

The Voice of Providence

PERIODICAL OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY



now JUNE-JULY 2008
AND AT THE **HOUR**



SERVANTS OF CHARITY

100 YEARS OF SERVICE AND GRACE ❖ 1908-2008

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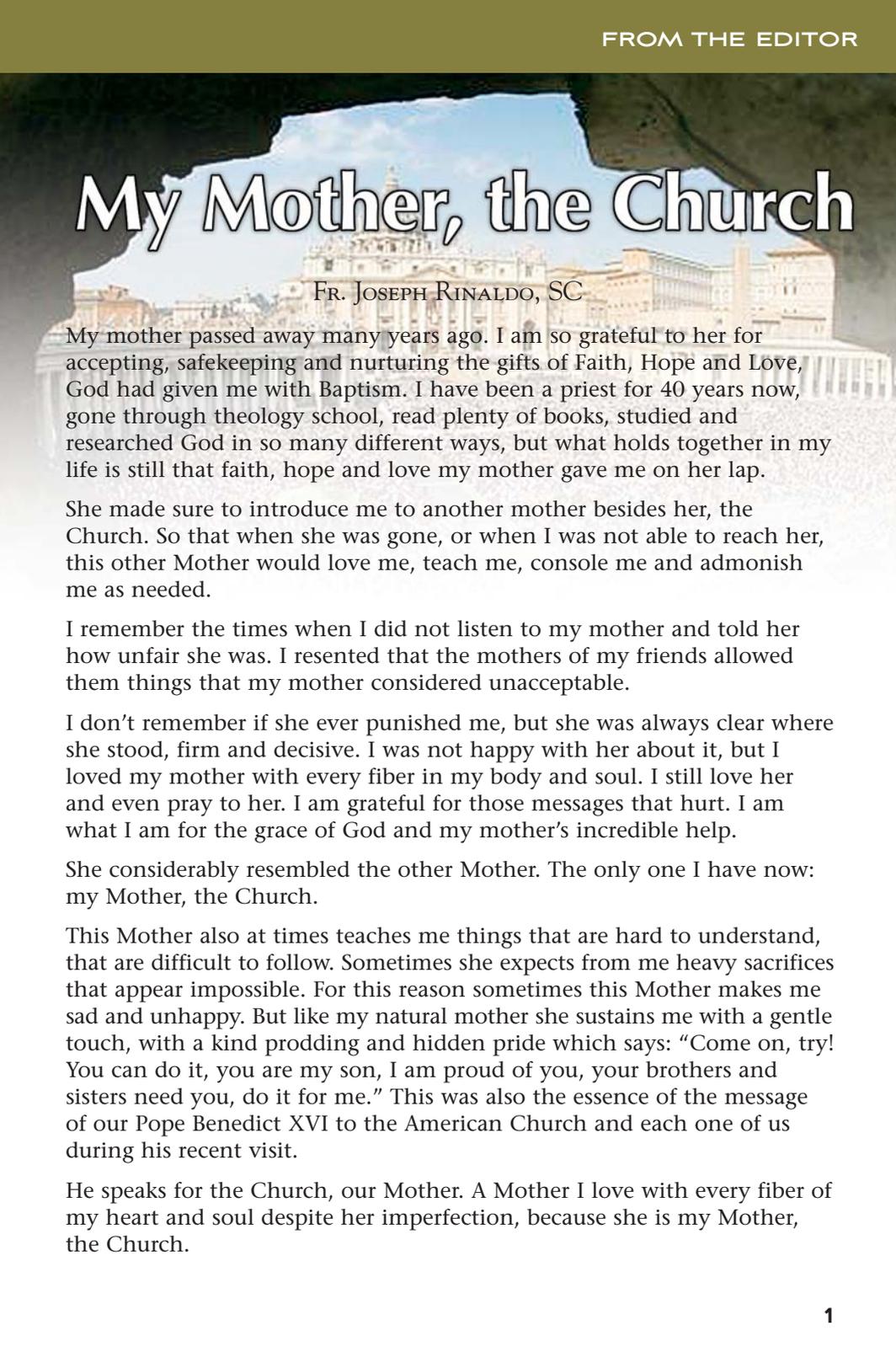
The Voice of Providence: Now And At The Hour...

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.



My Mother, the Church

FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SC

My mother passed away many years ago. I am so grateful to her for accepting, safekeeping and nurturing the gifts of Faith, Hope and Love, God had given me with Baptism. I have been a priest for 40 years now, gone through theology school, read plenty of books, studied and researched God in so many different ways, but what holds together in my life is still that faith, hope and love my mother gave me on her lap.

She made sure to introduce me to another mother besides her, the Church. So that when she was gone, or when I was not able to reach her, this other Mother would love me, teach me, console me and admonish me as needed.

I remember the times when I did not listen to my mother and told her how unfair she was. I resented that the mothers of my friends allowed them things that my mother considered unacceptable.

I don't remember if she ever punished me, but she was always clear where she stood, firm and decisive. I was not happy with her about it, but I loved my mother with every fiber in my body and soul. I still love her and even pray to her. I am grateful for those messages that hurt. I am what I am for the grace of God and my mother's incredible help.

She considerably resembled the other Mother. The only one I have now: my Mother, the Church.

This Mother also at times teaches me things that are hard to understand, that are difficult to follow. Sometimes she expects from me heavy sacrifices that appear impossible. For this reason sometimes this Mother makes me sad and unhappy. But like my natural mother she sustains me with a gentle touch, with a kind prodding and hidden pride which says: "Come on, try! You can do it, you are my son, I am proud of you, your brothers and sisters need you, do it for me." This was also the essence of the message of our Pope Benedict XVI to the American Church and each one of us during his recent visit.

He speaks for the Church, our Mother. A Mother I love with every fiber of my heart and soul despite her imperfection, because she is my Mother, the Church.

In Gratitude for a Past Full of Blessings

BY FR. ALFONSO CRIPPA, SC
SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY

On March 24, 1908 in the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Como Italy, Fr. Louis Guanella and his first disciples gave themselves fully and perpetually to God with the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. This day was the birthday of the Congregation of the Servants of Charity.

Marking the 100th Anniversary of our ministry in the Church, members of the Congregation throughout the world are celebrating this historic event. We share our joy with all of you, our friends and benefactors, as we remember that you, too, were held in the heart and mind of our founder. So, for all of us today, it is meaningful to recall the spiritual experiences that lead Fr. Guanella to the foundation of a religious community that would enrich his life and enter into the history of the Church.

As we reflect on his life, it might seem strange to you that by the age of sixty six, Fr. Guanella was just reaching the goal of a religious foundation, which he dreamt of for so long. His biographer helps us to understand this delay within the deeply felt emotion Fr. Guanella experienced and communicated to his disciples on their Foundation Day.

*Altar with the bodies of Blessed Louis Guanella
and Clare Bosatta (Como, Italy)*



He tells us, himself, that despite many trials, difficulties, misunderstandings and much suffering over many years, he continued to nourish in his heart the desire to found a religious congregation of priests and brothers. His vocation to relieve human misery was surely strengthened during this long process of discernment of the will of God.



Philippines: Centennial Celebration

As we experience today, it was also difficult in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to arouse a vocation to be totally committed to the poor while following Fr. Guanella in the way inspired by the Holy Spirit. Once, it happened that, while he spoke with his religious sisters, Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, he confided to them the difficulty in attracting people to an enduring commitment in service to the poor. “You don’t know – he said – how much it costs to form a priest!” Nevertheless, Divine Providence sustained his desire with numerous committed ministers of charity.

Today the Servants of Charity welcome many young people who ask to join the Congregation in countries where Fr. Guanella could only dream of spreading his apostolate; nations and people that he saw in a vision while he prayed to Jesus on the day of his First Communion.

It wasn’t only his perseverance and tenacity that caused him to be the founder of the Congregation. When someone asked him why he didn’t begin earlier, considering the excellent works of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, he answered that the Servants of Charity were in his mind even before them. He said that a special grace and preparation were needed for the providential plan of God to be manifested and fulfilled. This time of grace, he said, the maternal womb out of which we came into existence was the life of suffering and prayer of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence. The Founder was also sustained and helped by: the poor who were sheltered in his homes and with whom he wanted

his disciples to spend their lives; the many co-operators and benefactors supporting his work of charity; some Bishops who, trusting in him, conferred priestly ordination to the first members of his religious family.

All of them were in his mind and heart as he expressed his gratitude to his confreres in the solemn moment of their Perpetual Religious Profession. "Father Louis Guanella, wrote his biographer, was deeply moved in thanking us for having given him the way, by accepting his invitation and following him. Our hearts could stand no more, and we shed tears of love and of holy jubilation."

We express the same thanksgiving today, one-hundred-fold, in a spirit of gratitude to the Holy Spirit for his gift to the Church through the mission and ministry of Fr. Louis Guanella.

At the same time we offer our gratitude to the past generations of the Servants of Charity who followed Jesus, opening for us and our lay co-operators a way for the fruitful evangelization of the poor.

It is also to these poor and suffering people, with whom we share our lives and ministry that we give our gratitude, as we recognize that they are our teachers in the fulfilment of our mission and at the same time they are the reason we stay with Jesus, loving and serving them in his name.

In reliving the day of our birth, as Servants of Charity, may we be inspired to live a more committed life, renewed in spirit and fervor.

India: Centennial Celebration



THE LEGACY OF THE GUANELLIAN CHARISM

BY FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SC

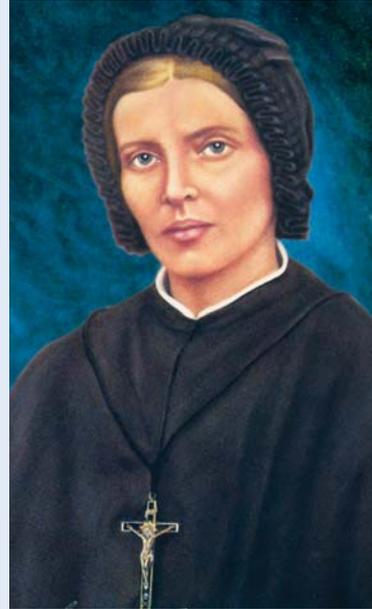
The Servants of Charity are celebrating the Centennial of their official recognition as a Religious Congregation. March 24 is solemnly observed as Congregation Day. This celebration, however, is different than what is normally understood as celebration. This celebration does not have fireworks, parades, concerts or monuments. It is a celebration of memories, of looking back to history and people, events and geography, now and then. It's a meditation on the legacy, development and transformation that took place from that day on.

Furthermore, this celebration is examining the roots as we admire the full grown tree today.

By the time of his death, Father Guanella, Founder of the Servants of Charity, had left us a clear understanding of his mission and charism. He wanted to give to the Church a family of priests, brothers,

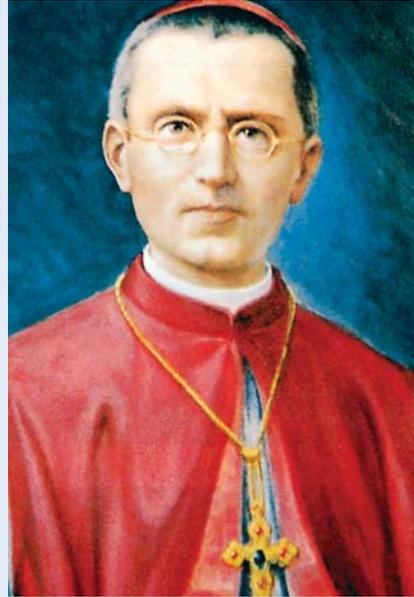
sisters and lay cooperators who would totally dedicate themselves to the poor and restore their human and spiritual dignity. One hundred years of service and grace on behalf of the poor. This is the story of the Servants of Charity. We read stories of miracles, of sufferings, of incredible sacrifices known to God alone. We read of people whose lives were changed forever, of children who were raised from hopeless ghettos, of adults whose life has been one of depravation and loneliness who died surrounded by caring hands. We read of priests, brothers and sisters whose apparently average life did not shake the establishment, but were remembered by the simple people whose life they touched, for a long time. Theirs was a holiness that could be perceived only by the humble. Within the last one hundred years, many holy men and women have blossomed from the spirituality and heart of Blessed Louis Guanella. Two of them in particular have been publicly recognized by the Church: Blessed Clare Bosatta and Venerable Bishop Aurelio Bacciarini.

Dina Bosatta was born on May 27, 1858 in Pianello Lario, Italy, where Fr. Guanella became a pastor. She grew up under his spiritual leadership.



Silently and deeply she absorbed his faith and love for the poor. In Pianello, she joined a fledgling congregation that would become the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence founded by Blessed Guanella. She became a contemplative in action and took the name of Clare. Sister Clare's life became a story of obedience, sacrifice and contemplation. At the direction of Fr. Guanella, in the spring of 1886, Sister Clare and a small delegation left to establish their new mission at Como. Clare modeled Christ Crucified in sacrificing everything for others. She served Christ in the poor and lived under extreme conditions to the point of exhaustion. She returned to her home in Pianello and died at the age of 29. She was declared Blessed by John Paul II, on April 21, 1991. Blessed Clare Bosatta, DSMP, is the small mystic flower in the Guanellian Garden of Holiness.

Born in Lavertezzo, Switzerland on November 8, 1873, Bishop Aurelio Bacciarini was the first pastor of the Basilica of St. Joseph in Rome-Trionfale. He succeeded Blessed Louis Guanella in the leadership of the Congregation of the Servants of Charity and in 1917 was appointed Bishop of Lugano, Switzerland. Fr. Bacciarini first led the Congregation and then the Diocese of Lugano during a politically and spiritually troubled period for the Church and Europe. A man of mystic orientation, he balanced his life and leadership between courageous decisions and a deep life of prayer. He embodied in his life the Guanellian motto to "Pray and Suffer" continually for his people, especially the poor. By the time of his death on June 27, 1937, Bishop Bacciarini had completely restructured the Congregation of the Servants of Charity and the Diocese of Lugano toward a path of success. On March 15, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI confirmed the report of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, and decreed the heroic virtues of Bishop Bacciarini be publicly declared, and recognized him to be entitled "Venerable".



For biographies and Holy Cards of Blessed Clare Bosatta and Venerable Bishop Bacciarini, please contact the Pious Union of St. Joseph.

Jesus Heals Our Hearts

BY FR. OTTAVIO DE BORTOLIS, SJ

As we honor our Blessed Mother in the month of May, so the Church dedicates in a special way the month of June to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Since the end of the 19th Century the Church has celebrated this Solemnity on the Friday after the Sunday of Corpus Christi, the Body and Blood of Christ. This feast was instituted by Pope Leo XIII and it is rooted in the explicit request of Jesus, who appearing to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, asked for acts of reparation for the outrages and coldness by which he was treated, especially by consecrated persons. Jesus asks that his love for us be re-known and re-loved.

We realize that many terrible situations and events in the world are caused by many people, both in and out of the Church, who adopt the same attitude toward Jesus as described in the Gospel of St. John, "He came to what was his own, but the world did not accept him." (Jn 1:11) Our society is moving away from Jesus. It is evident: He came into the world to give us life, but man refuses it. Millions are practically living as pagans regardless of their Christian denomination. In our Catholic Church, we are lukewarm: we are like spoiled children who were given many good things and favors, but seem to forget these great and wonderful gifts. How many times do we forget that in



addition to the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation we are endowed with special graces through the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, as well as through the Word of God, devotion to the Blessed Mother and the intercession of the Saints?

The celebration of the feast of the Sacred Heart tells us: remember the precious gift of love God shows you through his Son; open your eyes, or rather, open your heart; wake up from sleep; be aware of your dignity and how much you have been loved.

Love makes up for our hearts. What is the meaning of this reparation and toward whom is it offered? The reparation we are invited to offer to Jesus is not related to his need for consolation, but it is to bring about in us a conscious decision to allow Him to heal and renew our own wounded heart, numbed and blocked by spiritual indifference, mediocrity in our spiritual life, and compromises with sinful attitudes.

Open your heart to Jesus to be renewed in his Word and Sacraments in a very spiritual climate of faith, silence and prayer. Seek to renew your astonishment at the presence of the Lord in your life and desire fervently to experience the sweet taste of spiritual things once again.

Relating ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not an individualistic devotion. In contemplating his wounded incarnate love, expressed in his heart, we get in touch with our family, the community, with the sick and the troubled and all who are living lives far from God. We entrust all of these to the mercy of the Lord and to the power of his Spirit.

Jesus, showing himself with a wounded heart, is the one that all will look upon. (Jn 19:37) The conversion of the world is prepared, first of all, by our own conversion and by our prayers of supplication to obtain the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The call of Jesus for reparation is, in a special way, a call to pray for the sanctification of priests.

Let us pray for our priests. May they be holy since they are dealing with holy things. May they be able to break their lives, as they break the Bread of Life. Like Jesus, the good Shepherd, may they, too, fully give their lives for the sheep entrusted to them.

In our spiritual offering to Jesus, let us pray for the reparation of sins committed by priests and consecrated religious while asking for an increase in priestly and religious vocations. If, today, our Local Church is suffering from a decrease in vocations, the cause is the decrease of love within our communities and families for the Eucharist. If Jesus, whose redemptive love we celebrate in the Eucharist, would be more known, loved, celebrated and glorified, it would never fail that generous persons would entrust themselves totally to him in priestly and religious life.

The real problem for the Church and the world is the lack of love: devotion to the Sacred Heart is the remedy.



Human Growth of Jesus

BY FR. TARCISIO STRAMARE

Among the mysteries of the hidden years that Jesus spent at Nazareth, Pope John Paul II takes into consideration the growth of Jesus “in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man” (Lk 2:52). In his Apostolic Letter, “Guardian of the Redeemer,” the Pope says that Jesus’ growth took place within the Holy Family under the eyes of Joseph, who had the important task of “raising” Jesus: feeding, clothing and educating him in the Law and in a trade, in keeping with the duties of a father.

That is the task of Joseph, while the task of Jesus was to be obedient to them (Lk 2:51). He respectfully returned the affection of his “parents.” In this way he wished to sanctify the obligations of the family and of work, which he performed at the side of Joseph.

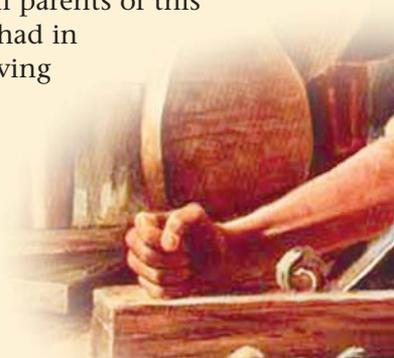
Pope Paul VI underlined that aspect by seeing reflected in Jesus’ life his long years spent with Joseph. He addressed the fact that “St. Joseph is the kind of gospel that Jesus, once he left the shop in Nazareth and began his public ministry, would proclaim as his program for the



redemption of men. (March 19, 1969)” The “new man,” announced by Jesus, developed in his mind during the many years he spent at the side of Joseph. Joseph was the model of his eyes. The constant presence of that honest, serious and virtuous man positively influenced the boy, teen, young man and adult Jesus. To him, his foster-father was the image of the new humanity that lives according to God.

John Paul II follows suit, writing “Surely the Holy Family of Nazareth was not only working, but it was also a school, the first and most important school, the school of all schools. Within family life we learn how to be true men and women. Only a family can teach it. St. Joseph was the “principal” of that school of humanity. It was his privilege to teach the Son of God how to be a man. (January 18, 1981)” It is in the family that values are passed on. Both Jesus and Joseph are the examples which touch all generations of fathers and sons in passing on values that guard and enrich our humanity. Joseph, Mary and Jesus were a real family. Each and every family is the place where we pass on our human and Christian tradition, what is true, all that is good, all that is beautiful. Jesus too went through that human development in his childhood and young adult life. Both Jesus and Joseph could be seen side by side at work. Jesus learned his trade from Joseph. Jesus learned to be a good Jewish boy and man from Joseph.

The true humanity of Jesus required the “ministry” of being formed and educated by his parents. We might think that being Jesus, the Son of God and God Himself, he was not in need of parents and teachers. Because He chose to become man, he fully embraced the human condition like each one of us, except for sin, of course. As it happens to each child, Jesus too needed to grow in his body and to be taught by his parents how to talk, walk, eat, behave and work. The gospel of Luke shows us that journey: Jesus is open to receive what all parents of this world give to their children. Lucky them, they had in their midst a very obedient and good boy behaving much, much better than the majority of our children. Jesus was docile to his parents in everything.



Exercising his role as a father, Joseph cooperated with Mary to make the house of Nazareth a congenial environment for Jesus to grow and mature in.

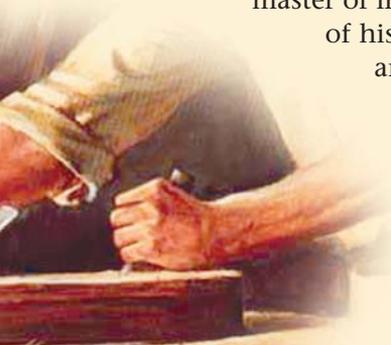
As “employer,” Joseph introduced Jesus into the workplace giving him the opportunity to get acquainted with society and its working conditions.

We don’t know from Gospel accounts, but we believe, that Mary took on the task of introducing little Jesus into the pious practice of Judaism. If we have learned our first prayers from our mother, do you think that Jesus did not go through the same experience? It was she who introduced Jesus to the rites and prescriptions of the Law of Moses, to the psalms and the history of the people of Israel. From Mary and Joseph, Jesus learned the way to the synagogue and how to comply with the annual pilgrimage to the temple of Jerusalem for Passover.

Mary and Joseph appear truly as the educators and formators of Jesus. Because of this, they both should be the model to parents and teachers in their endeavors to educate and form their children.

Though Joseph did not take part in generating Jesus, he is fully a father to him because he bore all the ordeals that a father goes through every day. The matrimony between Mary and Joseph was willed by God, especially because a family is the place where children are welcomed and formed. Joseph’s mission went much beyond being a mere custodian and guardian, as many think. His presence within the Holy Family did not end in a mere superficial assistance, or in providing food for the table or defending Jesus from danger. He was not a body-guard. On the contrary! His personality, his character, and his formative interventions with the boy Jesus left a mark in the adult Jesus.

All who seriously seek perfection consider St. Joseph their patron and master of interior life. As a “father,” he took the formation of his child seriously, regarding his spiritual, human and civic life. St. Joseph is truly the model for parents dealing with the formation of their children. May he be their patron.





On the Sign of Hope

BY FR. ENZO ADDARI, SC

A visit by a family member or by a close friend always stirs deep emotions of love, gratitude and happiness. And when the visit is made by the one who has been entrusted to sustain our faith, it stirs even deeper emotions. The Pope's visit to the USA from April 15 to April 20 has brought the same feelings and emotions. Throngs of people have moved to see him, witness the event of his visit and be strengthened in their faith.

The theme of this visit has been 'Christ Our Hope.' And this is exactly what Benedict XVI has proclaimed over and over again.

He brought healing, purification and reconciliation to a suffering Church, meeting with some of the victims of the pedophilia scandal that has marred the Church.

He has shown that all of us need moral persuasion. Its power, at times, is difficult to be recognized, but like the water that, drop after drop, leaves a mark on the stones, so it is with the moral persuasion. Since 1870, once the Church lost her political power, she has grown as a moral persuasion agent; all the Popes since that date have been leaders in the world history as a lighthouse of security and enlightenment among the confusion of the relativistic philosophies proclaimed throughout the world.

The message of Benedict XVI during his visit has been a message of hope, for Christ is the center of this hope and it is he who can give salvation, freedom and liberation.

The Pope also looked at values that the USA carries since its foundation: freedom, truth, peace, human rights, the reciprocal respect between State

and Church, and the ability to embrace different religious denominations. “Human rights”, he has proclaimed, “must be respected as an expression of justice.” Remarkable has been the visit at the Jewish synagogue inviting to dialogue as a source of truth.

He has called the Catholic schools, especially the Catholic Universities, back to their original mission: science cannot be separated from truth and the truth is God himself. This principle is also the foundation for the respect and promotion of any human life, from conception to natural death.

The encounter with people with disabilities touched me the most. To them the Pope said: “Sometimes it is challenging to find a reason for what appears only as a difficulty to be overcome or even pain to be endured. Yet our faith helps us to break open the horizon beyond our own selves in order to see life as God does. God's unconditional love, which bathes every human individual, points to a meaning and purpose for all human life. Through his Cross, Jesus in fact draws us into his saving love (see Jn 12:32) and in doing so shows us the way ahead – the way of hope which transfigures us all, so that we too, become bearers of that hope and charity for others.”

He has also given a message to the whole world, visiting the United Nations on April 18, 2008. “The founding principles of the Organization – the desire for peace, the quest for justice, respect for the dignity of the person, humanitarian cooperation and assistance – express the just aspirations of the human spirit, and constitute the ideals which should underpin international relations.”

“The promotion of human rights remains the most effective strategy for eliminating inequalities between countries and social groups, and for increased security.”

“My presence at this Assembly is a sign of esteem for the United Nations, and it is intended to express the hope that the Organization will increasingly serve as a sign of unity between States and an instrument of service to the entire human family.”

Visiting Ground Zero the Pope prayed for light and peace for those who died, compassion and healing for those who suffered injuries and illness on 9/11, peace for a violent world, and wisdom and courage for all to work for a world where true peace and love reign.

At the St. Patrick's Cathedral he encouraged everyone to move forward: “We can only move forward if we turn our gaze together to Christ!”, and he concluded: “Let us go forth as heralds of hope in the midst of this city, and all those places where God's grace has placed us. In this way, the Church in America will know a new springtime in the Spirit.”

Memories of My Heart



BY DEACON BENTOS MATHIAS JAVIER, SC

How can I write about the ecstasy I felt and the heavenly joy I experienced, on January 14th, the day of my perpetual profession? I was happy to say “Yes” forever to the call of Jesus, because His love for me is genuine and everlasting. I was one of the least chosen by God to taste Guanellian love and I am happy to become a drop of water in the Guanellian Ocean.

This day was also remarkable because it coincided with the celebration of Pongal, the celebration of the harvest and the feast of thanksgiving. My joy was doubled because it took fourteen years to prepare the ground for religious profession and to be harvested at the right time.

At last, here is the fruit of the harvest; my sacrifice to the Lord in the final profession of vows. My soul was filled with a sense of gratitude for the wonders of the Lord.

We began the liturgy of celebration in the evening with a procession. The altar of the Lord was surrounded with the presence of our Guanellian priests and priests from neighboring communities. Fr. Luigi de Giambattista delivered a powerful homily. He said that the Pongal celebration is a feast of joy and gratitude and thus we are grateful to the Lord for his goodness to the congregation. He also said that we must follow Jesus Christ to Calvary in order to rise with him when he is glorified. The perpetual profession is a solemn and definitive consecration between God and the chosen person. The chosen one must give himself totally to God and to his brothers and sisters who are in need.

I feel blessed by God because I took my final vows at the threshold of the centennial celebration of the first Guanellian family. It was with that joy that I made my perpetual profession and Fr. Luigi accepted my final “Yes” to be a follower of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of Blessed Guanella.

Afterwards I was given a royal welcome to our Congregation with the lovely embrace of our Father Provincial, and all the other priests who had come to partake in the celebration. The celebration was made more wonderful with the presence of my parents, relatives, and religious from neighboring institutes, cooperators and friends.

January 18th, of the following week, was the day of my Deaconate Ordination. I am wedded to Christ and his Church by the power of the Holy Spirit. Most Rev. Dr. A.M. Chinnapa, SDB, the Archbishop of Madras Mylapor, presided over the Mass. In his homily he said that the deacon is to serve the Lord in the poorest of the poor and marginalized in society. After the homily students of theology were conferred to the ministries of Acolyte and Lector. Then he ordained me as a deacon and I felt the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I was happy to assist the Bishop in the Holy Eucharist after ordination.

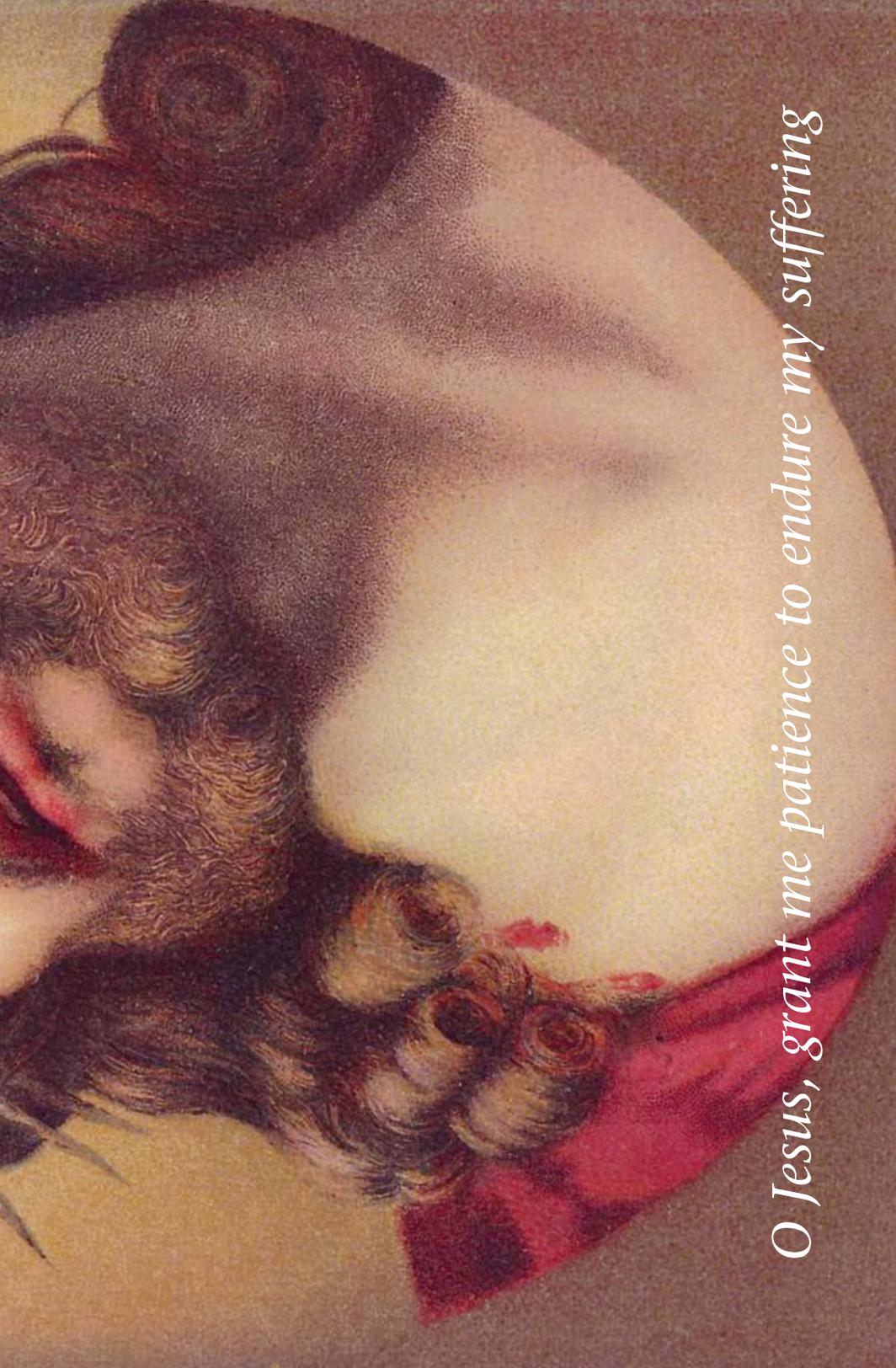
This occasion was made special by the presence of Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, the provincial treasurer; Fr. Nico, the Rector of the international theological seminary; and Fr. Alaxandro. Their presence gave me joy and spiritual nourishment.

I have no words to express my sincere gratitude to our Superior General and his Council. All the credit goes to the Don Guanella Major Seminary community and in particular to the Superior and Rector, Fr. Soosai Rathinam.

My simple prayer is to share my faith with every troubled heart and to give my hand to the crippled and suffering. I know that the time is now to fulfill my vow and I walk forward trusting in the providence of God.







O Jesus, grant me patience to endure my suffering



The Blessing that Comes with Illness

BY AILEEN SEMPIO-VIRAY

I am a woman in my 40s, working at the height of my career as a TV series writer. My husband works overseas. We have two lovely kids and relatives who are very proud and supportive. We are working and waiting for a simple dream to come true; that our kids will finish their education so he can return home and spend the rest of his life with us. I work and go out with my friends, who are always there to support me, and life is not so hard because of all these blessings. I look forward to the future that our efforts and hard work will bring. Whenever I feel lonely for my husband or depressed I spend time with the people who care about me or I go to the gym to stretch and then stuff myself with healthy food. I am living a full life.

So, having a life-threatening illness is something I never expected. This illness took away all that I have worked for: the ability to work, our life savings, our children's future, and the simple dream that my husband can return home.

Encountering serious illness in my life, surviving it, and learning to live with it is confusing. After treatment, there was the ordeal of gaining back physical strength, adapting to the damage that comes with cancer treatment, overcoming the stigma of being a sick person, managing my dwindling finances and eventually finding a work environment that fit my new situation. It's like starting all over again. Since it isn't a fresh start it's more difficult and you find that blessings are harder to notice. After surviving tedious, painful, exhausting and emotionally draining treatments; being thankful for survival or for having your life extended

is far from your thoughts when the doctor says, "Congratulations! You survived treatment! I am so proud of you!" Instead, I had disturbing questions in my mind addressed to God: "Why did you let me live? What am I going to do, now that you have taken everything away from me? What did I do to deserve this?"

People around you will give you inspiring and comforting words, trying to help you in your ordeal of living with death, but the only person who can really help you cope is God and yourself. Prayer helps a lot; hope and positive thinking are essential. Sometimes hope fails you. When mine did I asked God again: "Why?" Every morning when I woke up I went to my little altar to ask God what I should do today. And, one day I heard a still voice answer my question saying, "Faith is something you hold on to when all your hopes fail." And, from then on, I trusted that still voice. I hear it in the morning as I wake up, half conscious, giving me sound and practical advice about how to simplify and live a sustainable life. It stops once I get out of bed.

Now I live each day as it comes and enjoy each moment of each day. Somehow, this gives me an outlook on life that is simpler and easier to contend with. When difficulties come and I don't know what to do, I pray to God to show me the way and return to living each moment as it comes. This illness brought my life to a halt. While waiting at the stop sign, I let go of my many preoccupations, the means for me to avoid self-confrontation, which enabled me to be alive in each moment. In doing this, I could see the subtle and hidden blessings that can be so easily ignored.

*Prayer is not an old
woman's idle amusement.
Properly understood
and applied, it is
the most potent
instrument of action.*

Mahatma Gandhi

After my grueling dark walk with cancer, I finally found the light that uncovered the blessing of my illness. The challenge to life became a journey in itself. Finally, I appreciated the people who spared their time and effort to hold me in their thoughts and pray for my healing. These concerned thoughts and sincere prayers sustained me in my darkest hours. They also helped me to discover the inner strength to face difficulties with dignity and grace. And now, as I write this memento of my walk with cancer, God has filled me with comfort, love, strength, grace and a lasting sense of peace. I understand now why God allowed this illness to overcome me. It is his way of holding me in his arms and showing me that I am going the wrong way. He led me back towards the child within me, the child I forgot to nurture, the child who resides in my heart, my home. I am thankful because God, through my illness, gave me the greatest blessing that I have ever known.



*Quezon City – Philippines
Aileen with her family*

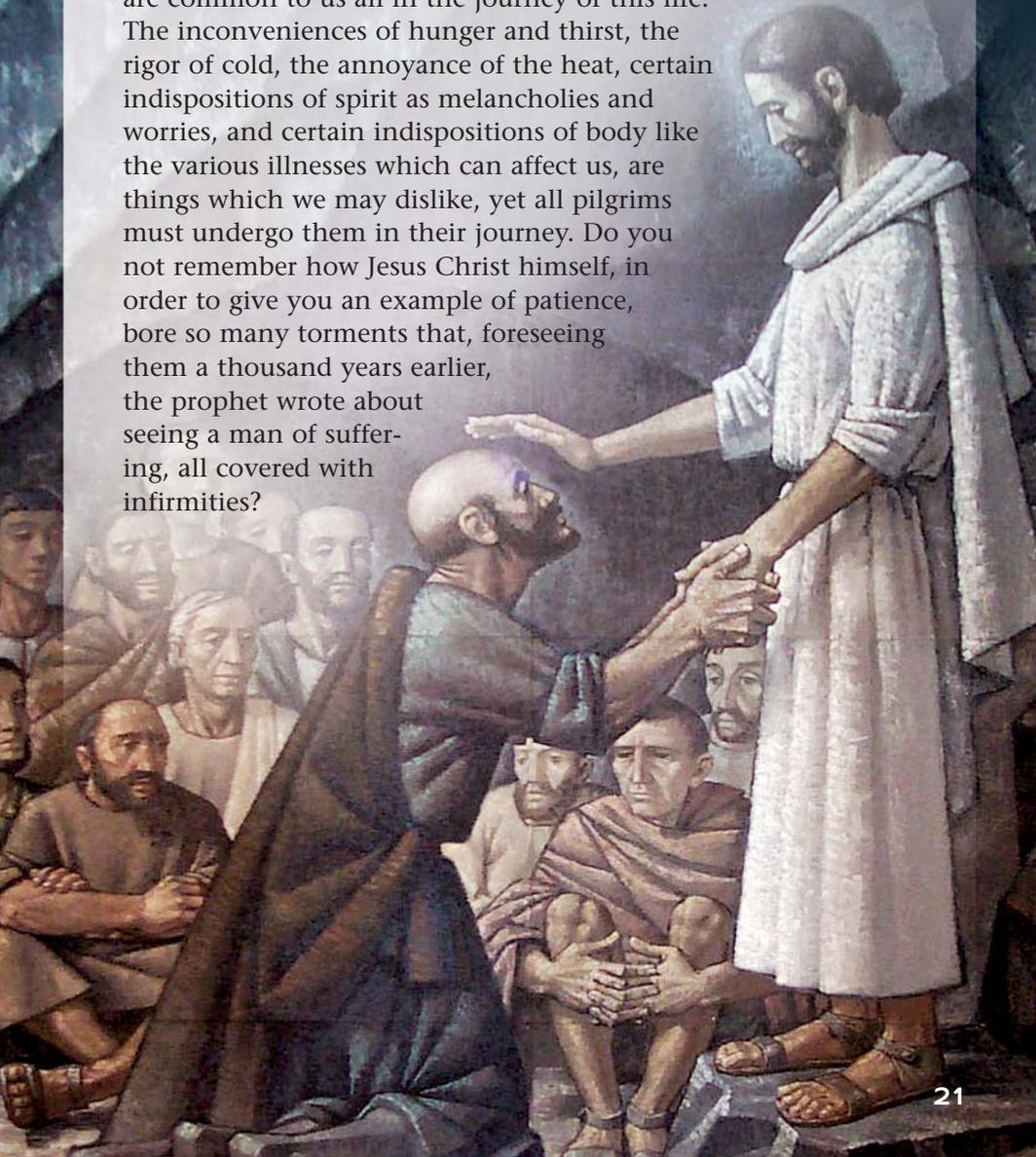
I don't know how others with terminal illness cope, but this is what my life taught me and somehow, along the way, I found my God, myself and my serenity.

Have a blessed day. Always bear in mind that every day is a blessing no matter how hard it may seem. Just hold on to your faith and it will lead you back home.

DELIVER US FROM EVIL

AN EXPERIENCE OF GOD ACCORDING TO BLESSED LOUIS GUANELLA

Do not ask God to spare you from all those difficulties which are common to us all in the journey of this life. The inconveniences of hunger and thirst, the rigor of cold, the annoyance of the heat, certain indispositions of spirit as melancholies and worries, and certain indispositions of body like the various illnesses which can affect us, are things which we may dislike, yet all pilgrims must undergo them in their journey. Do you not remember how Jesus Christ himself, in order to give you an example of patience, bore so many torments that, foreseeing them a thousand years earlier, the prophet wrote about seeing a man of suffering, all covered with infirmities?



In your regard, you can very well pray that the Heavenly Father may spare you from them.

However, when you pray, you should also say to God: “Grant my request if you foresee that my soul will benefit from it. Otherwise, increase the afflictions as you like, and give me strength and patience to bear them, since your assistance can replace anything else!”

As you can see, the evil from which you absolutely need to be freed, is only one: sin. The greatest calamity is sin, and in order to be safe from it, it will never be enough that you cry out all the time: “Deliver us from evil!”

Keep yourself calm, because God will save you. You have been coming to the Heavenly Father saying: “I am happy that you are in heaven. I rejoice that all praise you. Yes, that all may obey you on earth as the angels adore you in heaven! Give us, poor fellows, our daily bread to live and guard us from dangers.”

While you speak in this fashion, the lion of pride may attack you from the front, and the wild beast of avarice can attack you from the side, while the snake of concupiscence is already winding around you. You cry out immediately: “Father, deliver us, deliver us immediately!” Will it be possible that the Lord does not welcome you into his arms?

You know that, reciting the Lord’s Prayer, you offer to the Eternal Father the prayer suggested by his very own Son, Jesus Christ. You also know that, by submitting that prayer to the Most High, you are joined in spirit by all the faithful of the world, which is the Church of our Divine Savior. Why do you worry then? Pray, pray with holy affection: Our Father...” and the Heavenly Father will bless you.

From Let Us Go to the Father, Works Page 64-67

This book may be requested from the office of the Pious Union of St. Joseph with a suggested donation of \$10.

Life is a Challenge

Love is the Remedy

St. Louis Center is a residential facility, giving care to developmentally disabled men and women in Chelsea Michigan. This ministry of charity of the Servants of Charity is also a source of inspiration for those who are, emotionally wounded or looking for spiritual help, trying to discover

the reason, find support for their life and sustain their hope. Through this ministry, many find the way of Christian understanding which gives sense and meaning to their daily life again.

The following is a family's experience, recovering peace and harmony, while helping one of their members, entrusted to the care of the Servants of Charity.

"The most difficult thing for a parent is to leave your child in the care of someone else. We were faced with this situation almost 13 years ago and it was the best decision that we have ever made for our son, our family and our life.



Brian Hunt

Our son Brian was only 11 years old. He was diagnosed with autism and ADD and he got to the point that he was uncontrollable. Our family was stressed out and often fought because Brian caused a lot of stress and tension. We loved him unconditionally but, sometimes felt like we wanted to kill him, literally. You could tell that he was unhappy, unchallenged and just plain bored. Due to this condition, he had no friends and a very small life.

We were referred to the St. Louis Center by one of our son's teachers and, of course, we were a bit hesitant about having him live outside of our home. We knew that in order for our son Brian to have any type of life he would need to be surrounded by people just like him.

Similar to parents that drop off their children at college for the first time, we had an empty feeling, leaving our son at a "group home," Our whole family was emotional and guilt set in the moment we pulled out of the parking lot. We felt like horrible parents for leaving him, but we would be even more challenged as he grew older. Brian was a handful and we knew it.

Each time got easier, leaving him, because he loved it so much. Brian had a life that we could never have given him at home. He had friends; he did chores, went on community outings and started to show signs of maturity. Although we looked forward to picking him up every other weekend, he was most excited when he was able to go back to St. Louis Center.

Our experience with the staff has been wonderful, the Priests are extremely loving and the sup-

port has been amazing. The St. Louis Center has truly changed our family's life and for that we are grateful. The center has allowed our son to learn important life skills and has enabled him to function with little assistance. He absolutely loves living there and we trust that he is always in good hands. We would recommend the facility to anyone that has a child with a similar disability as Brian.

Again, thank you St. Louis Center for saving our life."

The Hunt Family



Brian's friends at the St. Louis Center

GUANELLIAN NEWS

FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SC

Spreading Branches of Charity

“How does it feel to be one hundred years old?” asked Bishop Carl Mengeling as he began his homily on March 24th, 100 years, to the day, after Father Guanella and the first members of his new Congregation professed their vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. Concelebrating with the Bishop were the Servants of Charity and several priests of the neighboring parishes with whom they share their ministry in the diocese of Lansing Michigan.

The same day, all the Servants of Charity whose communities are spread throughout the world, were celebrating the same cherished event. Their work, in the last one hundred years, was accomplished quietly and discreetly, while enriching the Church in its ministry of charity to people suffering in loneliness in a tumultuous world; a world where people pass them by without noticing their cries for help, ignoring the pain they suffer when living in poverty and dying abandoned.

The presence of Bishop Mengeling at the Shrine of St. Joseph, probably one of his last public appearances as Bishop of Lansing, was a time of grace. He spoke to us with an open heart, giving thanks to the Servants of Charity for caring for the disabled and for the spiritual growth of the diocese. It was an opportunity for us to express our gratitude to Bishop Mengeling for his assistance and support, which he has given generously to us during his pastoral ministry as Bishop.

In his homily the bishop retraced the spiritual journey of our Founder who was able to perform miracles of charity for his deep faith in God, as the provident Father. He also encouraged us to be like our founder, open to God calling us through the signs of the time.

How can we read these critical signs; how can we hear the calls of the Church; how can we care for the spiritual and human needs of American



society today, with the same spirit, energy and optimism which marked Father Guanella's activities?

In his personal pursuit of the mission of charity, entrusted to him by God, he was inspired and assisted by his contemporaries: Pope Pius X, Cardinal Andrew Ferrari, Fr. John Bosco, Fr Luigi Orione and others who, like him, are honored as Saints and Blessed by the Church.

The Servants of Charity, working in the United States, open their hearts and lives to the challenges presented by the Church and society. With trust in God and the help of many holy priests, religious and the people of God, we struggle to reinterpret, today, the gift of grace God gave to Father Guanella. In this way many more will taste fruit from the tree planted so long ago, and that today extends its roots to 19 nations throughout the world.

Fr Alfonso Crippa, General Superior of the Servants of Charity, visited us to celebrate the Centennial. He also came to affirm us in our identity as Servants of Charity and to animate us in our mission of evangelization of the local Church, caring for indigent and marginalized people. At the same time he encouraged us to identify new ways of immersion in this Church of Saints bringing to life the imagination of the Holy Spirit, inviting us to evangelize the poor, to comfort the lonely and heal the sick.

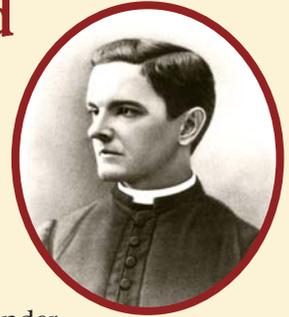
In the history of the Church, our one hundred years is comparable to only a few years of childhood; the age of dreams and imagination. We ask the Holy Spirit to give color to our dreams and to make them true in his love.

The Superior General (center) with the Confreres working in Michigan



September 21, 2008: A Day of Honor & Gratitude

A Knight of Charity and A Knight of Columbus



On March 15, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI declared “Venerable,” Father Michael J. McGivney, Founder of the Knights of Columbus.

We Servants of Charity in the U.S. rejoiced at the news because we love to associate him with our founder, Blessed Louis Guanella. Both were gifted by God with the charism of total dedication to the poor, the Lord’s chosen portion. These two holy priests, operating in different parts of the world, challenged developing social and financial trends which ignored fundamental rights to: employment, health, education and religious freedom.

Father McGivney embraced the cause of immigrants who were in danger of losing their faith while distracted and oppressed by the hardships of securing employment and trying to find their place in American society.

Father Guanella gave all his energies to the social and spiritual rehabilitation of people, whose human dignity was ignored because of poverty, age, sickness and disability.

When the Servants of Charity began their work in the U.S., they were naturally drawn to the K of C for the similar Spirit of Service that their founder transmitted and they became members themselves and strong friends. We are grateful to the Knights of Columbus for their support for our ministry and for the handicapped and their families.

Because of our respectful and brotherly relationship with the Knights of Columbus in Michigan we have invited them to the St. Louis Center for an Open House of Gratitude on September 21st.

As we celebrate the Centennial of the Foundation of the Servants of Charity, what could be more rewarding than sharing it with our Brother Knights?

This is a day of celebration which associates, the Servants of Charity, the Knights of Columbus and our special children; all gathered together in gratitude to the Providence of God, who sustains us and gives us hope.



GRATITUDE



April 21 the Servants of Charity and the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence celebrated the liturgical feast of Blessed Clare Bosatta in remembrance of the 150th anniversary of her birth. Women Religious, working in the Diocese of Lansing Michigan were invited to join in the Eucharistic Celebration at the Shrine of St. Joseph.

To our Guanellian Sisters we gave a tribute of gratitude for their cooperation in the arduous work of planting the first seeds of our Congregation in the U.S. For many years we shared our work, hope and difficulties with them. They were always like generous and solicitous mothers to us. Today we consider our Sisters, more than ever, as spiritual partners in the Guanellian ministry of charity.

A plaque in memory of all deceased members of the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence was blessed and placed on the “Memorial Wall” at the top of Mount Calvary.

GUANELLIAN LAY MOVEMENT



3rd National Conference • St. Mary of Providence Center, Elverson, PA • October 10th, 11th, & 12th, 2008

The “Guanellian Lay Movement” is a group of women and men following their Christian vocation in the world and committing themselves to follow Jesus in their daily efforts to transform our society according to the spirituality of Blessed Louis Guanella.

The Guanellian Laity, then, is an Association of persons who witness the love of God, lighting the fire of hope so that in our time we may be open to our true destiny; filial communion with God.

During the 3rd National Conference they will learn how to follow better Jesus, the Good Samaritan, imitating the example of Blessed Guanella, Blessed Bosatta and the Servant of God Catherine Guanella, sister of our Founder.

For more information, call the St. Louis Center at 734-475-8430, or the Pious Union of St. Joseph at 517-522-8017

From Iraq to the Shrine of St. Joseph

On March 13th of this year, a tragic event brought sadness to the Church. The body of the Chaldean Bishop, Paulos Farj Rahho, of Iraq, was recovered in Mosul after his kidnapping by a group of Islamic terrorists. He is another innocent victim, added to the thousands of other victims whose blood stains the history of ancient Mesopotamia, where the three monotheistic religions acknowledge their origin and relationship with God through Abraham.

In the chaos, which marks the Iraqi experience today, it seems that endless dialectic on the reasons of war and the ways for peace have taken precedence. This conversation cannot bring an end to the suffering of this people distressed by political, economic, racial, and let me say religious supremacy.

On March 19th, the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, a group of Iraqi Chaldean pilgrims came to the Shrine of St. Joseph, as they are accustomed to do every year. With faith and spirit they implored the mercy of God and asked for St. Joseph's protection for their devastated homeland. They were led by a Chaldean priest, who arrived in the U.S. a few months ago, after recovering his freedom. He, too, was kidnapped and imprisoned by Islamic terrorists.

While enjoying security and freedom in the U.S., they are fearful of the campaign of persecution incited against Christians who feel obliged to travel abroad and who are not welcomed everywhere. In their own country they are considered as enemies, allied with foreign interests.

Turning to God with fervent pleas, the pilgrims asked that the suffering in their land might pass. They prayed that their country would enter into a new way, where justice and freedom, which allows them to profess their Christian faith, would grow and flourish.



A Prayer Reverberating In Heaven

Joyful expressions of gratitude to St. Joseph reach us every day at the Shrine, written by our suffering brothers and sisters throughout the country. Recently we received letters written in surprise and thanksgiving for a new way of prayer, experienced within the Church, drawing close to the suffering and glorious Jesus in the Eucharistic celebration, offered to the Eternal Father throughout the world, every hour of the day.

Prayer, united to the Perpetual Mass in Supplication & Reparation, is a mystery of faith and love that involves all of us in the ministry of evangelization and salvation. The Church, called to fulfill this ministry, follows in the footsteps of Jesus who, through his suffering, saved us and is saving us every day in the celebration of the divine Eucharist.

A member of the Pious Union of St. Joseph wrote to us from Ireland saying: "Blessings! Thank you for the Perpetual Mass with Jesus for the Suffering and Dying. I made my first two hours today. What a wonderful way to pray. God bless you."

From Baton Rouge, Louisiana, an Oblate of St Benedict wrote, "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 of prayer for dying Priests



and Religious. I am in a nursing home and only receive Jesus in his Eucharist three times a week. 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. Through the Perpetual Mass Intentions, I can live each hour with a special intention.”

A wonderful experience of faith, uniting ourselves to the Perpetual Mass is an expression of our love and trust in Jesus, to whom we offer our sufferings and prayers for suffering and dying people, especially for those in need of God’s grace as they make their difficult journey to the house of the Father. This is the same road that the saints and the faithful travelled, which we, too, are invited to take, so that we may be one with them in Jesus Christ.

The Lord, through the pastoral visit of Pope Benedict XVI, granted a very precious gift to the Local Church in America. We witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit revitalizing the faith, which dozed off in the hearts of many Catholics. His inspired message helped us to understand that the members of the Church must become courageous messengers of the truth, which comes only from Jesus. With Him it’s possible to demonstrate the way of peace, harmony and salvation within our society, which often assumes the face of false certainty in its economic success and sees dimly through the opaque lenses of materialism that cloud the mind and obscure the heart. Our Pope invited us to open our minds to the truth and to discover the real meaning of life, making space for God in our hearts and cooperating with him to help the world progress in justice and peace.

Among the groups and individuals he met, Benedict XVI wanted to share his time and prayer with people wounded by physical anomalies or victimized by deplorable moral behaviour. To these, he offered his fatherly affection and pastoral presence. He asked all of us to share their suffering and assured them that they would be remembered in his prayers to the God of mercy and love.

In accordance with our Pope’s suggestions, we invite you to add another intention to those presented for the “Perpetual Mass in Supplication and Reparation:” pray for the increase of vocations. Spiritually adopt priests. Pray for them. Surrender yourself to the suffering Jesus on the cross for their sanctification and for the continuous purification of the Church.



A Vision for the Future

Fr. Germano Pegoraro reached the House of the Father and enjoys the eternal reward for his faithful service in the vineyard of the Lord. He began the Pious Union of St. Joseph in the United States. He envisioned a place of prayer for pilgrims where they can ask the intercession of the glorious patriarch, St. Joseph.

To fulfill his dream and honor his memory, we will continue to follow his example of dedication, trusting, once again, in your cooperation.

All Donations, large and small, sent to the Pious Union of St. Joseph are helpful and appreciated.

Here are a few ways of making a dedication or memorial that also helps to build up the Shrine in honor of our dear patron.

Widow's Might for the Calvary	\$ All Donation
Dedicate an altar step	\$5000
Dedicate a Bench in front of the altar	\$1000
Bronze Plaque on the Memorial Wall	\$500
Tile below the Cross on top of Calvary	\$250
Become a Shrine Forester, plant a tree	\$150



Mount Calvary as it looks today and the vision of the original project with landscaping and benches.

Servants of Charity Daughters of St. Mary of Providence

Called by God to evangelize the world through Charity

Among those who are deprived of humane and spiritual support, we care for developmentally disabled, abandoned children, indigent elderly, incurable and terminally ill and troubled youth. We are also committed to pastoral and mission work in America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

Our founder, Blessed Guanella, wrote that “the whole world is your homeland.” His words, echoing through time, remind us that Charity has no boundaries.

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The Servants of Charity

100 Years of Service and Grace 1908–2008

Blessed Louis Guanella lived the gospel with deep understanding of the primacy of love. With perseverance and a spirit of sacrifice, he did everything to understand and carry out the will of God. With faith he went to whatever place he considered to be ground for the work of his Lord, that charity might blossom and grow within it. By welcoming his example and his word, we feel him actively present among us, as a father who still urges us to zealous works, a living rule as he was at our very origins.

Blessed Louis Guanella

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