Augustine chronicled his search for God in his *Confessions*. At the age of nineteen he fell in love with Truth and wanted to dedicate his life to it. But he was led astray by heresy and did not actually fulfill his desires until years later. In the meantime, he pursued ambition and lust until they became both deeply entrenched and painstakingly hollow pursuits. It was his deeper longing for God that eventually broke his chains.

I think young people realize, more than any other group perhaps, that they want more than their current life has to offer. Sooner or later, their worldly pursuits must ring hollow. It is just a small leap from there to desiring God above all else and seeking His will. Many singles are discerning their vocation in life precisely because they feel this longing. With a little encouragement, many more could be doing so. John Paul the Great recognized this and regularly encouraged young people to see God as their ultimate desire and be not afraid to respond radically to His invitation.

Regardless of our vocation, whether we are single or married, religious or lay, God should be the center of our life. Single people may be faced with much uncertainty, but one thing we do know is that we need to stay close to Christ. Holiness is not an option or something meant for someone else. It is our ultimate call in life and it's something we can all strive towards *now*. And if we make that our all-consuming pursuit, we will find true joy.

¹ *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, For Your Marriage. “A Snapshot of Marriage in the US.”*

http://www.foryourmarriage.org/interior_template.asp?id=20398709

“IN ITS REFINED STATE,
ONE REALIZES THAT
THIS DEEP DESIRE
FOR SOMETHING
MORE IS REALLY A
DESIRE FOR GOD.”

Dear Friends of the Pious Union of St. Joseph,

Today I received your magazine, *Now and at the Hour*.

Thank you for the intentions of the *Perpetual Mass in Reparation*. I like to unite myself each day with all the Holy Masses that are offered throughout the world. Now I can, in a personal way, unite myself in each hour for a special intention. I'm writing this letter at 10:00 a.m., the hour for dying Priests and Religious.

I am in a nursing home and only receive Jesus in His Eucharist three times a week. Thanks to the Catholic Station I do look at the Mass each day. We do have a Mass here twice a month and a Communion service twice a month. A very good couple takes me to Mass on Saturday.

When I was out in the world I used to go to Mass and make a Holy Hour every day. Now I live it in spirit.

Thank you once again for the Perpetual Mass intentions, now I can live each hour with a special intention.

Sincerely living in the Spirit of Saint Joseph,
LSJ, Oblate of St. Benedict from Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dear Father,

I received your letter of thanks for our donation and I really must thank you for the "Stations of the Cross" booklet. It is very beautiful, especially the illustrations by Fr. Pegoraro. I read in *Now and at the Hour* of his recent departure to be with the Lord. I trust that he will continue to be close to us.

The Pious Union has been exceedingly generous with my family. A few years ago I accepted the invitation to purchase three prints by Fr. Pegoraro. I had them matted and one hangs in each of the bedrooms in our home. The images provide constant inspirational blessings.

About one year ago I took the opportunity to purchase *Let us go to the Father*. I was thoroughly absorbed by Blessed Guarella's expression of the charism of love of the Servants of Charity. I hope to visit the Shrine during this 100th Anniversary of the Servants of Charity ministry.

Thanks for all that you do.

R.F. of Sterling Heights Michigan

Pray the Rosary, the Guanellian Way

Another delightful book has been added to the English collection of Guanellian works.

Over one hundred years ago Blessed Louis Guanella, a fervent devotee of the Blessed Mother, published a booklet entitled *Mezz'ora di buona preghiera* (Half an Hour of Great Prayer).

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Last year, Fr. Umberto Brugnoli, Vicar General of the Servants of Charity, unearthed this hidden treasure and added the Mysteries of Light.

Let us pray the Rosary for one another.

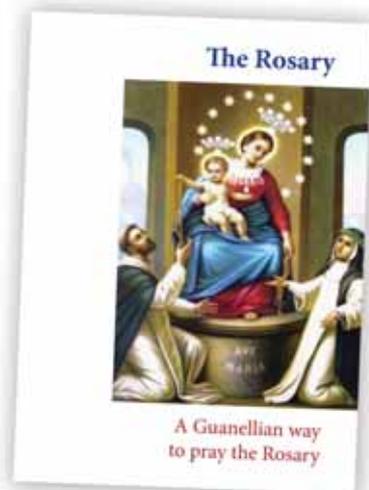


Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC

*The English edition contains nearly 100 pages of beautiful meditations and photos. A **Guanellian way to pray the Rosary** is available through the Pious Union of St. Joseph office.*

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