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THE VOICE OF PROVIDENCE

AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 2015

EUCHARISTIC COMMUNION:

Encountering Christ in My Neighbor

FEATURED STORY ON PAGE 9

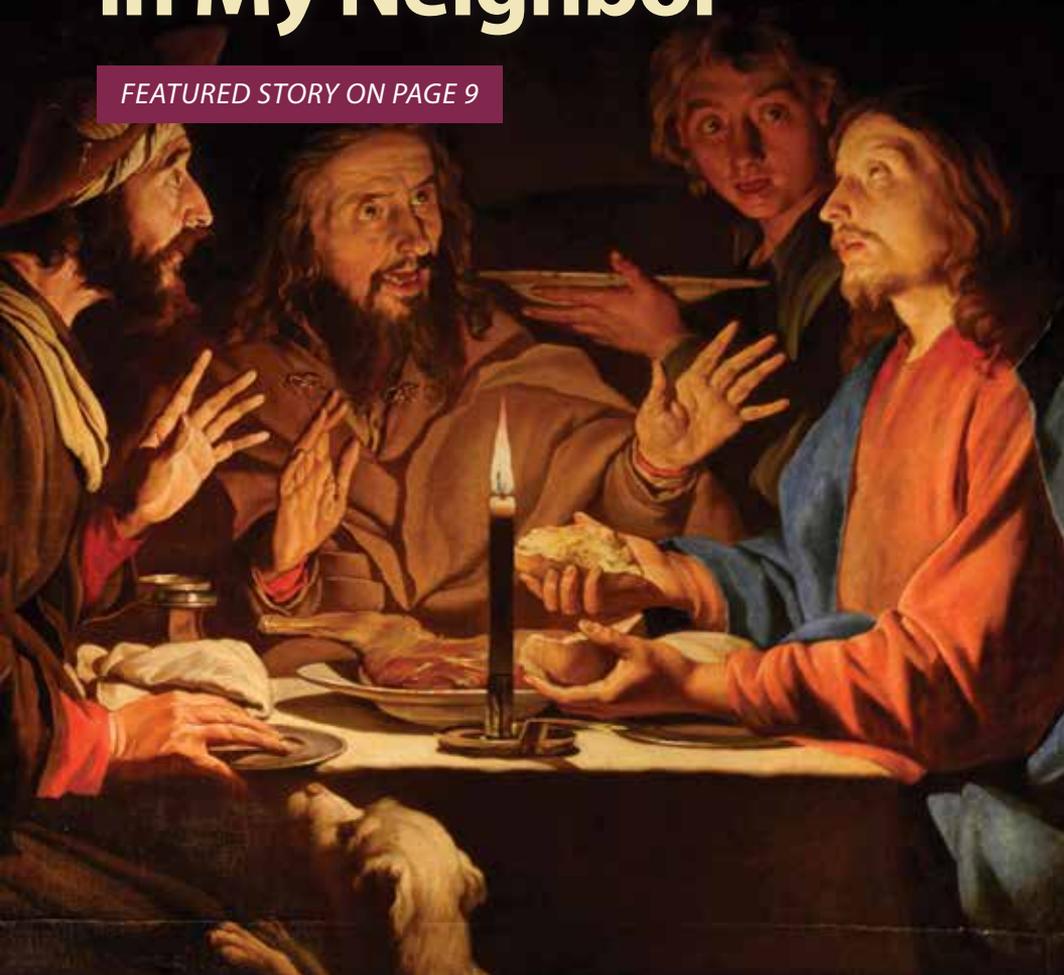


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Published By:

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

953 East Michigan Avenue
Grass Lake, Michigan 49240-9210

517-522-8017 voice 517-522-8387 fax

PiousUnion@pusj.org

www.servantsofcharity.org

www.pusj.org

Editor In Chief: Fr. Joseph Rinaldo SdC

Editing Team: Joe Yekulis, Kelly Flaherty,

Fr. Satheesh Alphonse SdC, Dawn Nicoson

Sr. Ann Huber DSMP, Tom Herron

Photos: St. Louis Center Archives,

Joseph Yekulis, Kelly Flaherty

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

The Voice of Providence: Is a non-profit bi-monthly publication of the Divine Providence Province of the Servants of Charity, a Catholic Religious Congregation founded by Saint 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.

Center image: *Birth of the Virgin* was painted in 1690 by Francesco Solimena probably in Naples, Italy. It is currently in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but not on display. For more information please visit www.metmuseum.org.

HealthcareWorkers

By FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, SdC

Since the end of World War II, people are healthier and live longer. However, the older we get, the more health maintenance we need.

We have more and better hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, assisted living homes, and similar facilities. I visit all these places to see friends and benefactors and for my ministry. All healthcare facilities have a good number of employees. Some people work in these facilities because they need a job, but they do not stay long. Working in these facilities is a job and a vocation. Healthcare workers have a human and spiritual mission and healthcare facilities can become places of Evangelization.

The Church says to the sick and the elderly, “You are neither alone nor useless because, united to the Cross of Christ, you contribute to His salvific work.” And with the same emphasis of hope the Church also addresses professionals and volunteers in the health field, “You have a singular vocation that requires study, sensitivity and experience.”

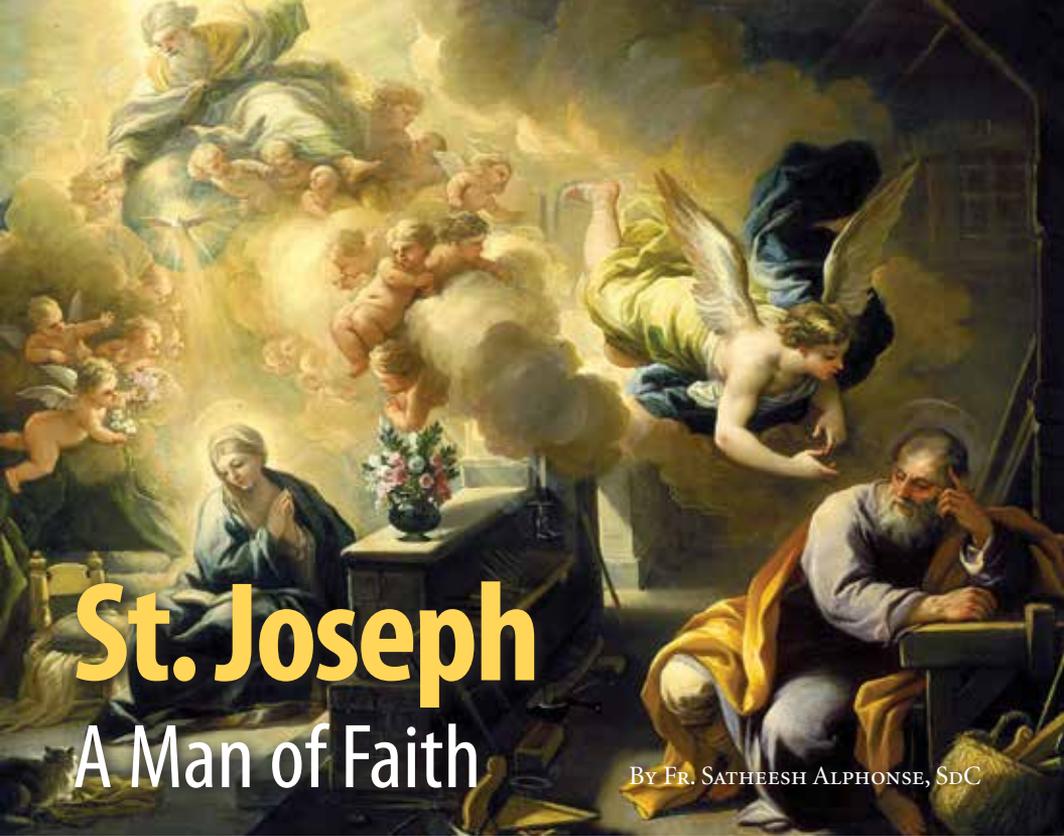


The “Christian way of suffering” is the only truth capable of responding to suffering and of bringing comfort to the sick without illusions. Christ did not suppress suffering; nor did He explain its mystery: He took it upon Himself, and this is sufficient for us to understand its whole value. St. John Paul II addressed the healthcare workers assisting the sick on pilgrimage to Lourdes with these words, “Of this Christian way of suffering, you are the qualified experts! Your being Catholic, without fear, gives you a major responsibility in the sphere of society and the Church: this is a true vocation, as has been recently witnessed to by such exemplary figures as: St. Giuseppe Moscati, St. Ricardo Pampuri, St. Gianna Beretta Molla.” And this is a duty of the new evangelization even in times of economic crisis that decreases resources to protect health. Precisely in this context hospitals and support structures must re-think their role to avoid healthcare becoming another piece of merchandise subject to the laws of the market, a good reserved for a few, rather than a universal good to be secured and defended.

The special attention owed to the dignity of suffering persons can never be forgotten. The vocation of the health worker is to serve every man and the whole man in the different stages of his existence. It is to be hoped that the language of the “Christian way of suffering,” which is molded by compassion, solidarity, sharing, abnegation, gratuity, the gift of self; becomes the universal vocabulary of those who work in the healthcare field. From this perspective, hospitals are seen as privileged places of evangelization, because that is where the Church becomes the vehicle of the presence of God and the instrument of a new humanization of man and of the world. Only when the well being of people in their most fragile and vulnerable condition is secured, can the hospital be understood as a place in which the relationship of care is not a career but a mission; where the charity of the Good Samaritan is the first place of learning and the face of suffering man is the face of Christ Himself.

Now more than ever our society needs “Good Samaritans” with generous hearts and with arms open to all with the awareness that the measure of humanity is essentially determined by the relationship between the suffering and the provider by going beyond the clinical approach. Healthcare workers, especially the Catholic ones, chaplains and members of religious orders who work in healthcare have a fundamental role in this respect. It is their first duty to allow the glory of the risen crucified Christ to appear in the diversified care of health.

The dear persons who are sick are silent witnesses, an effective sign and instrument of evangelization for the people who care for them and for their families in the certainty that no tear of those who suffer or those near to them is lost before God. They are the brothers of the suffering Christ; and with Him, if they allow Him, they save the world!



St. Joseph

A Man of Faith

BY FR. SATHEESH ALPHONSE, SDC

St. Joseph—the foster father of the child Jesus—quiet, humble, submissive, patient, and loving; yet a man of conviction, strength, fortitude and dedication—seems out of place in a modern world where materialism, fragmented families, sexual promiscuity and selfish pursuits are the norm.

Ironically, it is precisely because of his nature that St. Joseph is so valuable to us today as Christians in a troubled world.

He is, like many of the ancient patriarchs, a beacon of light in the darkness; he is, like those patriarchs, also a father of faith—a faith Albert Nolan defines as “a radical reorientation of one’s life.” This is precisely the notion St. Joseph had to embrace in the context of his role as the guardian and father of the Messiah in the story of salvation. St. Joseph’s voice was his life of faith; through this, he showed the world how to sacrifice the self by cloaking himself in the very nature of the Father of us all.

When we look at the life of St. Joseph, one significant feature that emerges is his silence. He is a man of action whose behavior emanates the meaning of faith. Immediately after presenting the genealogy of Jesus, Matthew turns his attention to the circumstances of

Jesus' conception. When Joseph discovers that Mary is pregnant, he immediately plans to dismiss her quietly without bringing shame to Mary and her family. However, as soon as he is made aware in a dream that the child was a product of the intervention of the Holy Spirit his behavior changes. He believes. He follows that dream. It is a radical turning point because the Gospel writer clearly says that St. Joseph was intending one course of action but God wanted him to do something else. He doesn't question it. Instead, he makes himself ready for it. He accepts God's plan and lives it.



As a result of such faith, the life of St. Joseph was not an easy one. He had to confront many such hurdles in order to live his faith. The birth of Jesus immediately brought on other hardships. St. Joseph was ready to settle down accepting his new responsibilities as the head of the family. But God had other plans. “Flee to Egypt,” says the Angel to him and he follows. Going to Egypt required a complete reorientation of Joseph's goals for his new family. It is a challenge full of unknowns and dangers. Yet Joseph—silent and obedient in his faith—places his trust in God. Like Abraham and Moses before him, Joseph sets aside his own desires and wishes and follows the will of God.

Certainly, as many scholars argue, God had His hands in the formation of Joseph as the foster father of His Son. God prepared the time and place for His Son to be born and predestined Mary to be His Mother. In the same manner, why should God not have predestined St. Joseph to be the father of Jesus, the Savior of the world?! The beauty and wonder of St. Joseph lies in these special gifts from God; they are such that he reflects the very nature and qualities of God, the Father.

The reason that we revere St. Joseph for such a wonderful faith is because he was able to abandon the self and totally embrace the will of God. Because of this, he was able to accept the difficult and challenging shifts in life, which God required of him, in humble silence. He became a model for Jesus by trusting in God completely and abandoning his will to the Father. God invites all of us to do the same: to open our hearts and mind to His will, to trust the reorientation that such faith does to our lives, and to have that loving trust and patience seeking to follow God in every decision that we make in spite of the fact that it is difficult. Modeling the spirit of this great saint can enable each of us to turn away from the stresses and pressures of the world and discover, as St. Joseph did, the peace and joy in the simplicity of a life lived in love and faith.

The Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us,

Christ, have mercy on us,

Lord, have mercy on us,

Christ, hear us,

Christ, graciously hear us,

God the Father of Heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, One God,

Holy Mary,

Saint Joseph,

Illustrious descendant of David,

Light of the patriarchs,

Spouse of the Mother of God,

Chaste guardian of the Virgin,

Foster father of the Son of God,

Watchful defender of Christ,

Head of the Holy Family,

Joseph the just,

Joseph most chaste,

Joseph most prudent,

Joseph most valiant,

Joseph most obedient,

Joseph most faithful,

Mirror of patience,

Lover of poverty,

Model of workmen,

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

have mercy on us.

have mercy on us.

have mercy on us.

have mercy on us.

pray for us.

Glory of home life,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Guardian of virgins,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Pillar of families,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Solace of the afflicted,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Hope of the sick,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Patron of the dying,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Terror of demons,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Protector of the Holy Church,	<i>pray for us.</i>
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,	<i>spare us, O Lord.</i>
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,	<i>graciously hear us, O Lord.</i>
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,	<i>have mercy on us.</i>
V. God made him master of His household,	<i>R. And put him in charge of all that he owned.</i>

Let Us Pray.

Almighty God, in your infinite wisdom and love you chose Joseph to be the husband of Mary, the mother of Your Son. As we enjoy his protection on earth may we have the help of his prayers in Heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers to St. Joseph

O glorious St. Joseph, you who have power to render possible things which are impossible, come to our aid in our present trouble and distress. Take this difficult affair under your particular protection that it may end happily.

O dear Joseph, all our confidence is in you. Let it not be said that we have invoked you in vain, and since you are so powerful with Jesus and Mary, show that your goodness equals your power. Amen.

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

ShrineNews

FR. SATHEESH ALPHONSE, SDC

The month of May has been a very eventful month with two important celebrations. May 1st being the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, we had special celebrations at the Shrine.

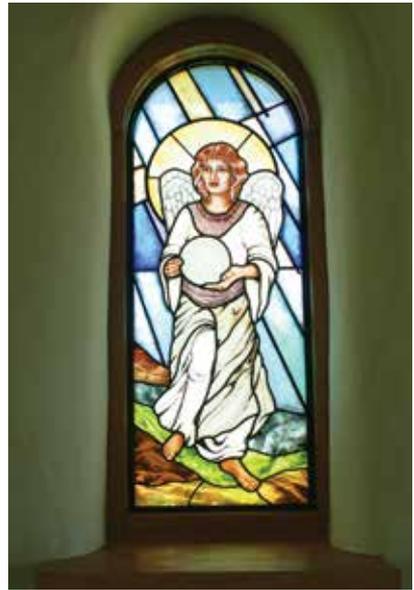
After the usual morning Mass, we had a special time of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the evening. Adoration began at 7:00 p.m. and we recited the Evening Prayers of the day solemnly followed by the rosary specially dedicated to St. Joseph. The prayer time concluded with benediction and a special prayer for workers. Then the pilgrims gathered for a time of sharing along with some snacks. St. Joseph was the inspiration for the day.

The month of May is dedicated to our Blessed Mother. May 3rd was designated to be the day for May Crowning. No other day could have been better since it was a perfect day for a Eucharistic Celebration in the Grotto. Immediately after Mass, we prayed a living rosary around the central area next to the Grotto. All who came for the mass participated in the rosary and singing. As we sang the final hymn, 'Immaculate Mary,' all the faithful moved towards the Grotto where Annalies Walsh, who had received her First Holy Communion the day before, gave the crown to Mary Parrish to crown our Beloved Mary. The celebration ended with a pot luck. The day was certainly blessed by our Heavenly Mother.

At the end of the month, two new stained-glass windows were installed behind the altar adding color to the Shrine Church. This project has been in the making for some time and due to the cold weather, was somewhat delayed. The two angels on either side of the altar presenting the host and the chalice give spiritual meaning to the celebration of the Eucharist in the Shrine.

The main project that has been in the making recently is the Stations of the Cross on the Shrine grounds between the Grotto and the Calvary. It is in the beginning stages; so far we have installed the posts. There are many other things to accomplish before the stations come to completion. We would like to offer our supporters opportunities to donate towards the set up of each station as well as the maintenance.

Each station dedication will cost \$200. The cost for the pathway throughout the Stations of the Cross will be \$1500.



The Pious Union of St. Joseph

Mailbag

Dear Father,

I am sending you these pictures of our little angels who pray to Saint Louis Guanella everyday for the people in need who have asked for their prayers. I am one of those people. Last March I was diagnosed with Stage IV Renal Cancer. Prognosis was not good. Surgery was risky, because of cancer that had spread to the vena cava, adrenal gland and lymph node. My liver had to be lifted, to remove cancer, and the risk of a clot could have further complicated the surgery. Msgr. Bolger had given me a holy card of St. Louis. I never knew how tied he was to special people until Msgr. Bolger told us on his canonization.



Well needless to say, I prayed, everyday. My surgery, to the surprise of my surgeons, went off without a hitch. As they described it....all clean cuts, not what they expected. A few months later, cancer spread to my lungs. We attacked with a clinical trial, six weeks later, gone. My prayers had been answered, I would return to my angels, able to teach again. My doctors will always talk about my stay in Intensive Care, that lasted one night. I had the surgery on a Friday and was home Tuesday evening. They have never seen such recovery before. I will say to them, you guys are good, but you had so much help! They agree! I missed 6 days this year. I continue to pray to St. Louis and tell my children his story. We call him our Patron Saint. So many times I feel anxious or worried, I turn to the comfort of my go to saints; St. Theresa, the Little Flower, St. John Neumann, and St. Louis Guanella. They place my prayers at the Feet of Jesus Christ. I am blessed to be among the Angels on earth and privileged to teach them of the Great Saints of the Church and the love that God shows us everyday.

God Bless You and the work you do.

Sincerely,

Debbie Getz

Our Lady of Consolation Day School

Willow Grove, PA

Encountering Christ in My Neighbor

By SR. BRENDA McHUGH, DSMP

People have asked me, “What is the point of worshiping together at Mass?” I have also heard the comment, “I can commune with God in nature or read the Bible in my room. I feel God closer when I pray to Him in solitude, rather than with a crowd whom I hardly know.”

The answer to this question lies in understanding God’s mystery of communion. When I speak of God’s mystery of communion I am referring to the unity of three persons in one God. God’s Trinitarian presence is one of communion between and with one another. In this pouring forth of love, we see an example that vivifies us, restores us and invites us to share in this same communion.

God, as Perfect Communion of Persons in the Trinity, is present in the Eucharist. It is in and through this Trinitarian presence manifested in a particular way at the Eucharistic Celebration that we are called to communion with God and with one another.



“COMMUNION IS AN INVITATION TO SHARE IN GOD’S OWN LIFE, THE LIFE OF THE TRINITY. JESUS HIMSELF GIVES US THE EXAMPLE OF COMMUNION WITH NEIGHBOR. WE FIND THIS IN HIS TEACHINGS AND IN THE EARLY LIFE OF THE CHURCH. JUST AS JESUS DREW NEAR TO HIS DISCIPLES AND FORMED THEM INTO A COMMUNITY, THEY EXPERIENCED THE CLOSENESS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”



Communion is an invitation to share in God's own life, the life of the Trinity. Jesus Himself gives us the example of communion with neighbor. We find this in his teachings and in the early life of the Church. Just as Jesus drew near to His disciples and formed them into a community, they experienced



the closeness of the Kingdom of God. As such, they related to one another in ways that were marked by truth, loving service and reciprocal sharing. Jesus' mission and ministry on earth exemplified this. His prayer at the Last Supper implores this for us: "That they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."¹ Communion is a summons to live the *koinonia* of the early Church who "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."² St. Paul refers to the word "sharing" as communion, "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."³ Because we share in the Body and Blood of Christ we are one with Jesus and are brought into communion with one another.

Contemporary theologians continue to draw on scripture to elucidate the significance of this Trinitarian communion to our life of communion within our Christian communities. Michael Himes explains that the Church's worship, especially around the Eucharistic table, is grounded in the fundamental metaphor: "God is love" (*agape*).⁴ "The least wrong way to talk about God, the reason why there is something rather than nothing is because 'God is Love.'"⁵ In worship, we gather together as a community, recognizing Christ in one another as well as in Word and Sacrament.

Himes continues to explain the role of the community: "Pure and perfect self-gift is not possible without the community aspect of the Church."⁶ We can only come to know God in relationship and we recognize this in the fact that God is a community of persons in the Trinity. That is why friendship is the most basic religious experience. To

¹ Jn 17: 21 NRSV.

² Acts 2: 42.

³ 1 Cor 10: 16-17.

⁴ 1 Jn 4: 8, 16.

⁵ Michael Himes. "Ecclesiology" Class Lecture, July 11, 2011.

⁶ Ibid.



be human is to be capable of friendship and in that experience we gain the language to talk about God and to God. When I realize that I am loved into being, I can share the delight of everything that is with God. I can see you and me, as God has always seen us: as good. This experience allows me to love as God loves: without expecting anything in return.

Jeremy Driscoll further develops Jesus' prayer for unity at the Last Supper: "God's desired destiny for the human race is that it share Trinitarian life."⁷ The celebration of the Eucharist is in invitation to participate in this Trinitarian life. As we reflect on the various parts of the Mass, we will see the unfolding of the Trinitarian mystery and share in God's Trinitarian communion.

The initiative toward communion is on the part of God. This reality is wonderfully made manifest in the Church's worship. He calls us to assemble together. We are drawn together by Christ. God is the head of the family and we the Church, the family members, gather around the Eucharistic table to be nourished and to nourish. We are not alone. As a community, we come together to worship God, to strengthen one another in our union.

The very act of the celebrant of the Mass entering in procession with the servers and ministers signifies that we are not alone, but on a journey together.⁸ As we gather from all different walks of life to celebrate the Eucharist, we raise our voices in song.

⁷Jeremy Driscoll. *Theology at the Eucharistic Table*, (Herefordshire: Gracewing Publishing, 2005), 185.

⁸ Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, (IEC) "The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with One Another Theological and Pastoral Reflections in Preparation for the 50th International Eucharistic Congress." (June 10–17, 2011) 56, at The Holy See www.vatican.va, (accessed July 20, 2013).

“Our singing at Mass is a fusion of voices into one voice that expresses the fact that we are this people one heart and soul, giving glory to God.”⁹ It is amazing to think of our song as an expression of our oneness as God’s people who come together to worship and pray and to be fortified by Love itself.

At the very beginning of the Eucharistic Celebration God’s mystery of communion is evident as we mark ourselves with this sign of communion: “In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” We recall our own baptism and the fact that we share in God’s own life through the grace conferred on us. As we sign ourselves, we profess our faith in the Trinity and we call upon this Perfect Communion of Persons to bring us to be one. When we respond to the greeting of “The Lord be with you” with the words, “And with your spirit”, we acknowledge the fact that



Christ is already present within and among us, and that he wants us to be with Him—in the very heart of God.¹⁰ Sin causes division. Jesus’ redemptive sacrifice commemorated in the Mass brings us communion in that it heals us from sin. In the Mass we participate in God’s reconciling action through Jesus Christ by offering ourselves, but through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are made present to Jesus’ death on the Cross as we are bound together in communion.¹¹ As part of the Penitential Rite we confess that which has severed our relationships. But even in our brokenness, there is a heartfelt solidarity in recognizing our sinfulness and in our need for forgiveness.¹² And so we ask for forgiveness as a community and as individuals. In our prayer together we become conscious of God’s unfailing mercy.

It is a comfort to know that Jesus enters into our brokenness and walks with us on our journey, just as He did with the Disciples of Emmaus. As we gather together, sharing our journey with one another and with Him, we recognize His presence in the breaking of the bread and in this encounter, we cannot but share who we have encountered with others. We have encountered Love and through our relationships with other members of the community we continue to build one another up and support one another in the Love of Christ! Personal prayer is important, but our journey is not easy when traveled alone. Thanks be to God for the grace of my fellow travelers and believers who manifest God’s presence to me!

⁹ Ibid, 60.

¹⁰ Ibid, 61

¹¹ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical on the Eucharist in its relationship to the Church *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 2003) 13.

¹² IEC 2012, 63.

An Unsung Heroine

BY SR. ANN HUBLER, DSMP

If it's true that behind every successful man there stands a woman, then the woman behind Fr. Guanella was Sr. Marcellina Bosatta. She, with her sister, our Blessed Clare, were among the small group of ladies formed by Fr. Charles Coppini, pastor of St. Martin's parish in Pianello, Italy.

Sr. Marcellina was made Superior and Directress of the small group. Before he died, Fr. Coppini told them: 'Be content with the will of God! After me will come another, who will do much more than I!'

With the vacancy of the parish upon the death of Fr. Coppini, it was suggested to the Sisters that they withdraw from performing their charitable works, but they did not follow this advice. With faith the Sisters waited, and their waiting was not in vain.

Sr. Marcellina had heard about that "hot-headed" priest and was very cautious. But after reading certain articles of the same Fr. Guanella, the hearts of the two sisters began to unburden themselves and entrust themselves to the direction and zeal of the newly arrived pastor. After some time Sr. Marcellina approached Fr. Guanella and asked if he would mind giving the Sisters some conferences. And that was the beginning of a holy and fruitful partnership.

For more than thirty years, Sister Marcellina learned from the living words of Fr. Guanella, and still more, from his example, how to love, suffer and immolate herself for souls and for the poor.



.....

“She was the foundation stone upon which the constructor was able to build the plain and sturdy edifice that became the Guanellian Family.”

.....

Close to Fr. Guanella, she thus became the Superior of many works, and the Mother of numerous Daughters of his spirit. She was also “mother” to one or other of the first Servants of Charity, whom she considered and loved as her own.

Fr. Guanella, the hard-working father let rise and multiply the Houses of Charity amid numerous difficulties and oppositions. And Sister Marcellina, the silent and laborious Mother, hidden but whose presence was felt, was recollected in prayer and in union with God. She remained close to Fr. Guanella to inform him and to care for various needs; but also to aid him in the various financial matters, either to preserve them or increase them, and furnish the more or less abundant savings of charity.

She assisted him with her maternal charity of good judgement, suggestions and admonitions.

She was the chief instrument in the hands of our Founder. She was the foundation stone upon which the constructor was able to build the plain and sturdy edifice that became the Guanellian Family.







Guanellian Lay Movement in **INDIA**

By STELLA JOHN, GLM PRESIDENT

I am Stella John, residing in Bangalore for over 25 years. I have always loved to do the mission work of God, to be a Good Samaritan. As a youth I was involved in a lot of social service activities and this gave me a lot of rewarding joy. Years went by and I continued helping the needy. However, I was in search of some group where I could belong and share myself and my mission. This took place when I got introduced to the mission of the Servants of Charity. Fr. Visuvasam, whom I can call my spiritual director and a good friend, introduced me to the beautiful world I was looking for.

It took me a few months to understand the mission; but each time I visited I was awestruck by the kind of service the Fathers and Brothers did. The amazing aspect of it was that they did their service with joy and love. For me it was a learning experience and I started to reflect about my vocation and why Jesus took me here. I was puzzled, yet the Spirit always told me that I belonged to this place. Soon my visits to Guanella Preethi Nivas became very regular.



Each time I visited, I learned more about how to be humble and left with a spirit full of joy. This was enough for me, and after two years, I made my promise as a Guanellian Cooperator. Being in front of God and promising to walk His path was a divine feeling. I cherished this moment. It was a connection between me and Jesus with no words to explain. I looked at St. Louis Guanella and prayed to him: "I don't know much about you but there is definitely a reason why I am here today and I will know you better."

At GPN I met some wonderful souls who were lay cooperators like me and we motivated each other. One of them, Emaculate, made me realize that we need to be faithful to our promise and do justice in whatever we do. These words linger in my ears constantly and push me to different dimensions to give my best. I enjoy working with the members, Fathers and Brothers. It's a beautiful relationship we share and today it's not just me who's drawn to the congregation but everyone in my family is a contributor. What a blessing it was to have my brother Gerald make his promise as a cooperator!

This was indeed a moment of joy for me as my brother seemed a bit away from God and now he is in this beautiful ministry.

Fr. Visuvasam trusted me and gave me a lot of responsibilities: an amazing learning experience for me as I understood the congregation better.



I write projects, give talks to students from the university who come to our mission house, address the parents' meeting in the house of the Sisters who take care of the differently abled. I was nominated to be the General Secretary of GLM India. I am part of the Oratory program where I get a chance to assist, teach and guide poor children.

Lately, in a quest to grow as a Guanellian, I started to overcome my hesitations to serve the needy, not just financially, but also by sharing my time and love. Today I feel I am a better Guanellian and I will continue to serve the Lord this way. It feels good to know that Guanellian Cooperators are the third wing of the Congregation, canonically recognized by the Church. I am very happy today and someday I would like to serve the Guanellian mission on a full time basis.

I thank the Congregation, especially our Provincial Fr. Soosai Rathinam, Fr. Visuvasam and Fr. Gnanaraj who trust me so much and encourage me in every step of my life, both personal and spiritual.

DEFEND US IN BATTLE

BY KELLY FLAHERTY

AS SCHOOL GETS UNDERWAY FOR ANOTHER YEAR,
LET US TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT UPON ST. MICHAEL
THE ARCHANGEL WHOSE FEAST IS CELEBRATED
ON SEPTEMBER 29TH.



If you recall, St. Michael is the angel who defeated Lucifer and his rebels, casting them out of heaven. He is most popularly depicted wearing a suit of armor. His very name means, “who is like God.”

In this day and age, especially if your children attend public schools they are faced with many challenges that could harm their immortal souls. A game known as the “Charlie, Charlie Challenge” which invokes demons to come and communicate through a rudimentary “yes/no” matrix, has been trending on social media. It seems like a harmless little game asking “Charlie” to answer a simple yes or no question, but the problem is that Charlie is a demon. It might seem harmless, but invoking evil will always have consequences when the salvation of



our souls is involved and the devil doesn't care how he enters as long as he is allowed in. For more information on the Catholic teaching regarding demons and the occult read the Catechism of the Catholic Church beginning with paragraph 2110.

Please talk to your children about the existence of evil and demons in today's world. Help them to discern where they might be hiding in popular culture: games, books, movies or tv shows. Teach them that the only way to get the right answers is to ask God Himself. Take them to Adoration, teach them how to pray, and most especially don't send them out without being properly 'armed.' Let them know the power of the Sign of the Cross in moments of fear and recite the St. Michael prayer together before they leave the house, everyday:

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all evil spirits who prowl throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen



August 5:

The Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major (Our Lady of the Snows)

BY FR. SILVIO DE NARD, SDC

If you have the grace to go to visit Rome, it is mandatory to pay a visit to the four Papal Basilicas: Saint John Lateran, the Pope’s cathedral; Saint Peter’s in the Vatican; Saint Paul Outside the Walls; and Saint Mary Major.

The latter is also called the “Liberian” Basilica, because the first building, today totally disappeared, was built by Pope Liberius. It is the most ancient church dedicated to Mary present in Rome, if not in the whole of Christianity. Thus Mary is present in Rome, next to St. John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, and the two “columns” of the Church, Peter and Paul.

They are called Papal Basilicas because only the Pope can celebrate Mass at their main altar placed at the center of the church’s transept. Except for St. Peter’s Basilica, each of them has a huge marble throne leaning against the wall right in front of the altar. Only the Pope can sit on it since time immemorial. No other cardinal, or bishop, or priest can do that. I remember years ago when, young and dumb as I was, I tried to get a photo taken on the steps of the throne in St. Paul Outside the Walls. I hadn’t yet touched the

first step when two Vatican security guards were on me like two wolves. My white collar saved me from something worse.

So, to sit there, I have to wait for the day when I will be a Pope. But that could happen if the Holy Spirit were to go on vacation.

The history of the Basilica is a charming tale of a popular tradition, of an assured theology and of a healthy devotion.

1. Popular tradition. On the night of August 4–5, 358 AD, snow fell on the Esquiline, one of the Seven Hills of Rome. Advised in a dream to build a church in that place in honor of the Virgin Mary, Pope Liberius and a rich and pious layman devoted themselves to this mission. In memory of that, in the course of Vespers of the feast, petals of white roses fell from the vault, to the great delight of the faithful and tourists who hurried to gather them, as if they were gold dollars. That is the popular tradition.

2. Assured Theology.

The early modest church disappeared to give way to the splendid Basilica whose dedication we recall on August 5. It was built under the pontificate of Pope Sixtus III (432–440 AD). Now, in 431 AD, at the time of the ecumenical Council held at Ephesus, the Church declared it legitimate to give Mary the name, “Mother of God.” It was not, at first,

about honoring the Virgin, even less so of transforming her into a goddess, but rather, to go to the root of the Christian faith in the Incarnation. God became man in the person of His Son. He is called Jesus, “God saves,” Emmanuel, “God with us.” He was conceived in and given birth to by a woman, Mary.



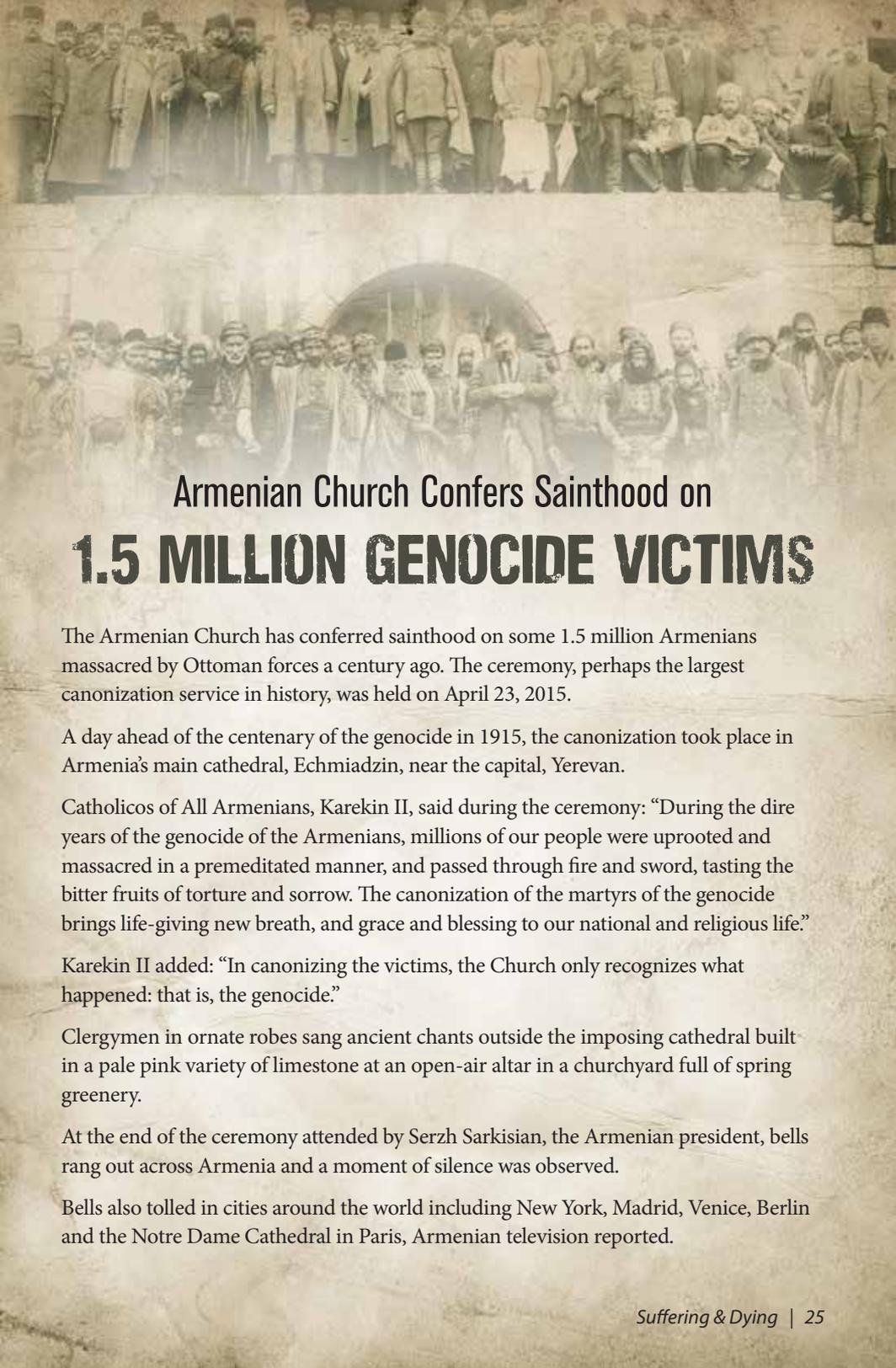
“Saint Mary Major includes a representation of the crib and, it is said, a relic of the authentic manger. Regardless of the effective historicity, it is beautiful and profoundly Christian, to express the realities of the faith in the very visible signs: it is a ‘sound devotion.’”

She certainly is not the source of His divinity but she is the one through whom the Son, who merits the name “God” as the Father, was really united to humanity. An infinite honor was bestowed on her and also on us. A woman of our race merits being called “Mother of God,” as we say in the Hail Mary.



3. Healthy Devotion. The Roman Basilica is the monumental homage that the fourth century Church of Rome wished to render to the Mother of God. Mary gave birth to her Son. This happened at Bethlehem. “She wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and placed Him in a crib.” This is why Saint Mary Major includes a representation of the crib and, it is said, a relic of the authentic manger. Regardless of the effective historicity, it is beautiful and profoundly Christian, to express the realities of the faith in the very visible signs: it is a “sound devotion.”

This Basilica is very dear to Romans. They invoke the Mother of God there as “salvation of the Roman people.” She is, therefore, dear to the Bishop of Rome, the Pope. On the day after his election, Pope Francis went there to entrust his ministry to her whom one of his predecessors, Blessed Paul VI, proclaimed, during Vatican Council II, “Mother of the Church.” He returns there, early in the morning, just before beginning any travel outside Italy. Like a very nice gentleman, he offers her a bouquet of flowers and then he kneels for a prolonged personal prayer.



Armenian Church Confers Sainthood on **1.5 MILLION GENOCIDE VICTIMS**

The Armenian Church has conferred sainthood on some 1.5 million Armenians massacred by Ottoman forces a century ago. The ceremony, perhaps the largest canonization service in history, was held on April 23, 2015.

A day ahead of the centenary of the genocide in 1915, the canonization took place in Armenia's main cathedral, Echmiadzin, near the capital, Yerevan.

Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin II, said during the ceremony: "During the dire years of the genocide of the Armenians, millions of our people were uprooted and massacred in a premeditated manner, and passed through fire and sword, tasting the bitter fruits of torture and sorrow. The canonization of the martyrs of the genocide brings life-giving new breath, and grace and blessing to our national and religious life."

Karekin II added: "In canonizing the victims, the Church only recognizes what happened: that is, the genocide."

Clergymen in ornate robes sang ancient chants outside the imposing cathedral built in a pale pink variety of limestone at an open-air altar in a churchyard full of spring greenery.

At the end of the ceremony attended by Serzh Sarkisian, the Armenian president, bells rang out across Armenia and a moment of silence was observed.

Bells also tolled in cities around the world including New York, Madrid, Venice, Berlin and the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, Armenian television reported.

Why I Became a Priest

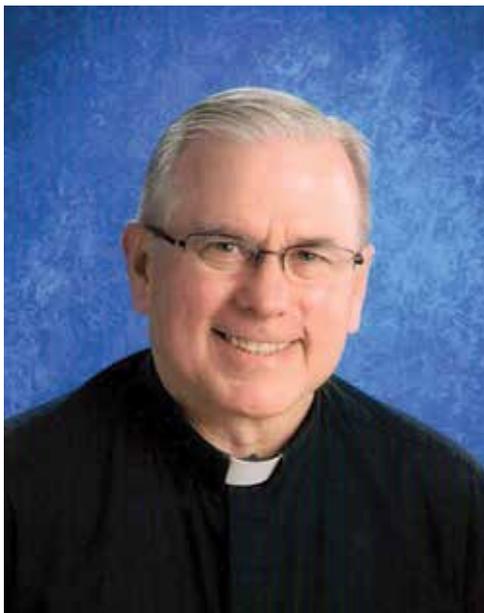
By FR. TIM NELSON

Why would a cardiologist become a priest? It seemed like a crazy idea to me, too, but now I can see that God was preparing me for the priesthood over many years.

It all began around 1957, when I was six years old. I was attending Sunday morning Mass, sitting in a front pew of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Dubuque, Iowa, where I grew up. I remember seeing the parish priest and my childish brain thought, "The priest gets to be with God all day, every day, but I only get to be with God for one hour each Sunday!" So then, I thought, "I want to be a priest!" That's how it all began, as best as I can remember.

The idea of the priesthood stayed with me until my senior year in high school when I went to the prom and later in college when I started to date seriously. I thought to myself, "I'm not sure I could be a priest. I would rather get married. Besides, what does a priest do?" I was majoring in math and physics in college and astronauts were landing on the moon. I wanted to do something really important in life. I couldn't figure out what a priest does. I knew he said Mass and sometimes was a nice guy but beyond that, what did a priest do? So, I took a year off from college and taught English in a private school in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. It was there that I met a lay missionary from Malta who was a medic in WWII and had a practical knowledge of medicine. He would go to the surrounding areas and give people shots of penicillin and sulfa - and they got better! You could see the improvement of their lives right before your eyes! That's when I decided to become a doctor. I returned home and finished college and got accepted to medical school at the University of Iowa.

During my fourth year of medical school I met a lovely young x-ray technician who became my fiancé during my internship year at Blodgett Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She was Lutheran and I was Catholic. At first, this didn't seem to make a big difference, but as time went on, I found myself talking more about my Catholic faith.





I realized then how much it meant to me. One day, she said she wanted to use the pill. “Oh my goodness,” I thought, “no longer is this a theoretical question! I have to make a decision one way or the other.” So, we did what any normal Catholic boy and Lutheran girl would do: we each got a copy of Pope Paul VI’s encyclical “*Humanae Vitae*” regarding the regulation of birth. This encyclical reiterated the long-standing Catholic teaching against contraception. We spent a week apart to read the encyclical. When we got back together, I asked her what she thought. She said the pope made some good points and was probably right, but she still wanted to use the birth control pill! At that point, I felt that if I gave in to contraception, I would, over time, give in on other beliefs of my Catholic faith.

While still considering all this, I remember driving to the hospital one morning thinking to myself, “I’m not sure I should get married.” A very clear voice in my mind said, “No one is saying you have to get married, that’s what this time is for.” I pulled into the parking lot of the hospital, got out of my car, and when I closed the door, I knew that I would not be getting married. It was not an angry or bitter thought; it was a very peaceful thought. I called off the engagement—which was a heart break for her. About a month later, we met and she said that after reflecting, she realized it may not have worked out in the end. In truth, she did not want to have children. She wanted

“I began to see a connection between my work as a physician and the possible role I could fulfill as a priest. People hurt and need healing in many ways. The priesthood is one way to deliver medicine for the soul.”

to live a doctor's wife's lifestyle. I began to consider that if we had gotten married, it might have lasted about five years or so. And since there is a history of alcoholism in my family and since I am something of a workaholic, who knows what path my life would've taken had we gotten divorced? In any case, I felt deeply grateful for that much maligned papal document which, I felt, saved me from a lot of future heartache.

This experience helped me better understand the Catholic Church in her teaching role. The Church takes a lot of philosophy and theology and boils it down and presents it in a way that helps people understand what they need to know to live well and get better. Similarly, as a physician, I have to take some fairly sophisticated physiology and anatomy and boil it down and present it to patients in a way that they can understand to help them live well and get better. I began to see a connection between my work as a physician and the possible role I could fulfill as a priest. People hurt and need healing in many ways.

The priesthood is one way to deliver medicine for the soul. Also, as a physician taking care of the body, I gradually came to a much greater understanding of the soul.

Gradually, the childhood dream of becoming a priest no longer seemed so crazy. I began to see the priesthood as something I could do and should do.

So, after several more years of preparation, I entered the seminary at 44 years of age. I was ordained four years later on June 10, 2000. Thanks be to God!

Throughout my time of discernment, I put myself under the care of Our Lady of Fatima—to protect me and lead me along the way that her son, Jesus, would have me go. I have experienced her loving intercession and now I find myself at St. Mary Star of the Sea parish in Jackson, MI. Thanks be to God, now and always. Amen!



Providence Soup Kitchen

FR. FLORINE LICAVOLI, DSMP, DIRECTOR OF PROVIDENCE SOUP KITCHEN

Not far from the downtown area of Chicago, located in the lower level of St. Stanislaus Kostka Shrine and Parish, you will find the Providence Soup Kitchen. It opened its doors to the homeless and needy almost thirty years ago under the direction of Sr. Ann Schaffer and the late and beloved Bishop Conway.

It began with a simple meal of hearty soup and a sandwich, and soon progressed to a healthy meal for all who came through its doors. At present we can serve almost 25 guests at a time, however the line of people who are waiting wraps around the courtyard. As the guests finish their meal, another group filters in to take their places. This continues until all the guests are served, and can vary from 70 to 110 or more on most days. They are all welcomed to the table of the Lord.

We are blessed to have wonderful volunteers each day of the week. They are generous and enthusiastic helpers and add much vitality to the program. They serve the soup, meals, desserts and beverages, and attend to the various needs of our guests.

We refer to those who come to our soup kitchen as “our guests” as Jesus would expect us to do. They receive the respect and dignity they deserve.

They are all ages, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and come from circumstances that we have probably avoided, by the grace of God. We greet each of them with a smile and show a personal interest in them as individuals. We ask them how they are enjoying their meal, and this makes them appreciate being recognized as people of worth.

We make every effort to make nutritious and healthy meals that we know they will enjoy. The holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and patriotic days are special as well. We have groups that will furnish necessities such as socks, hats/gloves, soap/washcloth, deodorant, toothpaste/brushes, etc. There are other generous benefactors who will make snacks and bags of candy, healthy lunch bags, all of which we send with them as they leave. Our kitchen is His “Divine Providence”, reassuring them that it is God who provides for their needs and in this way shows His personal love for each and every one of them.

They feel blessed in their own way, and express their gratitude, and we are blessed and privileged to serve each one in God’s name.



The Pious Union Library:

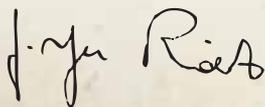
Don Luigi Guanella:

His Story is Called Hope

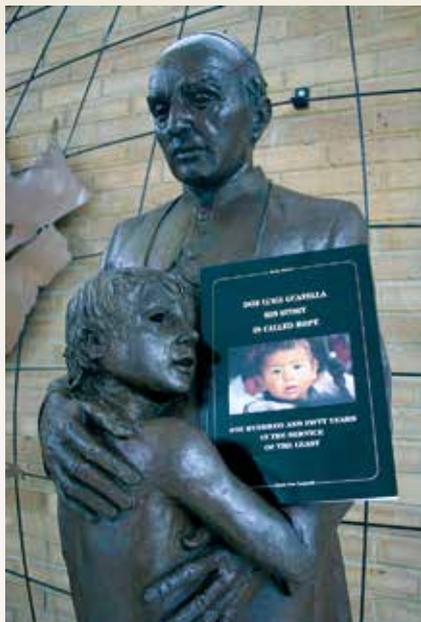
This story is more than just a biography of St. Guanella. It is a pictorial and poetic journey through the most significant events of his life and the impact he made on others.

Fr. Mario Carrera guides the reader visually through St. Guanella's journeys and draws you into his charisma; helping you to understand how he was able to attract so many holy and dedicated people to follow in his footsteps.

Fr. Mario's story begins in Fraciscio, Italy, leads you around Italy, through the lives of his disciples and into South America, India and Europe. This biography will awaken your desire to become a humble servant of the Lord; keeping your eyes and ears open to seek the poor, hear their cries and bring to them, "bread and the Lord."



Fr. Joseph Rinaldo, SdC



Adopt a Seminarian



Today the Servants of Charity have five hundred priests and brothers in twenty-one countries. In addition, there are numerous seminarians in various stages of formation in Guanellian seminaries throughout the world. They are devoted to completing their studies. Many hope to go back home where they can spread the Word and bring the Guanellian Charism to their countrymen.

The formation process for SdC seminarians combines spiritual growth with academic studies and technical training. The process can take six to eight years and is intended to prepare them to make the permanent vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience and to fulfill his priestly or brotherly ministry among the poor. Many of them come from poor countries.

“Adopting” a seminarian can make a huge impact. For the cost of \$1 a day (a cup of coffee or a donut), you can help make a young man’s dreams of becoming a priest or brother come true. Can you give up that coffee or donut to make that happen?



Sacred Heart Church

Fr. Silvio De Nard
118 Taunton Ave.
East Providence, RI 02914
tel: 401-434-0326
sdn249@hotmail.com

Pious Union of St. Joseph

Fr. Sathesh Alphonse
953 E. Michigan Ave.
Grass Lake, MI 49240
tel: 270-556-7789
sathesh08@yahoo.co.in

Daughters of St. Mary of Providence

Sr. Beth Ann Dillon
108 Ridgeview Ct.
Grass Lake, MI 49240
srbethann@gmail.com

Are you being called to serve
God's "special people" through
Consecrated Life as a Servant
of Charity or Daughter of
St. Mary of Providence?



To become a member of the Pious Union of St. Joseph or to extend membership to prayerful friends and relatives, please send names and addresses to 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake, MI 49240 or email piousunion@pusj.org

Shrine of St. Joseph Sacraments and Hours of Devotion

Mass times: Sun 10:00 a.m. • M, Tu, Th, Fr and Sat 11:30 a.m.

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

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

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

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

Confession: Before and after Mass, upon request

To receive the Monthly Shrine Bulletin and all special event mailings, please contact the office at 517-522-8017 or send email to piousunion@pusj.org

Pious Union of St. Joseph
953 East Michigan Ave.
Grass Lake, MI 49240
Phone: 517-522-8017
Email: piousunion@pusj.org

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