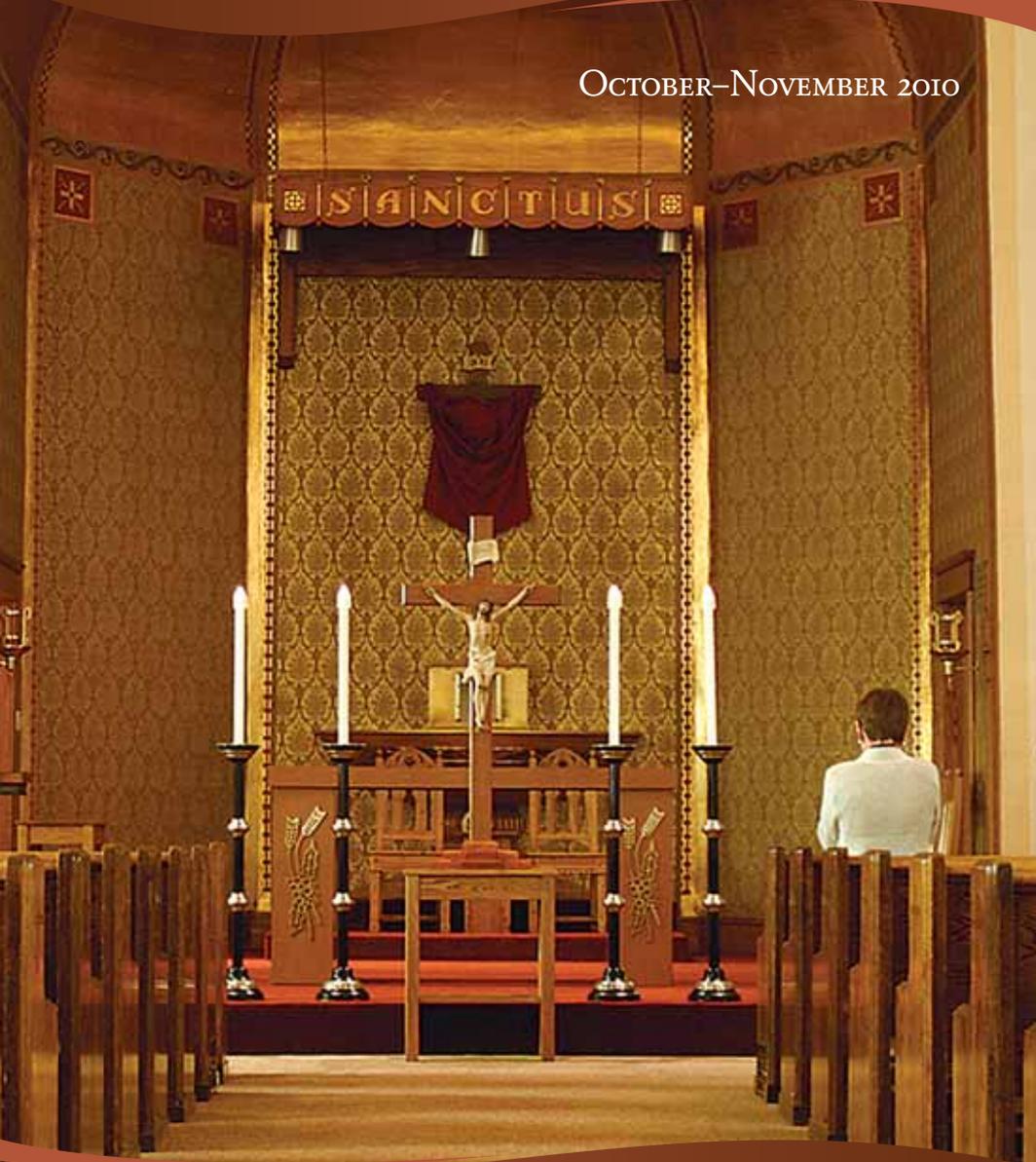


The Voice of Providence

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Featured Story: *A Call To Conscience*, page 7

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The Voice of Providence:

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Mission

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

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

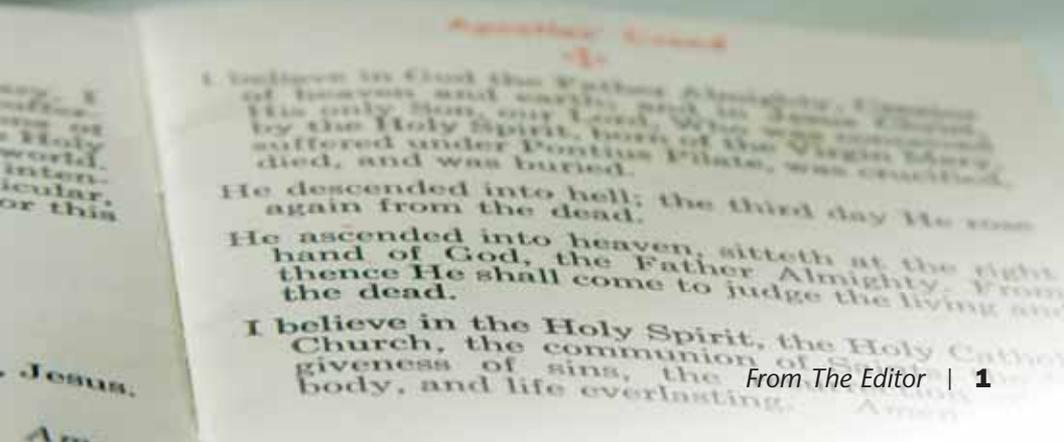
Resurrection of the Body

By FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SDC

Anytime we attend Sunday Mass, we recite the *Credo*. It is a prayer and a statement of the major truths of faith every Christian believes. One truth that strikes me as interesting and intriguing is, "I believe in the resurrection of the Body." How is it going to happen? We really do not know. It is a mystery. However we know that Jesus, after his Resurrection, was seen by many as He was before His death; He was touched, He ate, He went through the walls.

In this life we have only five senses and an immortal soul with its different names of spirit, intelligence and knowledge. In heaven we will be reunited with God and therefore we will acquire the sense of God and be totally in His image and likeness. After we are reunited with God we will see our beloved as they were on earth. We will recognize and be recognized by all people we loved and were loved in return. When I am down, or feel alone and tired, I pick up a photograph of my parents. Memories flow, feelings are restored, love exchanged and life goes on.

This is the way I love to celebrate All Saints Day and All Souls Day on November 1st and 2nd. It restores my faith, my hope and my love. Heaven is an eternal celebration of life, God's life and all His creatures' lives. It is a countless choir praising God's Creation, God's Redemption and God's Providence. It is participation with the Angels giving glory to the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Mailbag...



Dear Fathers of the Pious Union of St Joseph,

I enrolled my daughter in the Pious Union and she has been receiving the Voice of Providence magazine. My nine year old grandson, Michael, has been asking her how we would know if God is calling us to the religious life, and in the June–July, 2010 issue, there was an article “How Does God Call Us?”

Michael read it. He also has the center page image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus hanging in his bedroom. He loves all pictures of the Sacred Heart and has them in his bedroom.

Just wanted you to know that not only adults read your magazine.

Thanks, EM in New Jersey

My Dear Friends,

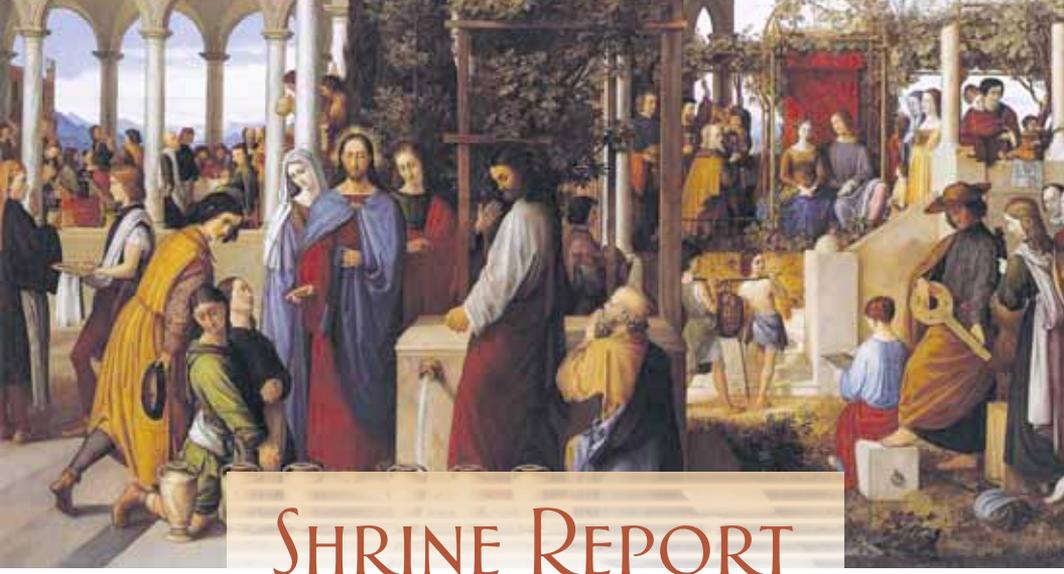
Would you be so kind as to enroll me in the Pious Union? I have been a great devotee of St. Joseph for my whole life and hope to continue until the moment the Good Lord takes me. Your work is so important for it revolves around our mission in this life: the salvation of souls; ours and all those entrusted to us by Our Heavenly Father.

With the assurance of my prayers and every best wish, I remain.

*Respectfully yours in Christ Jesus,
Father Vincent J. Inghilterra, FSD, Hawaii*

Father Vincent is the newest member of the Perpetual Holy Mass of the Pious Union of St. Joseph.

God bless you Father! St. Joseph protect you, Sr. Margaret Mary



SHRINE REPORT

The months of October and November are very dear to our Guanellian Family. On October 24th, we celebrate the Feast of our Founder Blessed Luigi Guanella. Now you may not have heard us refer to him too much in the past as “Luigi” but Luigi is Louis in Italian. And since our Founder was of Italian descent, the Servants of Charity, at their last meeting, decided we would unite in referring to Blessed Guanella as “Luigi.” Fr. Joe returned from that meeting with the news and so we are passing this on to you as part of our Guanellian Family.

It is beautiful for us to be united under the charism of Blessed Luigi Guanella which is to have dignity and love for all. Trusting in God Our Father, who provides for the least as well as the greatest, we reach out to those who are the “down-trodden” of this world. It is He who gives us all that we have and He wants us to share our own gifts and talents with those who are less fortunate. The fulfillment and satisfaction that we experience in giving is God’s gift to us! God is Good.

On November 12th we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Providence. The scriptural roots of the title “Our Lady of Providence” is attributed to Mary’s intervention at the Wedding in Cana. This is where Mary intervened through her foresight and concern to avoid an embarrassing situation for the newlywed couple. We too trust in Mary, Mother of Divine Providence to watch over us in every circumstance of life. As we all know the best way to go to Jesus is through His Mother.

St. Joseph to the Rescue of Souls in Purgatory

BY SUSAN TASSONE

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Psalm 116:15

A happy death is one of the greatest and the last blessings of God in this life. The Church encourages us to prepare ourselves for the hour of our death. In the litany of the saints, for instance, we pray: "From a sudden death and unforeseen death, deliver us, O Lord." We ask the Mother of God to intercede for us "at the hour of our death" in the *Hail Mary* and we entrust ourselves to St. Joseph, the patron of a Happy Death (CCC 1014).

Why are we dedicated to St. Joseph? St. Joseph is the Foster Father of our Judge and Savior. His power is dreaded by the devil. His death is the most singularly privileged and happiest of deaths: in the presence and care of Jesus and Mary. We ask him to obtain for us that same privilege at our passage from this life to eternity.

We are called to pray for a happy death and for the dying. Blessed Luigi Guanella said, "There is a need of living well, but there is even more need of dying well. A good death is everything." 152,000 people die every day and are judged. These souls die in natural disasters, wars, crime, suddenly without preparation. We are called, through our prayers and sacrifices, to assist these souls. Justice demands it.

If by your prayers, sufferings or other good works, you have obtained a good death for a dying sinner, you shall look upon yourself as a mother or father to that soul.

Their souls may have been going the wrong way and by your prayers you may have saved them by praying their souls into purgatory.

Now, you can assist, by all the means possible, in obtaining the soul's release from purgatory. To do this, you should be anxious to have Masses offered, pray the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, Adoration, and obtaining all the indulgences you can.

Blessed Leonard, of Port Maurice, thought so highly of praying for the holy souls he considered a person doing so to be on the road to sanctity. Save the dying if you have been a stumbling block to the living.

Holy Communion offered for seven consecutive Sundays in honor of the Holy Souls pleases St. Joseph and as St. Teresa of Avila says, "I do not remember that I ever asked St. Joseph at any time for anything which he did not obtain for me." Do you need a conversion in your family? Are your children away from the Church? Do you want peace of mind? Do you need a job?

Go to Joseph and pray for the holy souls in his honor.



St. Joseph sanctified labor, poverty, and privations by bearing them with patience and humility in resignation to the will of God. We endure many trials in life; we have need of these virtues. Make a list of your necessities, write them down and go confidently to St. Joseph and pray especially for all the holy souls who were dedicated to him.

Let us pray for our eternal salvation. Offer Masses in honor of St. Joseph for your deceased loved ones and for the grace of a "happy death" for you and your family.

Remember to arrange for Gregorian Masses in your will. They are 30 consecutive Masses offered for one deceased soul.

The Mass is the surest means to help a soul reach God. The Mass heals the living and the dead.

Pope John Paul II lived and died a holy death. His whole life was a prayer to the very end. He lived and died in the state of grace. That is a "happy death." To live and die in the state of grace with the last sacraments; this is the grace of all graces. And it is ours if we ask.

Read *Praying with the Saints for the Holy Souls in Purgatory*, practice these devotions for the grace of a “happy death.” Use it to assist your deceased loved ones and those who are dying, and encourage everyone to become a member of the Pious Union of St. Joseph.

Visit the Shrine of St. Joseph or an altar or statue of St. Joseph and pray to him for the grace of a holy life and happy death for you and your loved ones. Pray for the holy souls in Purgatory. They suffer day and night. They long to be with God.

Why do we pray for souls? Heaven is our reason. Our Lord has conferred on St. Joseph the special favor and privilege of obtaining a happy death for all who, during life and especially at the hour of death, invoke his aid. St. Joseph and the holy souls will pray for you all the days of your life protecting you, interceding for you now and until you are safely home in Heaven. They become your nearest, sincerest, and dearest friends now and for all eternity!

To honor God the Father, you honor Jesus. To honor Jesus, you honor His mother. To honor His mother, you honor Joseph.

St. Joseph must be known to the people of God so he will receive the honor that will glorify God and bring back the most abundant blessings upon this entire world.

May Jesus, Mary, St. Joseph and the holy souls lead you and your families to the House of the Father!

Susan Tassone is a member of the Pious Union of St. Joseph. Her books are available through Our Sunday Visitor. 1-800-348-2440

Prayer of St. Gertrude the Great to release souls from Purgatory

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the most precious blood of thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen

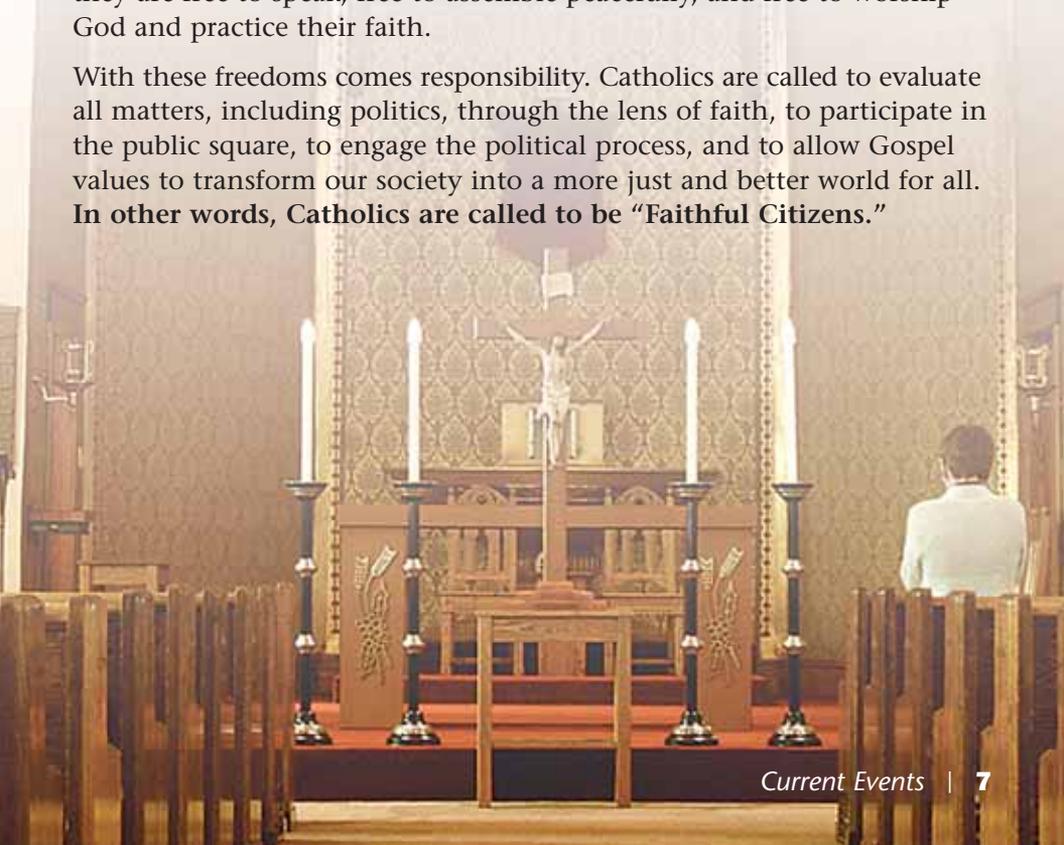
A Call to Conscience: Faithful Citizenship and the Common Good

An Election Year Statement from the Roman Catholic Bishops of Michigan

Reprinted with permission from the Michigan Catholic Conference, Lansing, MI.

“Government is instituted for the common good; for the protection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people; and not for profit, honor, or private interest of any one man, family, or class of men” wrote John Adams in *Thoughts on Government* in 1776. Later that year, the Declaration of Independence announced to the world “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights.” The nation’s Founding fathers created a government where all who reside in these United States are free to pursue the common good—they are free to speak, free to assemble peacefully, and free to worship God and practice their faith.

With these freedoms comes responsibility. Catholics are called to evaluate all matters, including politics, through the lens of faith, to participate in the public square, to engage the political process, and to allow Gospel values to transform our society into a more just and better world for all. **In other words, Catholics are called to be “Faithful Citizens.”**

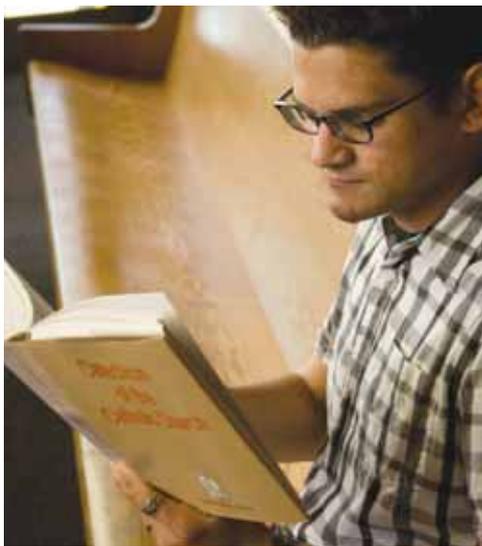


Practicing Faithful Citizenship flows from a **well-formed conscience**. What do we mean when we refer to “conscience?” According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 1777, “Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil. It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments. When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking.”

When we act in harmony with our conscience, shunning evil for that which is good, we are bringing Gospel values to the public square. Our pluralistic nation has a rich history of welcoming various ideas and

proposals from all sectors of society, including, and especially, religious groups. In this tradition, the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, brought to the public square by faith-filled Catholics, help to embolden our communities and to advance the common good.

Those primarily responsible for implementing the common good are the public officials whom we elect at the ballot box every two and four years. Public officials hold tremendous influence over public policies that affect us not only as citizens of this great state, but more importantly, as Catholics and people of faith. Issues of religious freedom, the right to life, protection of marriage and the family, the education of children, and how the poor, the vulnerable and immigrants are served confront



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elected officials at the State Capitol each day. These are the issues that we, too, as Catholics, must seriously evaluate when deciding for whom to vote this November.

We recognize that Catholics seek guidance from their church on matters of conscience. As teachers of the faith, we do not endorse candidates or political parties. However, as bishops of the church, we have a duty to help the Catholic faithful form their consciences based on Gospel values and teachings of Jesus Christ. As Catholics, we must evaluate candidates' positions based on the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in order to determine who best will guide our communities.

Yet not all issues carry equal moral weight. Catholics may disagree on practical policies that call for prudential judgment, such as how best to care for the poor, how to welcome the immigrant, or how to eradicate racism. There are other policies, however, that are intrinsically evil and can never be supported.

The right to life is a commandment of God, an inherent and fundamental moral principle. It is indeed the first of the unalienable God-given rights recognized by our Founding Fathers in the Declaration of Independence. It is the primary right through which all other rights flow. The willful destruction of human life through abortion, human embryo experimentation, and assisted suicide represent intrinsically evil policies. A Catholic with a well-formed conscience would be guilty of formal cooperation in evil if they were to deliberately vote for a candidate precisely because of the candidate's permissive stance on these policies. On the difficult occasion where both candidates support an intrinsic evil, the conscientious voter may consider each candidates' integrity and commitments, and determine which would be the less likely to advance such a morally flawed position and more likely to promote other authentic human goods.

By forming our consciences based on Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus Christ, we can bring to the public square our commitment to the common good. Elected officials expect nothing less from us. As Catholics, we are urged to vote, to take part in conversations about political matters, to join political parties, and to use the Internet to learn more about candidates and their positions. Most importantly, all of us, as faithful citizens, are called to cast our vote through the lens of faith.

Let us pray to the Holy Spirit for wisdom and guidance as we prepare to elect our political leaders this year.

In the Experience of the Founder

Part II: Together with St. John Bosco

BY FR. DOMENICO SAGINARIO, SDC

Father Luigi Guanella's personality and background helped him to seek cooperation and socialization. As a priest, he attracted people and created active enthusiasm around and on behalf of his works of charity. This openness to new friends and ideas drove him to seek other models that would inspire him in developing his vocation of charity deep in his soul.

He had the grace to meet St. John Bosco; fascinated, he became his friend and disciple. He visited Turin often to talk to him and to invite him to start his work for youth in the Diocese of Como. St. John Bosco hesitated, and Fr. Guanella insisted to the point of finding some land for a possible foundation. He soon understood however, that St. John Bosco had other plans and greater dreams. He then decided to join him. He would learn a lot and maybe convince St. John Bosco to open in Como. After painful efforts to convince his bishop to let him go, Fr. Guanella finally moved to Turin with John Bosco on January 29, 1875.

He arrived in Turin at the institution of St. John Bosco in the evening. Children were playing everywhere. He inquired about St. John Bosco and they told him that he was having an important meeting. Suddenly the door opened, everyone came out and Fr. Guanella found himself in front of St. John Bosco who said, "Fr. Luigi, are we going to America?" During their meeting, they had just decided to open a mission in Argentina. It is easy to imagine Fr. Guanella's happiness as he realized that a new world, vast and missionary, was opening in front of his eyes. Then his eyes rested on St. John Bosco's face, so friendly, and so full of



trust and appreciation. This was the opening scene of his Salesian experience, which remained indelible in his heart for the rest of his life.

Here at St. John Bosco's school, his human and priestly maturity acquired a high level of strength, rich in values, methods and prospective. He learned to win souls through benevolence. Through the ways of the heart; he learned the practice of working truthfully, intensely and efficiently.



In a special way, Fr. Guanella understood how crucial the collaboration with the laity was for his ministry. In this area, he already had a great deal of experience. St. John Bosco noticed that, and shared with him his desire to provide a better, organized structure to his large group of friends and lay cooperators. Fr. Guanella found himself personally involved in one of the greatest moments in the history of the Salesian Family.

During the first months of his experience in Turin, he worked primarily in ministry. He was requested to hold retreats, recollection days, and parish missions. All this was new to him. With fervor and courage, he became a preacher and a missionary in several churches of the city and neighboring towns, as well as in the cathedrals of other dioceses.

A few months after this first phase, he began working at the Oratory with the philosophy and theology seminarians until St. John Bosco put him in charge of the Porta Nuova Oratory in Turin. On Sundays, the Oratory was full of children. Fr. Guanella organized the games and the meals, provided clothes for the poorest, and used his creativity to make their stay interesting and rewarding, especially when it came to catechism and



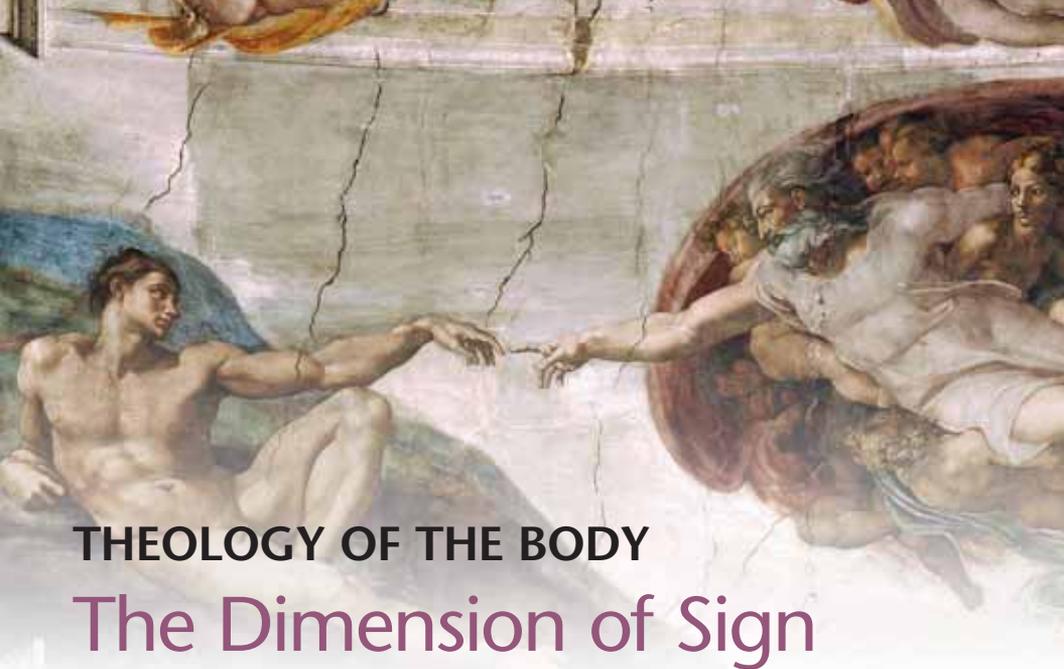
religious songs. Sometimes he took them on all-day field trips. For these activities, the lay cooperators became highly valuable. Several groups of the St. Vincent Conference were involved. The seminarians and youngsters from the neighboring parishes came to help, and were attracted by the kindness shown toward the children.

The records of that time and Fr. Guanella's own accounts tell of professionals, nobility, counts, dukes, "and many other very dear and distinguished apostles of youth," who had become permanent partners in his work. The presence of these committed lay people in the social and political arena, gave Fr. Guanella a new mentality and a greater



vision of the Church. The environment of those days saw the priest as more of an authority, a head and a leader. Now his work in the heart of the city put him in touch with new and complex problems. Next to the Oratory, he had to deal with a hostile denomination. The children, youth and teens coming from the various sections of the city, brought the problems of their families and neighborhoods to the Oratory. The Oratory was a small version of the big city.

To the very sensitive soul of Fr. Guanella, the social, educational and historical state of the church in Turin became a powerful chisel that shaped his vision of a dynamic and choral Church. This vision allowed him to think of his foundations as choral works of communion, where each with their own charism, contribute to spread the Gospel of Charity throughout the world.



THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

The Dimension of Sign

BY FR. DENNIS WEBER, SDC

As Pope John Paul II continues his reflection on the “Theology of the Body” in the second part entitled **The Sacrament**, he focuses on an aspect of the theology of the sacraments in general which centers on *The Dimension of Sign*, the title of chapter two of this part.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines the sacraments as “efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us” (CCC 1131). The sacrament, and in this case the sacrament of marriage, is an effective and visible reality pointing to or signifying another unseen or, one might say, invisible reality. For John Paul II, “This reality, moreover, has been defined from the very beginning by institution of the Creator: “A man will leave his father and his mother and unite with his wife, and the two will be one flesh.” (Gen 2, 24) It is the visible reality of the union or covenant of the husband and wife in marriage, defined by the Creator from the beginning, which acts as sign of a deeper reality. This deeper reality manifested by the sign of the covenantal union of marriage “is constituted on the basis of man’s covenant with God in Christ and in the Church; it is constituted in the supernatural order of the sacred bond requiring grace.” So for the pontiff, marriage points to “man’s covenant with God in Christ and in the Church” in the very heart of the “dimension of sign.”

The Holy Father then strengthens “the dimension of sign” in the sacrament of marriage by introducing a unique and profound image for the sign (sacrament) of marriage—the “language of the body.” He asserts “that the essential element for marriage as a sacrament is the ‘language of the body’ reread in the truth.” In a sense, he is saying that the two who become one flesh in the reality of the marital union “speaks” to a deeper mystery (sacrament) of the truth, which is present in that union, through the body (and soul).

Pope John Paul II reflects on biblical passages from two Old Testament books—Song of Songs and Tobit—and in these books he finds the truth of the “language of the body” expressed. From the Song of Songs, he comments on this biblical poem of love and says, “The love that unites them is of a spiritual and sensual nature together. On the basis of this love, the rereading of the spousal meaning of the body in the truth is achieved, because the man and the woman together must constitute the sign of the reciprocal gift of self, which *impresses the seal on their whole life.*” This reciprocal gift of self is a significant manifestation of the “language of the body” which speaks to the truth of the marriage relationship. He then continues to broaden the understanding of the “reciprocal gift of self” when he says: “The truth of love expresses itself in the consciousness of reciprocal belonging, which expresses itself in the necessity of the aspiration and search, which springs from the experience of reciprocal belonging. Love demands from both that they take a further step on the staircase of such belonging, always seeking a new and more mature form of it. What becomes apparent in this inner necessity, in this dynamic of love, is *the impossibility, as it were, of one person being appropriated and possessed by the other.*” This truth expressed

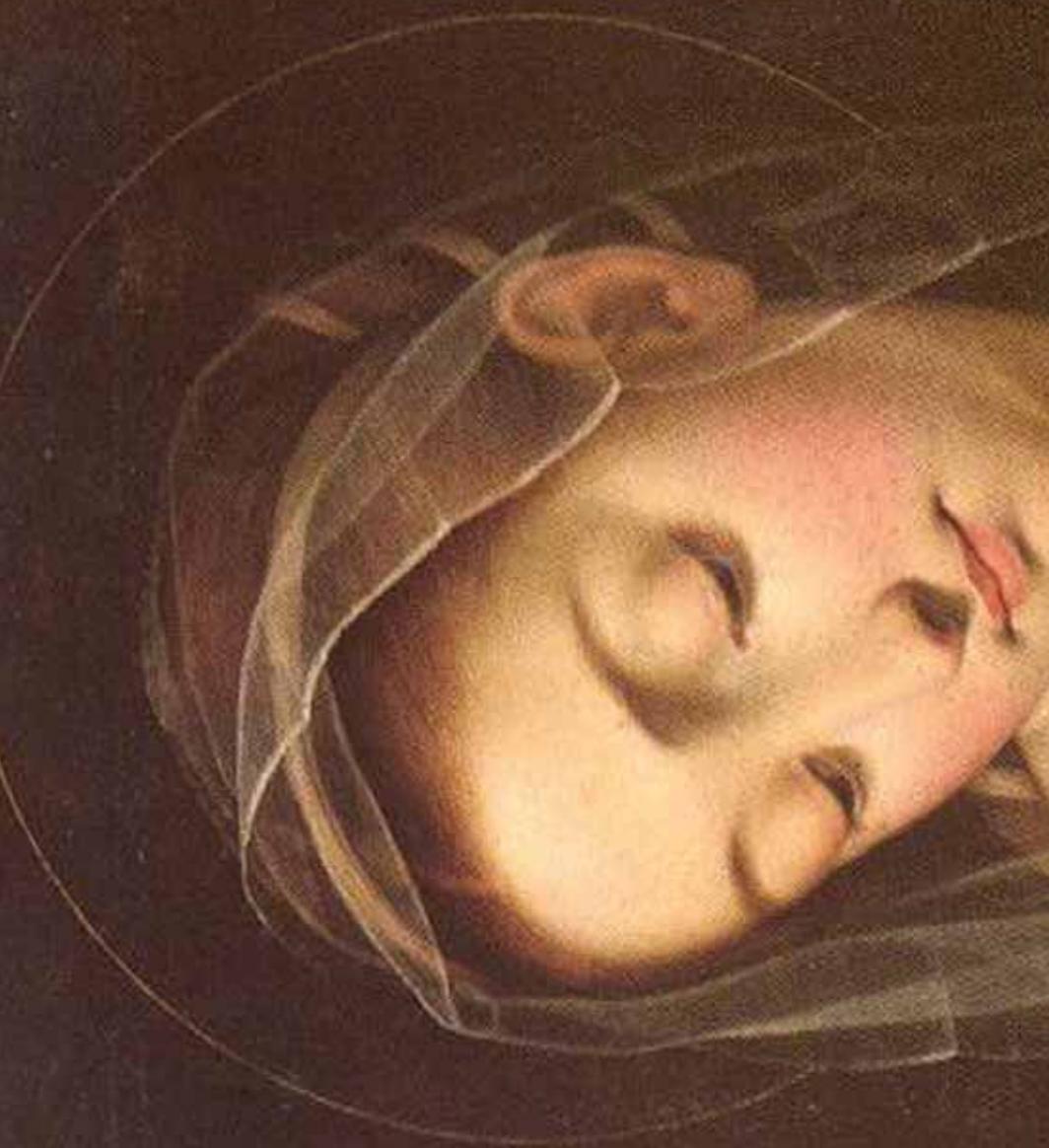


through the “language of the body” is one that cries out for appropriation in our world today—a dynamic of love that is mutual and not one-sided; a dynamic of love which is selfless and not selfish; a dynamic of love which continually searches and aspires to grow and mature in love and not remain stagnant and immature; a dynamic of love in which the two allow themselves to be embraced and loved by God and not to possess the other.

The Holy Father then engages what might seem to be a scandalous imagery found in both the Song of Songs and Tobit—the image of “husband and wife” as “brother and sister.” Rather than seeing this imagery in any incestuous manner, the pontiff sees it as strengthening the meaning of the “spousal meaning of the body” and of the selfless, reciprocal belonging of the spouses to each other. In fact, Pope John Paul II sees this image as foundational for their relationship: “And this reciprocal relation of “brother” and “sister” is constituted in them as the first foundation of the communion of persons ... (and) also in the dimension of the vocation by which they were to become “husband and wife.”

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Finally, the Holy Father concludes by relating the sacramental sign of marriage, as spoken through the truth of the “language of the body”, to reinforce the loving, covenantal relationship of God with man: “Their conjugal covenant is in fact the image- and the primordial sacrament of the covenant of God with man, with the human race- of the covenant that draws its origin from Eternal Love.” After all, it is the Eternal Love of God that truly builds the marriage relationship and allows the husband and wife to speak the truth of this love through the sign of the “language of the body.”





Northern Italy:

The Birthplace of the Founder

BY JOE YEKULIS

I was blessed with the privilege of visiting the birthplace of the future St. Luigi Guanella a week before the announcement of his pending sainthood at the end of June, and before leaving, I knew that I had to share this journey with the readers of *The Voice of Providence*. Following Fr. Guanella's early journey was a great honor, and considering that his charism began in northern Italy and now reaches twenty-one countries throughout the world; it is no wonder that his favorite saying was, "It is God Who Works."

This journey helped me to more fully understand Fr. Guanella's charism, because when you encounter a Guanellian priest or sister, you feel as though you are meeting Fr. Guanella himself. Each one of them possesses his peace of soul, kindness of heart, devout spirit, generous attitude, and most importantly; a love for Christ and the people of this world who are unable to care for themselves. Visiting Northern Italy and Fr. Guanella's birthplace in Fraciscio helps the faithful to understand the multiple layers of this future saint, and reveals how his faith and values were formed during the 19th century.

The Village of Fraciscio

Our journey begins in the beautiful City of Como, resting on the west and southernmost tip of Lake Como. The lake is fed by the melting snow of the Alps, and is seen on the map as an upside-down letter “Y”. Here, Fr. Guanella created the “Mother House” for his congregation of priests. As you travel north out of Como taking the main roads along the lakeshore and through the many tunnels that cut through the mountain passes, you begin to sense that you are in a very special place. And as you pass the pre-Alps and make your winding ascent to the top, you can feel God’s presence everywhere.

Our first stop is in Gualdera, the home of Fr. Guanella’s grandparents. The Servants of Charity purchased the original property from the family and turned the home and barn into an historical site, a restaurant, and a lodge called “Casa Alpina San Luigi in Gualdera.” The lodge is managed by a group of Guanellian Cooperators, and was the site where Fr. Guanella claimed to have encountered the Blessed Mother on his First Communion Day, promising her that he would become a priest, and pledging to care for the aged. He recounted this story on his deathbed, and a statue of the Blessed Mother on the side of a hill with Fr. Guanella, commemorates this event.



Grandparents home and barn in Gualdera



Statue of Luigi and Catherine making soup

After a great meal of “pizzocheri” at San Luigi, we travel a short distance to the Village of Fraciscio, and the birthplace of Fr. Guanella. You feel a natural reverence as you approach this aging home, knowing that our future saint was born here, and wondering what it was like to grow up in such a rugged place with his parents and twelve brothers and sisters. The three-story home is owned by the Servants of Charity and is being converted into a museum commemorating Fr.

Guanella. Outside is a bronze memorial depicting the moments when young Guanella played with his sister Catherine, pretending to make soup for the poor, with parents Lawrence

and Maria fondly watching over the scene. When we enter the home, we observe the room of his birth, the family dining room, and his former bedroom that is now a makeshift chapel; complete with a wooden table for Mass, a large crucifix, and a tabernacle.

After visiting Fraciscio, we head to Campodolcino and St. John the Baptist Church, where the infant Luigi was baptized the day after his birth on December 20, 1842. We meet with pastor, Fr. Bruno Capparoni, who shows us the original baptismal font and takes us on a guided tour of the church. The altar is a strikingly beautiful baroque design, with a huge tabernacle and a painting of the Blessed Mother showing her pride in the birth of her son, Jesus. Inside the altar, is the skull of St. Primus, a Roman soldier martyred in the 4th century. Fr. Bruno explains that relics like these were used to enrich the faith of the local farmers as Protestantism began to spread south from Germany through Switzerland. Outside of the church is another bronze statue of Fr. Guanella extending his hand to a poor person needing help.



Top: St. John the Baptist Church in Campodolcino

Bottom: The Altar of St. John the Baptist Church



Mother of Mercy Church in Gallivaggio

As we continue down the mountainside, we visit Mother of Mercy Church in Gallivaggio. This was a place of prayer and rest for Fr. Guanella as he would walk down the mountainside to get to his first parish assignments down the mountain. The church is built around a boulder upon which an altar has been built to commemorate the location that an apparition of the Blessed Mother appeared to two girls in 1492. Inside this ornate darkened church is a beautiful lighted statue of Mary holding Jesus behind the altar, and outside is a large retaining wall bearing the words, "Hail Mary Full of Grace."

Our final stop is in Prosto, where we find the Church of the Assumption of Mary; where Fr. Guanella said his first Mass as a priest on May 31, 1866. He was assigned by his bishop to remain there as an assistant pastor, and here on the banks of the Rabbiosa River, he began his ministry of caring for the sick, the lonely, the aged, and the children whose parents were working in the fields. The town of Sovogno can be seen from Prosto, where Fr. Guanella made a daily climb to fill the position of schoolmaster. A beautiful waterfall called “Aqua Fraggia,” can also be found pouring from the side of the mountain in this town.



*Church of St. Mary
Assumption in Prosto*

From these humble beginnings, God created Fr. Guanella to be His instrument of service. Little did these peasant people know at the time, that from them, a saint would emerge who would walk with Jesus to love and care for His people.

Next Issue: Fr. Guanella and his Religious Institutes

Jesus' Garden: A Dream Come True

By FR. PAUL OGGIONI, SDC

St. John de Britto served, suffered and died as a martyr in 1693, in Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu, India. He was well aware also that charity and mercy were essential to match the Hindu culture and religiosity.

Centuries later, many years ago, Fr. Sengol, a courageous Indian priest, strove to follow the example of St. John de Britto and Jesus' command to His apostles to preach the Good News all over the world, to care for the poor and to heal the sick in body and soul with the oil of mercy and the sweetness of charity. God inspired Fr.

Sengol to manifest his preferential love for the poorest in the community by opening a home where they could find refuge and, at the same time, a field to cultivate and grow the food they needed to sustain their life. The home is very close to Sivagangai, where St. John de Britto died as a martyr. The inscription on the humble building's wall reads, "Yesuvanam," that is Jesus' Garden. "Yesuvanam" is a message and a life project.





For many years, “Yesuvanam” has been a home to many people looking to improve their life condition and work for a better future. Many have died already, many others found a more dignified life and many still knock at its door.

The aging Fr. Sengol, like the ancient patriarch of the Old Testament, started looking for somebody to continue his work of mercy. God, “who does it all,” as Father Guanella says, guided Fr. Sengol to the Servants of Charity already working in Tamil Nadu, India, caring for many cast out because of their poverty or physical and mental disability. In 2007, the good priest entrusted “Yesuvanam” and 35 hectares of land to the Servants of Charity to continue the same work of mercy and love for the more neglected and underprivileged in the area.

Since then, “Yesuvanam” has become a center of prayer, of work, charity and joy, like another house of Nazareth. Following the example of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, three priests, one religious brother and twelve young seminarians moved in and set some serious plans for themselves. These Guanellians and future Guanellians are continuing the legacy of St. John de Britto and Fr. Sengol. They are reaching out to the poor, sheltering the homeless, feeding the hungry, giving medical attention to the wounded and restoring human dignity to the abandoned.



“Yesuvanam” is now re-flourishing. The bushes, the thorns and the weeds are gone. The land is ploughed and a borewell has been dug for irrigation. The relentless and extremely hard work of the religious Community has enriched that land with a variety

of crops and trees. They worked under stressful conditions with their bare hands without the proper tools and equipment.

The new farm is an astonishing example to the local population. It can be done when faith, heart and determination work together.

The soil is reddish, not the same dark red soaked by the blood of St. John de Britto, but sodden by the sweat of the priests and brothers who, like the early Benedictine monks, spread the good news of Jesus through their generous commitment, prayer and work.

The Servants of Charity now reach out to the poor and teach them how to take advantage of the gifts God has endowed abundantly on people and nature.

Recently a large gazebo was built next to the main building where the Servants of Charity are living and working, caring for a group of disabled people.



It is a multipurpose pavilion used for the programs of health care, rehabilitation activities, prayer and socialization for the sick and disabled living in the surrounding area.

“Jesus’ Garden” became more attractive with the addition of this “Temple of Love.”

Here, every day, many people marked by the stigma of poverty and illness, find friends welcoming them with open hearts. They receive food for their hunger, and healing for their body and soul. Their hope is restored so they can face the challenges of life with serenity and trust in God who never abandons the poor He loves.

The Servants of Charity and the poor from “Jesus’ Garden” in Sivagangai invite you to be part of the great adventure. They are in need of a tractor for poor farmers to cultivate more land. They need a new borewell as the old one becomes dry as they plough more land. On a smaller scale, they need wheelchairs and medication for the sick.

Your assistance will show these poor people that the Church and God did not abandon them. They will experience the gift of Providence coming to alleviate their suffering.

Contributions can be sent to: *Servants of Charity – India Project – Pious Union of St. Joseph.*

Mercy Flows through your Servants in Sivagangai

“Gather the poor in our house, they will bring the Grace of the Lord” – Blessed Luigi Guanella

A man named Thammappan, who appeared to be mentally ill, was roaming a 10 km stretch between two villages of Sivagangai daily. Our hearts were filled with compassion whenever we saw him and we tried to give him money and food, but he threw it in our face and yelled vulgarities at us. We were afraid to go near, but with time and patience, we were able to give our compassionate love to him.



Early one morning while he was walking along the road, a motorcycle hit him and his leg was injured. The men gave him

some money and left. Since everybody thought Thammappan was mentally ill and furious, nobody cared for him. His wound became very severe, to the extent that he was unable to move. Fortunately, Bro. Achariyam saw him staying in the bus stop near our gate and we determined to help him, come what may. We called a nurse from the nearby hospital, but Thammappen



would not allow him to come near. Then Bro. Achariyam and the confreres began trying to befriend him by bringing him food and drinks, but without success. His condition was still worsening. Finally, Bro. Achariyam put fainting tablets in the tea so that we could go near him. The Guanellian Fathers and Brothers cleaned and dressed his wound, gave him a bath, haircut and a shave. It was like the compassion of Mother Theresa in our lives. We thanked our founder for giving us the courage to help those crying out, "Lord, I have no one."

After seeing our love and hospitality, Thammappan, who was now conscious, had a little smile on his face. We all thought that he was mentally ill, but he started to speak with us as a normal person. We are continuing to give him food, medicine and dressing for his wounds. He is our new part-time family member, a new Jesus abandoned to our house. We thank God for allowing His blessings and mercy to flow from the Servants of Charity in Yesuvanam.

Thammappan continues to go on his daily walks, but he never forgets our love and concern for him. He is accepting our gifts of food, medical care, personal hygiene and companionship. Through the intercession of our Blessed Founder, we have been able to 'Give bread and the Lord' to one of the least of God's children.

The Angel Who Visited the Earth

Angelica was the greatest gift we had ever received. She was born with an angelic glow about her, and even when she was crying, this little girl was sweeter than anyone else in the world. At age one Angelica was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. It was the biggest shock of our life. Hence, our struggles began. We wanted her to get well, so we took her to the best doctors, the most renowned hospitals and world famous physiotherapists. But her story was to be a story of pain, which she suffered with patience in quiet resignation.



In many ways, Angelica was just like other children; she wanted to run, she liked new socks and party dresses, she enjoyed watching her mother cut vegetables, she loved music and she wanted us to tell her stories. She had a demure look in her eyes and a flirtatious way about her, but her best asset was her smile. Angelica's smile gave us happiness at home, rest when we were tired, cheer when we were discouraged, sunshine when we were sad and it was the best antidote when we were troubled. Now we long for her smile.

She loved visitors; boys in general and the Guanellian Priests and Brothers in particular, and many people visited us. They were not always consoling. Some said we did something to displease God, we stepped out of His favor, and He was punishing us. But is our God a punishing God?

Some brought flowers and sang hymns. But, the flowers faded, the hymns seemed dissonant and we were left by ourselves to face the pain.

Some said, "Have faith. Angelica will be cured." We never questioned God's supernatural power, but how could we convince Him of our sincerity? In the midst of our pain, faith was impossible to grasp and the notion of mustering it seemed exhausting.

Some people said, "Thank God for allowing you to suffer like this." We became angry at these words. Our pain was so great, we wondered if God

took delight in hurting us, dashing us against sharp stones, and torturing us until we cried out, “God we love you for doing this to us.” But we couldn’t say it.

The priests and nuns made us feel like we were on a special mission. They told us that, “You have been appointed to suffer for Christ and He will reward you. God chose you because of your great strength and integrity. He is using you as an example to others. People’s faith will increase because of your response and you should feel privileged, not bitter.” They continued, “What we see as adversity, God sees as opportunity.” At times, the notion of being privileged martyrs appealed to us. But other times when Angelica’s pain increased, we called out, “God, why Angelica? Why us? There are millions of Christians stronger and more honorable than we are. Couldn’t you choose one of them instead?” We wondered why God would deliberately place hurdles in the path of someone He loved.

Some people said, “Remove the oxygen. You have done enough; let her go. You have your lives to live. How much more can you borrow in order to sustain her life?” This made us angry. How could we live the rest of our lives after killing our only daughter? Besides, our love for Angelica grew, and was unconditional and pure.



There were other visitors, the Guanellian Fathers and Brothers.

They understood our pain and consoled us, mostly without words. From the day they met Angelica until the day she died, they became closer to us physically, morally and spiritually. They helped us in the hospital, cleaned the house, made sure we had food, wiped her saliva, prayed for her, prepared her Holy Communion and even when breathing her last breath, they held her hands with silent prayers in their hearts. They prayed the whole night in our house. They carried her coffin, and prepared a meaningful service for her final journey. They continue to visit us.

We are grateful to our loving Guanellian Fathers and Brothers. May God bless them.

Jonny and Maria, parents of Angelica

“He Whom God Loves Dies Young”

After seven years of constant prayer, Jonny and Maria were blessed with a child March 5, 1999. As Mary journeyed with her son Jesus in His suffering, these parents journeyed with Angelica in her suffering, abandoning their own pleasures in life. This sinless child suffered severe physical and mental disability, particularly the last couple of years due to lung failure, spinal cord damage and complete physical collapse, which lead her to spend her days on a Nebulizer. Though the financial burden for her medical care was great, her parents left their jobs for the greater vocation of loving and caring for their child, depending entirely on Divine Providence. They hardly slept and meals were erratic because they rarely knew what time of day it was. They were able to do all these things with the helping hand of God.

The Guanellian community became familiar with this family in 2006, when they began to visit her on Sundays. She received Jesus in Holy Communion in their chapel October 24, 2006, the Feast of our Founder. Thus a lasting bond was formed.

November 10, 2009 was the day of her last moments of agony and suffering. Jonny called Fr. Visuvasam to inform him that Angelica was in her final moments and to ask him for spiritual support at these last hours. As soon as Angelica saw Fr. Visuvasam, her heartbeat returned to a normal level momentarily. After a few hours, two novices came to assist them. She closed her eyes, her breathing lowered and at 2:25 p.m. she was born into eternal life.

The Guanellian Fathers and Brothers remained with them through the night by praying for her soul in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The funeral mass was celebrated in the chapel November 11, 2009.

Death may be the golden key that opens heaven’s door. But dear Lord when it takes our dear ones it moves us to tears. Grant her rest and peace after her long journey to Calvary.

Novices Dileep and Fernandez





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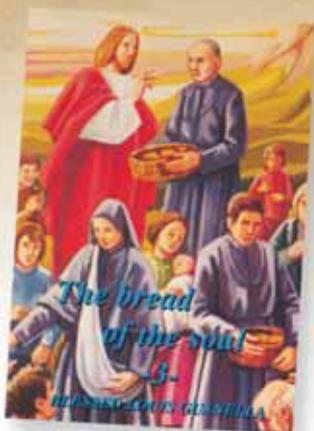
For more information or to make a pledge, please call the Pious Union of St. Joseph Office Monday–Friday at 517-522-8017.

Send email to piousunion@pusj.org.

THE BREAD OF THE SOUL

VOLUME 3

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



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

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

Volume Three offers a **Moral and Love** perspective. He encourages and illustrates the benefits to live the values of a Christian life.

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

Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC

The spiritual writing of Fr. Guanella contained in *The Bread of the Soul* is now available through the Pious Union of St. Joseph. This summer, another special booklet of prayers is also being made available to our readers; *The Holy Cloak in Honor of St. Joseph*. Send your request and a donation to The Pious Union of St. Joseph, 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake, MI 49240.

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

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

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

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Wed 8:30 a.m. followed by Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament

Benediction: Wed 4:45 p.m. • **Divine Mercy Chaplet:** Wed 4:30 p.m.

Holy Rosary: Before Mass • **Stations of the Cross:** Friday at 11:00 a.m.

Anointing of the Sick: First Saturday during 11:30 a.m. Mass and when requested

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