

## **Acknowledgments**

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## PREFACE

*The ever growing desire of fidelity to the Founder and to the conviction of becoming effective instruments of the New Evangelization have urged the Guanellians in this last decade to reread their educational patrimony with a serious and documented approach. This work began in September of 1986 and continued with an abundant exchange of reflections, which involved all the components of the Guanellian family, the sisters, the priests and brothers, and all the laity however involved in the mission field. It was resolved to proceed with the courageous work of revision, reinterpretation, updating, and of delving into the educational experience of Fr. Guanella, keeping in mind the ongoing validity of his basic assumptions and the timeless history of his expressions.*

*This research, in particular, had to respond to a concrete need to offer to educators a frame of reference, a synthesis of the characteristic aspects of the Guanellian educational action (inspiration, contents, style, areas of intervention, environments and typical structures) and thus to facilitate the drafting of the "local educational plans" in which this essential perception would have to be united with the needs of the dis-*

*tinct populations to be assisted and with the physiognomy of the numerous educational centers differing in work by location and culture.*

*The fruit of this wide research is now committed to these pages. It is dedicated primarily to those who work in the Guanellian mission. It is extended, as well, to those who choose the Guanellian style in their educational plans.*

*Terminology aside, this work reflects solid Guanellian tradition. In fact, the idea of an educational framework runs parallel with our centennial history.*

*Inspired by Don Bosco, Fr. Guanella conceived the notion of an educational system. Since the beginning of his mandate as a Founder he added his own components, made necessary by situations and institutional differences. With the "Saint of Turin," he called it the "preventive system" referring to it as the central nucleus, the unifying principle and soul of his educational activity.*

*During the 40 years dedicated to his works, he strove to apply his system and compelled all to apply it diligently. He was a master of its application, introducing a wealth of plans and programs which he faithfully recorded in his Regulations.*

*Repeatedly, he exhorted his own not to neglect study and research. He expected his followers to keep up with the times, new educational theories, and current needs. Exactly 90 years ago Fr. Guanella wrote "Education...is extremely delicate care. It does not receive sufficient attention. A little manual of the preventive system...would be a treasure for the Institute, and of great general benefit."*

*Fr. Leonard Mazzucchi, second successor to the Founder, kept interest in the system alive. His was a qualified voice of the Guanellian tradition. He recognized the precious heritage which had been handed down. As the developing Congregation began to address new and different cultural, social and religious situations, he faced many challenges. Now, more than ever, it became necessary to have a common, written, and theorized frame of reference; otherwise, there would be a risk of losing the identity and the vital bond of unity within the Guanellian educational mission.*

*Fr. Mazzucchi had foreseen the necessity of such a manual and its importance in the future of the Congregation. A little less than 10 years before his death, he made the first attempt to doc-*

ument the preventive system in an organized manner, resulting in his book, *Manual of Behavioral Norms*. The composition is not scientific by today's standards; however, it has the merit of being the most thorough educational and pastoral vision the Guanellians have had to date.

Now, with the Basic Document for the Guanellian Mission, we proceed a step further. The proffered synthesis is based upon the aforementioned reasons and within the direction of our Founder and our tradition. One can note, however, much has been gained in perspective and depth by the efforts of research and actualization.

In the Document there is a constant reference to the condition of those whom we serve and to the environment in which they live. It serves to point out the kinds of expectations they issue, especially those in line with the Gospel; the needs of truth, freedom, human growth, desire and — even if only implied — the need of the knowledge of the mystery of God.

The "preventive system" is the heart of the Document. Therefore it is not presented as a closed and rigid experience. Inspiring strength, it graces our manner of understanding educa-

*tion, educational relationships, the individual, and the work of the educators. It especially assists our people in developing their full potential toward self improvement.*

*Findings of modern educational sciences and timely pastoral resources offered by the Church are effective and innovative parts of this Document.*

*These times have been defined as those of the New Evangelization. This Document is a child of our time. Education and evangelization are separate activities. However, in the text they are integrated. Education authenticates evangelization when it is applied, essentially, as part of the salvation of the whole being. In such cases, education becomes deliverance from the multiple conditions of poverty and abandonment, social and cultural slavery, freedom from sin, and growth in Christ even to sanctity. Consequently, educators become evangelizers when they embody a love freely given, inspired by the charity of Him who anticipates His grace to every creature with His Providence. God follows each with His Presence and saves the person by giving His Life.*

*Finally, it is worth mentioning the unconditional confidence which this Document carries*

*for education, in general, and preventive education, in particular. Such an educational tradition has been proven, in Christian experience, as one of the best expressions of the evangelical precept of charity.*

*This Document is a precious instrument. With its sound elements of actuality and efficiency, it has acquired the value of a message seeking to inspire hope and to alleviate fatigue in our time; a time burdened with apathy and cultural conformism which is rampantly spreading into the educational field.*

*May this be so for the Guanellian family from whom these pages ask for a vital and creative collaboration urged by a human and Christian "passion" for the poor. May the many whom we hope will come to join in this "adventure" be so graced as well. This is an adventure rigorously founded on the evangelical harmonies between creation and redemption, between nature and grace, where every human being discovers the full meaning of life.*

*Rev. Nino Minetti, SC  
Superior General  
Servants of Charity*



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# INTRODUCTION

## MEANING AND VALUE OF THE DOCUMENT

### 1. Nature

The present document offers an educational system, both in theory and practice, which the Institutes of Father Guanella intend to follow in their multiple charitable activities toward the development of persons and peoples, particularly those tried by material and moral poverty.

This system is built upon the Christian values of life and of the human person as perceived and lived through a special charism, by Father Louis Guanella and his followers for over 100 years.

This document is not an educational treatise, nor a handbook of prescriptions guaranteeing a successful education. Rather, it systematically expresses the educational values derived from the Guanellian charism. These values are meant to saturate interpersonal relationships, educational activities, rehabilitation, assistance, pastoral work, and plans for both goals and performance.

In this way, the essential elements of Guanellian education are outlined, indicating our specific style of human development and communication. These elements are a reality which

maintain its vital force even in changing social or cultural situations. It is capable of enlivening, with a Guanellian spirit, the relationships between persons as well as individual and group activities.

Since this document represents the Guanellian educational heritage, it has the value of a constitutional document for all activities carried out by the Institutes of Fr. Guanella.

The term “education”, consequently, does not mean “scholastic”, but it applies to all fields of charitable and promotional service of the Guanellian mission such as rehabilitation, assistance and ministry.

## **2. Sources**

This document draws its initial inspiration and content from the Word of God, read with Guanellian hearts and eyes which have been endowed to us by the Spirit. In the Word we come to know the intentions of God for the human person and the world. We become familiar, as well, with the Lord’s educational method throughout the history of salvation.

The second source is the Wisdom of the Catholic Church. As authentic interpreter of the

Word of God, it indicates to humankind, in changing times and culture, the lasting value of human dignity and the sure paths for integral promotion of the person and nations.

The teaching and the life of our Founder, together with tradition and the present Guanellian experience, constitute another important source for this document, insofar as they contain the typical values of our educational system.

Also, the poor, in their existential situation, offer invaluable indicators on what really matters for the human being, on that which fosters integral human growth and on that which hinders it.

The document also acknowledges human sciences. They assist us in understanding persons, life, and history in their most profound reality and stages of development.

### **3. Value and Validity**

This document is the main source of inspiration for all the educational plans and programs of the Guanellian Family and for all those who are attracted by the charism of Father Louis Guanella.

It is a guide and a frame of reference for the drafting and evaluation of all Guanellian educational plans and programs worldwide. It is designed, as well, for specific geographical and cultural areas and for particular activities.

The endorsement of the Major Superiors appraises the document as a path of fidelity to the Founder, a response to the requests of the Church and to the expectations of men and women of good will in the field of human development.

We do not claim this document to be complete and perfect. It stands open to contributions from science. Moreover, a wealth of input is expected from further research into the Guanellian charism and its educational merits. The diversity of experiences of this same charism, as applied in multiple cultures, will further add value and quality.

#### **4. Recipients**

This document is directed, first of all, to all the members of the Guanellian Family: the Servants of Charity, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, and the Cooperators.

Called to share the charism of Father Louis Guanella at various levels, they need to strive to carry it into a daily lifestyle, in practice and methodology.

The Document also addresses every educating Guanellian community and its members, the recipients of our educational and pastoral service and their families, the employees and volunteers, and whoever, meaningfully, takes part in the activities of our centers.

The Guanellian educational package constitutes a set of values to be accepted, respected and implemented by all according to their roles and responsibilities.

Furthermore, the document intends to serve all those inspired by the way of life and education of the Guanellian charism. We include those connected with our mission of charity, such as our friends, alumni, volunteers and benefactors.

Finally, the content of this work is proposed for those who, seeking an effective educational avenue, discover the ongoing validity of the Guanellian educational insights and methods.

FR. GIANCARLO PRAVETTONI, SC  
*General Councillor*





## BASIC DOCUMENT FOR THE GUANELLIAN MISSION

### *Premise*

#### **1. As Church for the Promotion of the Poor and a More United and Fraternal Society**

Our educational commitment has its basic 1  
premise in a call from God. He has chosen us as  
living stones of His Church, making us sharers in  
the charism of our founder, Father Guanella. He  
sends us as a people totally dedicated to the full  
elevation of the poor and to the spread of charity.

Our activity partakes in the mission of the 2  
Church, constituted and sent by Christ to pursue,  
in history, His work of evangelizing the poor and  
gathering the lost children of God.

Following the example of Mary, Mother of 3  
Providence, we witness the merciful love of the  
Father through our charitable work. We repre-  
sent Jesus, who healed the sick, did good to all  
and gave His life to reconcile people with God  
and among themselves.

Our educational service is, therefore, a way of 4  
evangelizing and is our specific contribution to  
the mission of the Church.

We intend to act in the name of, and in union 5  
with, the Church. As its living members, we put

our activity at the service of evangelization. At the same time we seek to find in the Gospel the best path for the development of persons and peoples.

## **2. With a Specific System of Life and Education**

- 6 In fulfillment of our charitable and evangelical mission, we intend to follow the footsteps of our Founder, embodying his preventive system of education in our times.
- 7 Father Guanella lived with the poor. He served and educated them in his own style drawing his inspiration, first of all, from the Gospel presentation of God as a provident Father. Secondly, his human experience and personal perception of marginalization impelled him into their service.
- 8 Referring to the Catholic education of his time and to Don Bosco, he named this style the “*preventive system*.” With this name, and through his deeds and writings, he transmitted and entrusted his style to us. In this way he ensured we might have it in our hearts and minds in order to practice it with everyone, anytime and always.

This is not only a method for the promotion of people. It is, foremost, an evangelical proposal for a concrete method of living. Through it we relate to God and others, making everyday life meaningful, and walking with hope toward that fullness of life to which persons and society are called. **9**

Fr. Guanella, himself, summarized for us his system with these descriptive expressions, charged with prophetic strength: **10**

“It is that method of charity, custom and convenience, through which superiors surround their dependents with paternal care, while brothers and sisters surround each other with concern, so that in each day’s work no evil of any sort should come to anyone, and in the path of life all may achieve a happy goal. This is the system of life that most closely follows the model of the Christian life of the Holy Family.”



## Part One

# SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

### *Chapter One*

#### ANTHROPOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

### **3. The Dignity of the Human Person**

In the light of Christian revelation, every human being is made in the image and likeness of God, One and Triune, by whom he is created and to whom he is intrinsically oriented. 11

Here lies the foundation of, and the highest reason for, the dignity each person possesses from the moment of conception, regardless of any personal or social conditions preventing him from exercising his abilities.

Because the human being is made in the image and likeness of God, he is a person, a unique, unrepeatable individual, gifted with intelligence and will, capable of love and of relating to others: God, people, objects. 12

By his very nature he is a social being, functioning in a group and among people. God, from the beginning, created them man and woman, this being the first form of communion among persons. 13

Created by God, in justice, the human person lost His friendship through sin. Consequently, he 14

became miserable and unhappy, frail in body and spirit, a prey to evil and death.

Through Jesus Christ the human person received the extraordinary grace of becoming an adopted child of God, the strength of overcoming evil, the ability to build loving relationships with others and of walking together with them toward the Father.

Created and redeemed in Christ, the whole human person naturally carries a character of sacredness; sacred is the soul, sacred is the body.

- 15 Due to this dignity, every person, regardless of limitations, deserves respect and opportunity for improving his life. This is true even of a life marked by sickness or any form of poverty. Each life is important and valuable.

#### **4. The Needs and Vocation of the Human Person**

- 16 The human person has natural rights, which are the basis for all other rights, the satisfaction of which becomes the exegesis of his ensuing behavior.
- 17 Gifted with reason and freedom, each person feels the need to understand himself and the sur-

rounding reality, of freely pursuing his own development and finding the necessary means toward its implementation.

Essentially open to others, the human person has the need to communicate, to give and receive attention, esteem and love, and to be an active member of a family and of a community. **18**

His ultimate need, which outlines and explains all his experience, is the innate desire of a relationship with God, expressed so poignantly by St. Augustine "You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart has no peace until it rests in You." **19**

Through the experience of these needs, the person may already know his own destiny, even if indirectly. However, in Jesus Christ, the new and perfect person, one may fully discover one's vocation and find the way toward its completion. **20**

In Jesus, the person discovers having been made in the image of God (who is communion) and is called to perfection in loving. He is to live with others as brother or sister, thus forming with them one family. **21**

In Christ, the person discovers also that his intrinsic orientation toward the Absolute is his vocation to share in the intimate life of God and **22**

in eternal life, together with all others as one people.

## **5. The Place and Mission of the Human Person in the World and in History**

**23** The human person has been placed over all creatures to govern them and utilize them toward the glory of God and for personal growth.

From the Creator he has received the world as his home. Within it, all need to find the resources necessary for a dignified life and the ability to enjoy and share the joy of friendship with others.

**24** But the world, freed in Christ from the slavery of sin, is still threatened by a culture of death. Evil and injustice weigh, especially heavy, upon the weakest, often making their living conditions inhumane.

**25** God, in His love as our providential Father, leads humanity through history toward salvation. However, He asks the collaboration of all His children.

Therefore, He calls people and nations to transform the world through charity, so that peace and fraternity may bloom and grow until the coming of the new heavens and new earth.



The poor have an important role in the performance of this task. From them originate the strongest incentives. Great moral and spiritual resources spring forth from the poorest for the recreation of a world according to the plan of God. Even persons limited in their body or mind, can offer a significant contribution of hope and love to human history. **26**

For this reason we believe that, together with the poor, we need to build a more agreeable and fraternal world by beginning to heed their expectations and to appreciate their resources.

## **6. The Dignity and Mission of the Poor**

Our mission places us at the service of persons who, individually or as a group, live in diverse situations of physical and psychological, material and moral poverty, as well as in isolation or under oppression. **27**

Even should a person find himself a victim of frailty, limitations and egotism, he possesses, in our eyes, that same honorable dignity inherent in being human. Therefore, he is considered by us primarily as a person, worthy of respect, esteem

and love beyond any of his needs requiring care and assistance.

**28** On the contrary, his dignity acquires a particular intensity. In his condition he more closely resembles Jesus Christ, humiliated and suffering. He is the most eloquent sign of Him who, being rich, became poor to enrich us.

**29** So, the lives of those enduring poverty, though often socially unproductive, are always precious. Their presence enlightens us to some fundamental aspects of the human condition, that is, the human heart is made to love and to share with others. Love has preeminence over intelligence, self-sufficiency and beauty; the need to give meaning to pain; the call to battle against evil; the aspiration to a future life no longer marked with suffering.

**30** In this way the poor become our evangelizers and educators; their presence elicits love and is a factor in transforming human reality into a civilization of love.

They can be considered a burden only when our love is lacking. In recognizing and promoting their dignity, we recognize and promote our own dignity as persons. In so doing, we actualize the love of God among us.

## *Chapter Two*

### REFERENCE MODELS

#### **7. God the Father, Provident and Merciful**

Our whole concept of education has its supreme inspiration in the faith-filled reality that God is our provident and merciful Father, as has been revealed to us in His response to humanity throughout the history of salvation. **31**

He is a Father who loves us all greatly as His beloved children, treating each with such tenderness as to pledge with us all a covenant of love. **32**

He has profound compassion for each, taking care of us as though we were His only thought and concern. **33**

Although for Him all are equally His children, He is drawn, especially, to those most frail and needy, showing His favors to them.

In every time and event He educates us with strength and tenderness. He accepts each person unconditionally. With wisdom He helps us to grow together toward fullness of life. In trust, He appeals to us to usefully apply all our abilities. **34**

With patience God gathers all into one family. He unites us with bonds of fraternal love and guides us to full communion among ourselves and with Him. **35**

- 36** This delightfully divine psychology not only inspires all our educational activity, but constitutes its foundation and origin, *i.e.*, God, who reveals Himself as a Father who loves and encourages us to make this love the purpose of our life.

### **8. Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd and Good Samaritan**

- 37** It is Jesus Christ who, in His person and life, fully reveals to us the merciful love of the Father and His educational style toward humankind.

- 38** Sent to announce the joyful news of salvation to the poor, Jesus willed to be the Good Shepherd; He who knows each one personally. Walking with us, He leads us toward salvation. He goes in search of the ones who stray, rejoicing when He finds them. For all, He freely offers His life.

- 39** As the Good Samaritan He became one of us, coming to seek us. He knelt over us, bound up our wounds, cured our ills, and led us back to life.

Sacrificing Himself on the cross, He reconciled us all with God and with each other, making us brothers and sisters, children of the only Father.

We receive, from the love of Jesus Christ, the manner and measure of fulfilling our mission. Like Him and with Him, we are called to show to the world that God is the One who provides with the care of a Father for His children. We witness that only merciful love is the true salve for the ills of mankind. **40**

## **9. The Holy Spirit, Vivifier and Sanctifier**

The Holy Spirit, with His love, sustains the life of every creature and continually disseminates goodness into every person and into the world. **41**

With His light He leads us to discern the signs of the times, to understand God's plan for each individual and group, and to find the way to accomplish it. **42**

With His strength, He guides all persons to full maturity. He works gently on hearts to accept true values and moves minds to employ the gifts they have received. **43**

The sanctifier Spirit acts mysteriously with His grace in the hearts of people. His action is effective and, at the same time, respectful of human freedom. **44**

- 45 The Spirit, Giver of communion, encourages all to put their own charisma at the service of others and to arouse fraternal relationships among people and groups. He urges people to courageously overcome divisions and cultivate thoughts of peace. He guides people toward unity, with respect for and appreciation of all cultures.

### **10. The Trinity, Model of Communion**

- 46 The Trinity is the source of that love constituting the soul of our educational mission. The holy Trinity is also the origin and model of that communion which we seek to imitate in our centers and to extend into the world.
- 47 In fact, as presented in Christian revelation, God is the Mystery of the communion of love. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit give themselves incessantly, freely, totally and gratuitously, in perfect unison.
- 48 God gave Himself to humankind so we might share His intimate life and His communion of love. He sent His Son, Jesus, into the world as our Savior. He poured His love into our hearts, through the Spirit, making us His children and brothers and sisters to one another.

Because human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, the Trinity is the most profound truth of the person. The human being exists, drawing the fullness of life only in the reciprocal gift of self, made possible by the power of the love of God and in the measure witnessed by Jesus. **49**

### **11. The Virgin Mary, Tender and Attentive Mother**

Following the Founder and the teaching of the Church, we are inspired by the Virgin Mary. In fact, through her, the love of God revealed in Christ, appears more understandable and accessible. **50**

In the fulfillment of her parental function as Mother of Christ and Mother of all, she imitates, more than any other creature, the educational style of God, highlighting His maternal characteristics.

Mary loves us all, giving us her Son, Jesus, as Savior. She leads us to Him, inviting us to accept His Word of Life. **51**

At the foot of the cross, she receives us all as her children, taking us into her care. She gently

encourages us to endure in hope and solidarity. She introduces us to the understanding of the joyful news of the Gospel and of God's plans. She supports and encourages all good efforts in our life and in our mission.

52 Tenderly, she is present in the course of human history, above all in difficult moments.

With motherly sensitivity, she is attentive to those in need. With a concerned love she hastens to encounter all, anxious that the plan of the Father be fulfilled for and in all humankind.

## **12. The Family, Model of Life and of Educational Relationships**

53 Our Founder intended our centers to be structured analogous to a home. The life style and interpersonal relationships should be, as much as possible, similar to those of a Christian family.

Consequently, in taking the family as a model, we intend to select those universally recognized values belonging to the Plan willed by the Creator. These same values the Holy Family of Nazareth lived in an exemplary way, just as our Founder lived them, transmitting them to us.



In this plan, the family is the natural environment where human life is born and develops and where the person discovers his own identity and finds responses to his basic needs. **54**

The members are united to one another by reciprocal affection and have an experience of communion. Everyone is respected, appreciated and loved in his or her individuality. All strive to be of one heart and one soul, so the variety of personalities is an enhancement to unity rather than a hindrance. **55**

Daily life, with its problems and joys, its plans and resources, is shared in the enjoyment of being together. **56**

According to individual abilities and roles, all assume responsibility toward the realization of the common good. All are attentive to the progress of others as well as their own, caring for one another and encouraging each other.

As a social unit, the family interacts with the society to which it belongs, participates in its life, and contributes to its development. **57**

Aware that its origin is in God, the family lives totally trusting in Divine Providence. From its encounter with Jesus, the family draws availability to the Divine Will as well as harmony with and fidelity to its own educational mission. **58**

### **13. The Founder, Evangelizer of the Poor**

59 The aforementioned models of inspiration have been assimilated and embodied in exceptional and original measure by our Founder, Father Louis Guanella. He opened a new road for the development of people, in particular the poor.

60 Gifted with an extraordinary sensitivity toward discovering and understanding people in need and sorrow, he became neighbor to them. With total generosity he devoted all his gifts of nature and grace for their material and spiritual growth.

61 He embraced the cause of the poor as his own. He chose the most abandoned, taking care of them with the heart of a father, the sharing of a brother, the availability of a friend, to the point of the giving of his whole life.

62 Father Guanella did not limit himself to merely assisting the poor. He sought them out. He felt convinced that "we cannot stop as long as there are poor to be aided and needs for which to provide." With untiring commitment he went everywhere to make charity bloom and grow.

63 His goal was to offer a dignified living condition, opening a way for the poor to develop per-

sonal potentials. In this way they could enjoy the gifts of life and faith in pursuit of the paths of human and Christian fulfillment.

He gave them bread and the Lord, a home and a family, by giving them the knowledge of being persons loved and appreciated, protagonists of their own history and partakers of the journey of humankind. **64**

We look to the Founder as the model of a shepherd and an educator. We perceive his presence in our midst as a father and teacher, continually encouraging and educating us toward a faithful and generous accomplishment of the pastoral and educational mission entrusted to us by Providence. **65**

## *Chapter Three*

### GENERAL GOALS

#### **14. Integral Promotion of the Human Person**

**66** The promotion of the whole person, according to each one's capabilities, is the main objective of our work.

**67** We therefore safeguard the physical well being of people and offer, in cases of illness, as far as possible, suitable treatment and assistance. We implement these efforts even, when humanly speaking, we can't expect any improvement.

**68** The development and the psychological welfare of the whole person is also our purpose.

**69** We strive to keep alive and to increase awareness of human dignity and vocation, helping to open souls to the joy of the gift of life. In the greatest possible measure, each person's potential needs to be stimulated, even in those individuals whose intellectual, affective and decision-making capabilities appear most limited.

In particular, we seek to guide each toward the formation of a good heart, capable of a sincere and wide acceptance of others, sensitive to needs and available for fraternal assistance.

**70** At the same time we provide guidance for people toward a deeper knowledge and love of God perceived and loved as a provident Father,

as well as always to an ever more lively and joyous experience of Him. This, declared our Founder, is the ultimate intention of education.

We are convinced that, in Jesus, the human person may reach the highest degree of relationship with God and fullness of happiness. We strive to promote openness to faith in Him, even to the point of Christian sanctity, while greatly respecting the religious choices of each.

The goal of total enhancement does not only consider individuals, but also social groups and the people among whom we live. 71

Consequently, our action aims at their material, moral, spiritual, and religious advancement, always respectful of their history and culture.

## **15. Spread of Charity**

It was the will of our Founder that all our centers not only strive to live in charity, but also to radiate it to the surrounding community, so as to contribute to the renewal of the world. 72

Therefore, while we enhance the human person, we equally promote love of God and neighbor. In this way everything — persons, social institutions and relationships — may be affected. 73

Specifically, we desire to motivate people's openness to love, allowing themselves to be inspired and permeated by this supreme value, assuming its language and dynamics, consequently putting love into everything.

We invite all to take the commandment of love as a light and guide in their relationships, as radically and as extensively as did Jesus. We can learn from Him to transform love into service, making of our lives permanent gifts to our neighbors, especially to those in need.

- 74 We are also committed to a society, in general, in which no social group or people is left adrift, but in which all may be involved in the progress of civilization. No one must be left behind in life, alone and abandoned. Every human life, especially the weakest, needs to be accepted and surrounded with respect and love.

## **16. Building up Communion**

- 75 The Founder desired our centers not only to form one family among themselves, but also to actively participate in the building up of a united and fraternal society according to the plan of God, to reunite everything in Christ through

love, making of all peoples and nations one big family.

In response to the appeals of the Church and the great need of unity and peace in the world today, we foster a social mentality in which people and nations may recognize one another, not only as equal in dignity, but as siblings, beyond every difference of race or culture. **76**

Faced with contradictions and divisions which tear the fabric of society, we want to contribute to the growth of an environment of respect, acceptance, harmony and brotherhood within families, social groups and peoples. People and nations can then choose the path leading to a life of peace and solidarity. **77**

Since lack of communication creates misunderstandings and divisions, we shall strive to favor dialogue and communication. Thus, people and nations, in appreciating and valuing their respective human and cultural resources, can build unity. **78**

## *Chapter Four*

### SENSE OF EDUCATION

#### **17. Gracious Relationship of Support**

**79** Father Guanella believed that education is essentially a labor of love.

**80** In our system, education is, first of all, a process which puts into communication the interior worlds of individuals in a reciprocal exchange of thought, affection, and assistance.

**81** Education is not a mere sequence of actions performed according to a specific methodology aimed at the growth of the person. It is, rather, a desired and friendly relationship in which one offers another accompaniment in the learning of values as well as assistance for needs. In such a relationship he who receives responds with sentiments of friendship in turn, offering messages and stimuli capable of modifying the personality of the other.

**82** The educational process, consequently, is a path on which we proceed toward maturity together. Each one nourishes his own identity, maintaining his own role and function, while all help and support one another.

**83** In this way, when we seek the growth of the other, we are tending our own growth, and while we foster his advancement, we advance ourselves.



## **18. Process of Self Formation**

Education is, especially, a labor of love because it occurs deep in the heart-source of feelings, thoughts, intentions, creative planning, and decisions. **84**

To educate means to augment the other from within, not to mold him from without. It means to assist another, through a deliberate and systematic process, in the activation of all his energies and in the removal of the conditions preventing his self-realization. **85**

The growth of persons, therefore, is not attributed to external forces. Human growth always happens through the personal assimilation of knowledge and values, even for people with socio-cultural disadvantages, emotional deficiencies and/or severe intellectual losses. **86**

Using imagery, the Founder describes, “the heart of a person is like the soil of an orchard or garden, which produces fruits and flowers when cultivated.” We take this to mean that education is a commitment toward helping individuals to craft their own development. **87**

## **19. Work of the Grace of God**

**88** Education is not only the fruit of human effort. It is also the work of divine grace. We believe it is precisely this grace which makes educational work potent.

**89** God is the protagonist in education. As Father, He continually educates each one of His children by working directly within his or her heart.

He has an invisible but real and constructive relationship with His creatures, anticipating their needs with His love and grace. He urges collaboration toward opening new ways of growth, incessantly giving each light and energy toward the pursuit of perfection.

**90** His grace reaches the depth of people's hearts where human skills fail. It stirs the most hidden resources, producing results which appear miraculous even to the eyes of those so aided.

## **20. Social Dimension**

**91** Education is also a social process. It occurs within and through society.

Its first natural context is the family, whose primary role is educational. The family's first right and duty is the formation of its members in collaboration with the social institutions established for this purpose. **92**

Society as a whole and through its institutions, has a basic educational vocation. The education of the individual is one of its inalienable priorities. **93**

Family and society are not the only units performing educational tasks or providing the places in which they are carried out. They also are environments, capable by their very nature, of affirming education. **94**

Both family and society, in undertaking this mission, must work together, putting forth their best energies, aware that their ultimate goal and most noble accomplishment is the formation of mature and happy people. **95**

## **21. Universal Journey of Hope**

Education is an inalienable right of every person, since it proceeds from each individual's dignity. **96**

It is also an inviolable right of every social institution and of every culture, beginning with **97**

the family, because as agents and vehicles of formation, they have been called to a commitment of improvement and growth for all their members.

- 98** Thus, education becomes a path all humankind can take and an effective possibility of growth for all. On it, all human beings may walk toward their own realization. This is true even for those who, although limited, have the same good fortune of existing as persons and therefore, are destined to the fullness of life.

**Part Two**  
**GUANELLIAN EDUCATIONAL STYLE**

**22. Charity: Soul of the Guanellian Educational System**

Our system of life and education rests entirely on charity, considered by Fr. Guanella as “the infallible rule of religious education,” that is, an education inspired by God’s own style. 99

Charity is the soul and energy which makes the system productive. It is the source and essential element of our educational method. It stirs and informs interior dispositions and the behavior of interpersonal relations. It sets the atmosphere and determines the general work criteria.

Charity comes from God and is expressed toward us as a merciful love, moving us to seek out our impoverished neighbor, compassionately extending oneself to cover him in his need, even at great personal sacrifice. 100

Overcoming barriers of distance and differences, it leads persons to a common bond of friendship.

“Charity,” affirms St. Paul, “believes anything, hopes for all things, bears everything.” In other words, love can find goodness even where it is hidden and believes that everyone can be taught. Love trusts the ways of Providence and 101

the strength of life; supports every sincere effort and bears every difficulty for the promotion of people.

Love has no limits of race, time, or space, so that “the whole world is your homeland,” says the Founder, “and your borders are the edge of the world.”

## *Chapter One*

### FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

#### **23. Surround with Affection**

The principle of affection, according to the Founder, holds priority of time and importance over all others in our educational style, to the extent love is given even before service. **102**

From true love, like a rich reservoir, the most creative ways can spring to benefit the people we assist.

The first way of surrounding people with affection is by receiving each with an open and available heart, as members of the same family. **103**

Our welcome, therefore, evolves into cordial acceptance of every individual and people, just as they are, without judgments.

We multiply our attentions and concerns, as a sign that we care for each even before knowing his problems. We want to be attentive to his needs, to provide for them, shunning merits and demerits, mindful that all have the right to feel accepted and loved. **104**

At the same time we send clear messages of affection, esteem and trust, attesting to how important they and their destiny are to us, regardless of qualities and limits, previous experiences or actual conditions. **105**

## **24. Offer Diverse and Adequate Educational Proposals**

106 With words and example the Founder teaches us that each person need not be surrounded by love alone, but by everything enhancing the growth of his personality. These variables enable each one's progress on a sound path in life's circumstances.

107 Therefore, we strive to make available with consistency, clarity and conviction, every possible plan and educational opportunity. Quality is emphasized, acknowledging that the development of every human being depends, in large measure, on the available formative circumstances.

108 We furnish intense stimuli and educational means, rich in motivation. These should be suitable to the needs of the individual and proportionate to inherent receptive capabilities.

109 It is fitting to keep in mind the locution of the Founder: "Bread and the Lord must never be scarce, but always sufficient in our houses."

## **25. Value the Gifts of Nature and Grace**

110 All projects, on behalf of people, should follow the principle of utilizing their potential of



nature and grace. Present, in a greater measure than it may appear, these gifts are intrinsic to every individual, group, and culture.

In this regard, the Founder invites us to be attentive to the richness and the values of individual persons and of different peoples, and to appreciate and develop even meager resources and aptitudes the best we can. **111**

Let us discover, then, all the emotional, moral, spiritual, physical, and sensory motor capabilities each person possesses as well as all the beautiful and positive elements present in each culture. **112**

Our best educational efforts and suitable materials shall be made available to people and nations so that they can perform to the best of their knowledge and be aware of their qualities, particularly those of the heart, in order to further develop them. **113**

There is no room for prejudice in this educational work. Nothing should be left untried. Skill and virtues often remain hidden or completely buried by limitations and negative circumstances. They can be brought to light and developed by intelligent and creative love. **114**

## **26. Prevention**

**115** In our educational style, prevention is considered a prerequisite for the advancement of persons and communities. It consists in precluding any form of evil, physical or emotional regression, and of avoiding negative experiences.

**116** Our preventive strategy is carried out by placing the persons, communities and society in a position of protecting themselves from dangers and overcoming difficulties caused by social or environmental situations.

This occurs through a constant maintenance and strengthening of physical, emotional and moral resources of individuals and communities. They can then stand alone, able to raise an internal defense against evil and prevent it from taking root in body and spirit.

**117** Keeping in mind the frailty of the physical and moral state of the individuals and the communities we assist, prevention occurs by anticipating and possibly averting occasions of physical, emotional or moral harm by promptly removing them.

**118** We must also avoid the incidence of difficulties overwhelming to those in our care, foreseeing needs and carefully providing for them.

This work of safeguarding demands discernment of what is happening to us and the environment. We must detect danger, single out negative situations and take appropriate action.

The Guanellian preventive strategy enables people and communities to face dangers and obstacles with self confidence and trust in the power of God's grace. **119**

## **27. Encouragement**

"Always encourage," writes Fr. Guanella, "never degrade." **120**

Encouragement is not simply a message of trust toward our neighbor. It is that complex of actions and attentions motivating people towards good, almost unconsciously, leading them toward acceptance, assimilation and incarnation of values.

Encouragement is expressed in a patient and continual action of stimuli and gratification and, furthermore, appreciating and validating all positive efforts even if only symbolically. The practical application, however, suggests blending educational invitations with gentle but decisive recommendations to adhere to values. **121**

- 122** Encouragement avoids coercion and punishments. Even if no other remedy can be found for effective change, one must absolutely avoid anything that embarrasses the dignity of the person and surpasses his ability to understand.
- 123** We must follow instead the path of conviction consisting of a continual and trustful effort to instill in peoples' minds and hearts the love and desire for all that is beautiful, good and true. Then will each understand its importance and taste the joy of living it.
- 124** In times of difficulty and suffering, encouragement becomes a creative duty to prevent depression and keep morale high. One must offer comfort and keep alive reasons for hope.
- 125** This method is used with all, but particularly with those who are suffering more in body and in spirit. "They are never to be scolded," cautions the Founder, "never to be afflicted even when there is obvious reason for fault. Instead, we must find ways to constantly uphold their morale."

## **28. Companionship**

- 126** We walk together with the people entrusted to

our care. Every step of the way, we bring to them the heart of a father or mother, of a brother or sister, traveling the same road toward their greater well-being.

Therefore, we stand by their side as journey companions, not superseding, but respecting individual freedom and autonomy.

We commit ourselves to harmonize with their way of feeling, loving and expressing the joys of their successes and all bitterness of their failures, fears and hopes. **127**

A privileged form of companionship for us is the constant and fraternal presence expressed in making the journey together; there is reciprocity in the leading and guiding. We support them in their good efforts. Simultaneously, we are helped by them. **128**

Attention and beneficial presence is a privileged form of companionship, expressed in the sharing of daily life with the persons entrusted to us. In this way we capture their inner world and necessities. Following their personal events, and intervening promptly in difficulties, we let each one know we care.

Whatever the role or task, each, according to their possibility and needs, must assure this **129**

meaningful presence. In addition to what is strictly requested by our role and function, we need to spend time together for periods of daily life, even when this requires the sacrifice of our freedom, choices and conveniences.

## **29. Dedication**

**130** “Thoughtfulness is required when sharing in the improvement of others; we can never say enough for ours or another person’s development. Education is a labor of each day for every day of living.”

**131** With these and other words, the Founder invites us to work every day with energy, joy of spirit, prophetic courage, and, above all, with love, for the advancement of the needy and poor. He further urges us to make their cause our own, to the extent each one feels called by divine grace.

**132** Following the example of Fr. Guanella, we intend to employ, for our educational goals, the best of the spiritual and material resources Providence sends us, together with the time and gifts of nature and grace.

**133** Therefore we make a commitment to seek anything which better qualifies our work, making it more efficient.

Similarly we invest all our affective, emotional and educational operations on behalf of the persons entrusted to us, employing all our skills, tirelessly, without excluding any worthy initiatives.

### **30. Trust in Providence**

Total dedication advances parallelly with full trust in the Father's Providence. **134**

"We need to work hard," says the Founder, "as if everything depended on us and nothing on God, but at the same time, work with such trust in Divine Providence as if God were doing everything and we, nothing."

In our daily educational activity we are aware that the Providence of God has chosen us. He anticipates us with His grace and assists us now and in the future. **135**

We are assured God reaches where we cannot, knowing how to elicit talents, involvement and growth. **136**

This conviction helps us overcome anxiety and fear, replacing them with hope even in the most difficult situations. It also frees us from the temptation of giving credit to our strategies and so rendering our efforts sterile. **137**

- 138**      Everyone, whatever his role, must work and live every moment with trust in Providence. This consciousness must permeate everything: personal relationships, environment, choices and educational experiences.



## *Chapter Two*

### CHARACTERISTICS OF EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

#### **31. By Way of the Heart**

Education is, especially, a work of the heart. This intuition of the Founder is confirmed by experience and by science, for we desire what we have learned to love. **139**

In the Guanellian system of life and education, therefore, interpersonal relationships, especially educational ones, arise from the heart and develop by way of the heart. **140**

Human relationships originate and are developed through emotions and free will more than through other personal capabilities. They are expressed through internal attitudes and external behavior, conveying all the feelings of anyone who desires the welfare of his neighbor in love.

There are many ways to relate with others. However, in our opinion, the way of the heart is certainly the most inclusive, respectful and efficient. This is especially true when education appears an impossible and useless task, and we do not see sufficient reasons to wait for results. **141**

We believe, even in humanly critical cases, true love succeeds in finding the path to reach the deepest recesses of people's souls and brings a message of, and encouragement for, good. **142**

**143** For this reason, we favor an educational relationship based on and motivated by intelligent love, more than on structure or technical efficiency and methodology.

*a) Interior Dispositions*

**32. Benevolence**

**144** Benevolence is, especially for us, a profound and intense current of affection, opening to a free and spontaneous encounter with our neighbor. It blooms in the heart, inclining it to seek, with all its strength, what is best for others.

**145** Such an attitude leads us to approach our neighbor, first of all, as a person with whom we exchange love, even before help is provided. In this way the relationship is not akin to a giver and a receiver, but is as among brothers and sisters, mutual in loving and caring.

**146** At the same time the spirit of benevolence urges us to look with a generous heart toward individuals and peoples, valuing their needs with an open mind and understanding their limits more with mercy than with justice.

This interior disposition is extremely important to cultivate. Anyone in need and requesting help, looks, as well, for a loving heart. In fact, the Founder reminds us, the more a person suffers the more deeply felt is his need to be loved. **147**

Affection is definitely in a better position to identify needs than are theoretical methods.

### **33. Evangelical Compassion**

Among the interior dispositions giving credibility to educational relationships, Father Guanella greatly valued evangelical compassion. He writes “Let all the members of the house be educated to a lively sense of compassion toward every type of suffering. Compassion exists in human beings and a compassionate heart is a heart blessed by God.” **148**

Compassion is letting one’s heart be touched by the needs of our neighbor and deeply perceiving his cry for help. This is particularly so when the need arises from the vulnerability of the inarticulate and we share the burden of his sufferings as though they were our own. **149**

This interior solidarity, allows us to accept our neighbor’s troubles as “resting in our heart.” It **150**

enables us to communicate with him and to understand his state of soul, his needs and his hopes. We come closer to him, alleviating his sorrow and sharing the responsibility of his journey.

### **34. Solicitude**

**151** Solicitude is an interior attitude which compels us to assist our neighbor in need, who, like the paralytic of the Gospel, lies at the edge of life without human support. Timely relief to the suffering reflects God who, with the loving concern of a Father, provides for his children.

**152** Solicitude urges us to creatively seek all which fosters the full development of each person and to courageously pursue new paths of authentic liberation and promotion, even at the cost of risk and sacrifice.

**153** Solicitude illuminates our perception in emergency situations and in the many tragic forms of poverty present in various cultures. We can, therefore, respond promptly and fittingly within our means and capabilities.

**154** “A Christian heart, one alive with emotion and belief, cannot walk before the needs of the poor without helping them; we cannot stop

responding as long as there are poor to be aided and needs to be served.”

*b) Avenues of Relationships*

**35. Esteem and Respect**

In interpersonal relationships, esteem brings us to consider the other, particularly the neighbor marked by poverty, as an individual gifted with equal human dignity and his own personality. **155**

Esteem is not diminished by human limitations. With esteem we are able to perceive the other and appreciate his interior richness, above all, that of his heart. We are led to seek the moral and spiritual resources within him, which, in persons afflicted by sorrow and oppressed by indigence, are always vast. **156**

Esteem, with a special capability of penetration brings us to see beauty even when it is concealed within a lack of beauty.

Esteem is expressed in profound respect for others and for their inner world, history, background, plans and desires. **157**

In front of the mystery of suffering present within the people in our care, is due so great a **158**

respect that we must never violate their personal dignity or diminish the precious role assigned to them in the cycle of salvation history.

- 159** In assisting with the problems and difficulties daily met by the needy, our respect must be converted into attitudes and expressions of sincere understanding, of “unlimited” patience and of extreme delicacy.

### **36. Trust and Optimism**

- 160** Trust is a rule of great psychological importance. Trust invested generates trust in the other, invigorating his best energies.

With trust we are moved to believe in people and in their goodness and to value even the least of their resources.

- 161** Granting all a reasonable freedom of action and self expression manifests trust.

Faced with mistakes, trust does not withdraw. It works to reaffirm with solicitous charity, encouraging the continuation of the journey with serenity and hope, relying on the help of God, of others and on one’s own abilities.

- 162** Together with trust, a great sense of optimism will accompany and support us.

Optimism is not a product of emotions or opportunism. It is a conviction that good is stronger than evil, that the grace of God acts efficiently upon hearts, and that a person's abilities are far superior to his limitations.

Because of this conviction, we believe, **163**  
despite the problems of persons and nations and the tragedy of certain situations, education always produces good fruit.

This optimism encourages us to conquer fear **164**  
and to initiate challenging educational plans capable of awakening the dormant resources of people and nations and of sustaining their hopes.

Trust and optimism induce us to depend on **165**  
the efforts of others, to await patiently the fruits and to always appreciate the results even when they seem rather meager.

### **37. Confidence and Dialog**

In our system of life and education, our inter- **166**  
personal and group relationships are strongly earmarked by a note of confidence.

“In directing their dependents, superiors solicit simple confidential love, addressing each by his name as child, brother or sister, and dear

friend. Each, in turn, responds, guided by a spirit of love and confidence rather than that of fear.”

167 Confidence is expressed by opening ourselves to one another with sincerity, without fear or intimidation, helping and encouraging each other with advice and fraternal correction.

168 This confidence brings us to establish a frank and spontaneous dialogue, sought not only in specific moments, but also in the various circumstances of daily life.

169 To build and nourish such dialogue we are careful to avoid any erosion of the person’s esteem and reputation; on the contrary, we inform and exchange ideas and experiences, to pursue together what’s best for ourselves and for all.

### **38. Simplicity and Joy, Gentleness and Strength**

170 These final thoughts are a legacy of Father Guanella’s educational wisdom, remarkable, most of all, in their great balance.

171 Simplicity is a natural and spontaneous demeanor between humans. It is not a superficial or artificial comportment. It is a sincere expression of one’s thoughts and sentiments easily



understood even by anyone who has notable difficulties with communication.

Cheerfulness, which reflects exteriorly the pleasure of meeting with others, is proper. It is a manifestation of a joyful accepting spirit. **172**

Gentleness avoids rude treatment; it uses, instead, kindly manners consisting of courtesy and attentiveness. **173**

“Kindness, however, needs to be mature, not tolerating its use for personal convenience. In education we must guard against false compassion that fosters lazy and weak personalities.

To kindness, we add firmness. With patience and strength we eliminate inclinations toward indolence and indulgence.”

## *Chapter Three*

### THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

#### **39. Family Spirit**

**174** Our centers must be characterized by an atmosphere of cordial family spirit, where staying together is pleasant and people feel at ease.

**175** Therefore, we pay particular attention to all those factors favoring a family atmosphere, acceptance, generosity in reciprocal service and sincere interest in the growth of each.

**176** Every relationship is carried out in such a way that authority does not rouse fear, nor the age difference or the role create an obstacle to spontaneous conversation in the multiple daily encounters. Everyone, even the smallest and most frail, must feel useful and appreciated, finding a way of easily expressing his capabilities.

**177** As in a good family, we are careful not to “inhibit” that reasonable amount of freedom which helps to express one’s abilities and to bring to fruition the resources of the mind and of the heart.

**178** Simultaneously, it is important to maintain a balanced order, compatible with the service. A balanced order will protect the common good from egotism and assure a well modulated pat-

tern for relationships between persons, for activities and toward the security of all.

#### **40. Commitment and Serenity**

Other important characteristics of our centers are strong work habits and a great spirit of mutual sacrifice. **179**

Each brings his daily contribution through work, suffering, and prayer toward the growth of all and toward the material and moral prosperity of the center itself.

No one should think of himself as incapable or as having little to offer. All must commit themselves with a spirit of sacrifice and, at the same time, with peace and freedom from all anxiety. **180**

An atmosphere of serenity must permeate our centers. They must reflect our main objective to create environments where persons feel happy and constantly affirmed by signs of love and reasons for hope. **181**

The inevitable tensions, therefore, can be overcome with dialogue and gentle acceptance of others, with reciprocal trust and with a sincere search for the common, not personal, interest. **182**

- 183** In the face of fault and failure, all must open their hearts to forgiveness and understanding, acknowledging that we learn by making mistakes and that from negative experiences we draw lessons for life.
- 184**

Finally, we enjoy celebrations. Within their variety they have an expressive language accessible to all. Through celebration it's easy to manifest and share that found inner serenity which is contagious and soul binding.

#### **41. Morality and Religion**

**185**

“In our houses everyone must improve from day to day enabling themselves and others to progress in virtue. Good morality is the most desirable goal of the house.”

In harmony with this invitation of our Founder, our centers must manifest good moral conduct, encouraging persons in the overcoming of evil and in the acquiring of true values.

**186**

In our facilities we prevent and remove all offending moral character. We propose attitudes and behavior which make life beautiful in the eyes of God and the person: uprightness, justice, mutual understanding, harmony, and solidarity for the vul-

nerable.

**187**

When we perceive the presence of God the Providential Father, who brings serenity and trust into life, and everyone strives to live with Him, witnessing His Goodness, our environments have reached the most desired atmosphere.

**188**

The presence of continuous thanksgiving to the Lord, through our life and words and mutual commitment, shall be the best evidence that the plan of God is being realized in our centers.

## *Chapter Four*

### GENERAL OPERATIVE CRITERIA

#### **42. "Bread and the Lord"**

- 189** With this significant formula, "Bread and the Lord," the Founder entrusted to us the commitment to the promotion of persons and peoples, aiming simultaneously at their natural and spiritual enhancement.
- 190** Our educational services are directed toward the sphere of human needs, i.e., physical, psychological, ethical or social, as well as those relative to the religious sphere. We seek to respond in both areas.
- 191** We can't separate the promotion of the total person from evangelization but must keep them intertwined as two primary roots of our unique educational mission.
- 192** Therefore, we ought not to restrict evangelization as the sole commitment toward "human" promotion. Space also needs to be allowed for personal celebration of faith and the announcement of Jesus Christ.
- 193** Even so, let us not narrow education to religious and moral areas only. Let us broaden our intervention to include human and temporal problems, permitting each person to be recognized in his dignity and to reach the fullness of life.

### **43. Priority of “Heart” over Technology**

Our educational activity intends to utilize the practices and most suitable instruments toward the promotion of the person. These may be traditional methods or those suggested by proven scientific research as long as they are compatible with the Christian philosophy of human life. **194**

We hold, however, that every activity and educational stimuli are truly effective only if they are geared to an authentic interpersonal relationship characterized by affection, trust and optimism. **195**

It is just this type of relationship which makes individuals feel accepted, understood and loved as they are, and predisposes them toward acceptance of formative intervention. **196**

On the other hand, an educational relationship without adequate specific activities offers only partial responses to the needs of the individual and does not provide him with sufficient opportunities for integral growth.

In our activity, therefore, let us integrate techniques with love, so love may be the soul giving life to the techniques and the techniques may be true instruments at the service of the creative strength of love. **197**

#### **44. Realism**

**198** In the elaboration and implementation of our plans, we strive to seek and to value the real problems, expectations and options of individuals, groups, and nations.

Therefore, in respect of their dignity, their history and their plans, all prejudices and misunderstandings are set aside.

**199** The ideal educational objectives, however, must be always adjusted to the gifts of nature and of grace of each one, and be proportionate to his duties and energies.

**200** For this we do not seek the highest results at all cost. Instead, we focus on the essential needs and concentrate on the peace of mind of all; in the growth of their abilities and joy of living with others.

**201** Finally, in programming interventions, we take into account the actual availability of resources, careful not to create false expectations we may not be able to satisfy.

#### **45. Value of Daily Life**

**202** In the educational process of the person let us not put too much trust in “magic” moments or



extraordinary events. Without neglecting these circumstances, we primarily value the opportunities offered by the rhythms of daily life.

Any situation from commitment to fatigue, relaxation to celebration, or from tranquility to preoccupation, may become important and significant as happens in the life of a united family. **203**

For this reason, we seek to transform into occasions for growth both the rapport with others as well as events, things and every experience, even those marked by suffering or error. **204**

Thus, we encourage each person not to run from his own reality in search of an ideal condition. We encourage serene acceptance of personal situations, identifying the elements of good, and applying them toward self-improvement and the benefit of others. **205**

#### **46. Preferential Attention to the Weakest**

“The more miserable one is, lacking means or human protection, so much more must we show preference and give assistance. Welcome the most abandoned among all, give him a place at your table and make him yours.” **206**

The Founder clearly points out that the most delicate attention and the best care should be reserved for the one who is more distressed in body and in spirit, independent of his religion or culture.

**207** This means we exercise preferential option for those who are morally abandoned and in great poverty. In planning and executing our programs, their needs must be the primary consideration.

**208** Like a sound family, in which all surround with love and attention the one who has been hit with suffering, sacrificing time and energies for him, even when there is no evidence of a positive change in sight; so, too, all in our centers must be involved in thinking and providing for the weakest, concerned that the very best material and energies be invested in him.

This criterion applies to the individuals within our centers, to groups within a nation, and to all people within the entire human race.

**209** **47. Commitment for the Promotion of the Socio-Cultural Environment**

While we implement the most opportune interventions for the integral promotion of per-

sons, we are concerned, as well, that the socio-cultural environment in which they are inserted does not hinder their growth, but always offers better possibilities.

We are convinced that the socio-cultural environment, like humus to vegetation, strongly conditions and affects human behavior.

In this educational effort toward improvement of the environment, let us seek, first, to make the family and the community conscious of their duty to engage in a quality of life and of interpersonal relationships respectful of the dignity of the person and favoring his full development. **210**

We need to influence and assist family and society in recognizing the fundamental physical, psychological, and spiritual needs of the individual and help them to provide an adequate response. **211**

In this regard, families and social institutions are to be sustained in overcoming difficulties which inhibit a better quality of life and interpersonal relations. The identification and utilization of human resources and available materials also need to be promoted and valued. **212**

The education of the socio-cultural environment is an indispensable condition, not only for **213**

the growth of persons, but also for the promotion of a more fraternal and united society. Solidarity and understanding within a people and among individuals begins within the family and the community.

#### **48. Cooperation with the Family and Society**

- 214** Through our educational activity we do not intend to substitute ourselves in the role and responsibility of the family or society. Instead, we place ourselves at their side to appropriately encourage and support the general familial and social mandate of the promotion of persons and peoples.
- 215** In the absence of the natural or adoptive family, we request the involvement of the next of kin.
- 216** Our service strives to offer answers to existential and educational needs of which the family and society are not aware or are unwilling to provide. However, we encourage their conscientiousness toward their educational duties and the responsible assumption of their subsequent commitment.
- 217** We urge family and society to respond wisely and courageously to difficult situations and to the

more challenging problems. Initially, resources of persons and means necessary toward an adequate response must be sought within the local environment. Then, delegation to others of the mandate to provide satisfying solutions may ensue.

We can assist in the improvement of their capabilities and formative skills and in the initiation of a self-formative process. **218**

We recognize the primary role of the family and of society in the advancement of persons. Therefore, while we adopt their projects in the measure to which they authentically advance the human person, we reciprocally involve them, as much as possible, in our projects. **219**

Let us seek to find a common line of objectives, methods and interventions, so as to proceed together in the search for full development of persons and peoples. **220**

#### **49. Active Participation**

In the implementation of educational activities we tend to responsibly involve all the members of the educational community according to their roles and abilities. This approach renders **221**

all as active participants and not as mere executors of the educational work.

**222** This participation is extended throughout the whole process of the local educational project in all its phases of planning and execution.

**223** This requires, in the planning and execution of the activity, that the principle of teamwork be respected. Everyone should be entrusted, accordingly, with tasks of responsibility.

**224** The principle of participation does not allow movement in an individualistic manner. Participation implies the willingness to seek the view of others and to share ideas and experiences. The aim is the availability of finding the best solutions together.

**225** This principle should not be sacrificed to efficiency. It is to be observed even when to do so might require more time and energy or acquiescence to less effective plans for the greater input.

## **50. Insertion into the Socio-Cultural Context**

**226** In delivering our service we strive to incarnate our system of life and education within the local culture.

For this reason, we conform with the social and cultural environment, decoding the heritage of values, traditions, and customs and critically incorporating them into our educational system.

Simultaneously, we try to ponder the Guanellian charism in light of the local history and culture. This reflection is necessary in order to actualize the charism in a specific, practical and educational experience; one in which the rich values of our charism and those of the local culture harmoniously merge together. **227**

Furthermore, we intend to participate fully in the social and religious life of the community to which we have come to belong. We share the local concerns and hopes. We proffer our energies in the service of anyone living in material, moral and/or social hardship. **228**

We do this without limiting our range of action to the local area. We coordinate our activity with the programs of the local social reality, and volunteer our service for the promotion of the poor and the building of a more fraternal and cooperative society. **229**

Let us seek also to encourage, in the region, an openness to the knowledge and an acceptance of the values of the Guanellian system of life and **230**

education. Let us pursue their inclusion in the dynamics of the local history and social organization.

### **51. Universal Openness**

**231** Our educational activity is proffered to needy persons and to people of every race, culture and religion. It is open to the collaboration of not only those who share our faith, but also to any person of goodwill having, at heart, the cause of the poor and the coming of the civilization of love.

**232** This total and ecumenical openness requires understanding and reciprocal respect. No one, therefore, rises to judge other philosophies or religions. All agree to seek and accept the values of others, working on the basis of those values held in common.

**233** We maintain cordial relationships of esteem and trust with others. We reach beyond any differences, building our unity upon the conviction of our mutual human dignity and of being brothers and sisters.

**234** Anyone has the possibility of developing his own spiritual and religious life, progressing in



the search for truth. Yet, while respecting the boundaries of this personal freedom, the challenge of the Catholic faith should be introduced with conviction, remembering that living love is more effective than preaching love.

Tolerance of other philosophies and religions does not mean renunciation of our Christian identity or education. We ask of all, kindly but firmly, respect for our identity. All our workers, as well, should conform their educational interventions to this expectation. **235**

## **52. Unity and Diversity**

We understand and value the different characteristics of people and nations in the function of unity. **236**

They are manifestations of the infinite richness of God and are complementary attributes with which individuals and human groups are meant to endow one another. **237**

We are conscious, beyond superficial facades, that every person and every nation possesses its own charism. We place heavy accentuation upon its identification and upon development of appreciation of its social value. **238**

- 239** Furthermore, we are willing to guide individuals in proffering their personal qualities to the service of the common good. This goodness appreciates and celebrates the differences of each as precious occasions of encounter and dialog.

## Part Three

# HEALING COMMUNITY

### *Chapter One*

## IDENTITY

### 53. Nature

Our educational activity finds realization within a community which is the operative, the source and the vehicle of educational impulses. The community is not only an agent of formative interventions, but presents itself as a proposal and a way of education. 240

Modeled on the family, which forms the foundation of our educational system, the healing community is a living entity. The members of the community, inspired by a common educational ideal, are united in the mutual work of responsibly actuating the integral promotion of persons and people according to the values of Guanellian Education. 241

Community, therefore, is a structured group in which, through genuine relationships and continual exchanges of proposals, all the members can genuinely experience the authentic values relative to the individuals and to the society. 242

Our education is fundamentally Christian. Consequently the community is called to be the 243

place where we encounter the proclamation of the faith and experience the example of life proposed by Jesus.

#### **54. Family Characteristics**

**244** Every Guanellian educational community, in its structure and its life, proposes to model the family as much as possible, assuming its characteristics.

**245** Therefore, all the members are considered friends and brothers and sisters. Overcoming the distinctions of age, culture and social condition, we exclude no one but accept and attend to all with an expansive heart.

**246** All planning and action is constantly attentive to the complete growth and needs of each.

**247** Difficulties do not discourage us. We appreciate and maximize all resources, whether ordinary or extraordinary, old or new.

**248** The Guanellian Community is part of the society in which it lives. It does not limit interests and actions exclusively to educational services within its centers. Rather, attention to and activities within the region are extended, especially in emergency cases, where cooperation is

needed with any initiatives offering effective responses.

As a community of faith we are open to the world of God in all its mystery: in Him the community discovers its origin and model. **249**

We act within the consciousness of having been gathered together by God to collaborate in His salvific plan for humankind. With our commitment to promotion, we become instruments of the goodness and providence of our Father toward all, especially the most needy. **250**

## **55. Members**

In each of our operating centers the healing community is formed by all those who, for various reasons, are involved in the local educational plan. **251**

Therefore, the members include the local community of the Guanellian Family, the employees, the persons entrusted to our services, their families, and whoever cooperates closely and steadily in the formation process.

All these, in various degrees, share in the responsibility of the entire plan. **252**

According to the specific role and compe- **253**

tence of each, all are principal participants in the planning and execution of the project, contributing personal, moral and professional capabilities.

## **56. Duties and Rights**

**254** All members of the educating community, insofar as they work or are welcome in a Guanellian center, have the precise duty of knowing, accepting and respecting the local educational plan and supporting its implementation.

**255** All personnel, in their respective roles, have a serious obligation to qualify their work with an adequate professional, moral and Guanellian competence.

**256** Every member has the right to a range of freedom, access to proper materials for the development of assigned tasks, and to contribute in the elaboration of the local educational plan and respective programs.

**257** Also, everyone has the right, according to the principles of justice, to the respect of personal, family and social needs. Personnel engaged by a regular labor contract deserve a just recompense.

**258** Persons enrolled in the respective centers have the right to receive a suitable and solid edu-

cation, capable of meeting their specific needs and with an eye toward their integral growth.

## **57. Functional Structure**

The community, while presenting diverse and distinct aspects and appearing varied and differentiated, has a unified and coordinated structure. All members have a role and a function with sufficient independence to perform their task. Even so, everyone operates in close collaboration with the other members, coordinating their activity to reach the common goal and achieve the planned programs. **259**

Unity of projects and performance is assured by a group of persons who, in accord with and under the guidance of the chief executive officer, have the duty of following up the planning, the development and the verification of the project. **260**

The fidelity of life and education to the Guanellian philosophy is mainly guaranteed by the presence of the Guanellian family. Even those who are not directly involved in the educational activity are part of the animating core of the community. These are charged to keep alive **261**

the Guanellian educational values by the witness of their life and word.

**262** The members of the Guanellian family assure the presence of the Guanellian spirit and style in interpersonal relationships, the environment and activities. Similarly they confirm all in their commitment of being “here and now” witnesses and messengers of the love of God toward disadvantaged persons.

### **58. General Objective**

**263** The main objective of the community is the realization of the Guanellian educational mission in a definite socio-cultural environment. This task constitutes the reason for its existence.

**264** Therefore, the principal commitment, to which all other obligations must converge, is the achievement of the objectives of our charitable work as specified in the local educational plan.

**265** The local educational project is the center of the community’s life and activity. Therefore the community’s organization, plans, programs, and all available resources are geared toward the realization of the project.



## *Chapter Two*

### DUTIES

#### **59. Transmission of Knowledge and Values**

The primary duty of the community toward its members is that of transmitting and advocating professional and technical knowledge. These are important tools for the development of the person and his human, Christian and Guanellian values. **266**

The community must not limit itself merely to the presentation of values. Each must conduct himself in such a way that everyone, in freedom and conviction, may adopt our values as their own, loving them and living them in the adaptation of their thoughts and actions. **267**

Since deeds speak louder than words, we are called to do what we say, and say what we believe. **268**

#### **60. Promotion of Participation**

Since our mandate calls all members to collaborate in the realization of the local educational plan, the community has also the duty of creating and increasing opportunities which make participation possible. **269**

With due respect for the local culture and tradition, the subjective participation of the var- **270**

ious members shall be centered upon the Founder's desire: "The house will be especially blessed, when each and every one of its members will be especially intent on procuring the moral, spiritual and economic well being of the house."

- 271** The community also invites and accepts cooperation from the social and religious institutions in the area to develop a sense of solidarity and to promote endeavors for the poor.

### **61. Creation of a Guanellian Formative Environment**

- 272** The environment is not just a place where the educational action occurs, but it is, most of all, a live reality where persons, situations and things converge to form the individual and simultaneously are affected by him.

- 273** Therefore, the community has the task of building an environment which balances the facilitation of the maximum growth of individuals, while retaining and developing its own formative power. The educational climate of the environment becomes the source of interiorization and exemplary patterns of life.

This task obliges us to search for all that forms and creates a Guanellian climate and to avert negative habits and mentality. **274**

Such an obligation is daily and continuous, not limited to particular occasions because the environment is tangible and alive, requiring care and permanent attention.

## **62. Care for an Appropriate Personal Formation**

The community is called to execute its service with educational and pastoral competence and in fidelity to the values of the Guanellian philosophy. **275**

From this expectation is born concern for all members to possess suitable human, professional and Guanellian preparation. This permits all to develop their capabilities to the maximum and to become more qualified and perceptive in their work. **276**

Persons and situations are continually evolving. Human sciences progress and we are always rediscovering the Guanellian educational dimension. Formation can never be considered finished. It needs to progress in time with renewed enthusiasm and will. **277**

**278** The community then, while requiring from its members a basic formation appropriate to the role of each, promotes specific activities toward their continual formation and encourages their participation.

**279** The individual members also must be concerned and provide for their own formation. "Each one," writes Fr. Guanella, "should be perfected in his own position; he needs to study and work to bring improvement to his position."

### **63. Developing and Updating the Local Educational Project**

**280** The principles and general orientations of our education ought to be woven with the values of local culture and translated into a specific plan.

Based on an analysis and evaluation of its experience, the socio-cultural context, and the needs and capabilities of the individuals involved, the community must then formulate its own educational project.

**281** In the elaboration of the local educational program, this present document is utilized as a source and guide, facilitating all in the contribution of their ideas and experiences.

Since such a plan becomes the stable reference point for the local educational activity, we document and periodically verify and update it. In this way we overcome subjectivity, guaranteeing continuity and smooth transitions in changing situations and an openness to all contributions whether offered by science or experience. **282**

According to the expectations and traditions of the local cultures, with the assistance of appropriate techniques we accurately review and verify our plan periodically. **283**

#### **64. Providing Ourselves with Adequate Self Organization**

Good organization promotes greater efficiency to the educational process because it favors peaceful interpersonal relationships and functions as a true instrument in maintaining an atmosphere of serenity and of reciprocal respect. **284**

The community, in assuming and exercising this additional responsibility, gives order to structures, resources and activities, and thus avoids the loss of precious moral and economic energies and honors all potential at its disposal. **285**

- 286** Good organization clearly defines the areas and levels of participation of both individuals and groups, and therefore determines functions, roles and responsibilities. In considering the competence of each and wisely coordinating the various contributions, good order converges all elements toward the realization of the proposed objectives.
- 287** The purpose and procedures for the use of equipment and structures should be defined as needed. Policies and regulations must be codified.

## *Chapter Three*

### **FUNCTIONS**

#### **65. Administration**

Administration consists in guiding and leading the community, with certainty and clarity, to the realization of the educational plan. **288**

The ultimate responsibility for persons, plans, organization and environment is the administration's. It is to assign roles and define areas of action, assuring the necessary means, and to be vigilant toward the proper development of the educational work. **289**

Administrators must exercise this role with an open mind, a spirit of humility and of service, never as an exercise of power. They must combine authority with gentleness, never failing in charity, utilizing listening and dialogue for collaboration. **290**

The Major Superiors entrust the task of administration by appointment to a member of the Guanellian family or to another person with adequate professional and Guanellian background. **291**

#### **66. Animation**

Animation consists in sustaining the life of **292**

the Guanellian educational style and stimulating its adoption by the members of the community.

**293** Whoever carries this responsibility has the duty to exhibit authentic interior motivation to stimulate people toward creative participation and to support all in the development of their activities. By this, everyone will increase adherence to the values of Guanellian education and commitment toward the realization of the project.

**294** The task of animation runs on encouragement and patience. It trusts people and values the personality, capabilities and limitations of each. Furthermore it places attention on the mentality of the people and the culture of the region.

**295** This role belongs primarily to a member of the Guanellian family, not excluding other persons who, having assimilated its spirit and the Guanellian educational style, give witness to it.

## **67. Planning and Coordination**

**296** Planning and coordinating consists in translating the local educational plan into concrete programs that are realistic and appropriate to everyone and harmoniously steer the contributions of the various workers toward the established objectives.



This requires elaborating and initiating departmental and individual plans with the contribution of various disciplines, appreciating the contributions of all, however limited. This requires also that programs be modified and updated appropriately, according to evolving problems and needs. **297**

The responsible person must be attentive to the true necessities of the center and of each individual. This person must always have at heart the unity of the educational community. This function requires the capability of overcoming and enabling people to overcome the temptation of taking sides and/or personal stands. **298**

Planning and coordinating is the role of the person responsible for the department or group in union with the administration. **299**

## **68. Direct Educational Activity**

Direct education consists in performing educational intervention through direct relationships with the persons in which everyone gives and receives formative stimulation. **300**

This action requires exploration and execution of concrete activities aimed at the advance- **301**

ment of persons and groups, within a project and from an established plan.

**302** Direct educational activities are conducted with goodness of heart, firm confidence in the abilities of persons, in kindness and patience, acceptance of the different paces of growth, and knowledge of how to understand errors and stimulate improvement.

**303** Such functional nurturing is, especially, the mien and the concern of workers with a specific educational role and of the families of those persons entrusted to us. From a different perspective, in the general milieu this demeanor is inclusive of those receiving our service and of all members of the community for we are all called to strive for growth in ourselves and in others.

## **69. Management**

**304** The function of managing financial affairs is to support the educational activity. Therefore, the financial officer practices good economy as an integral part of the local educational plan.

This function consists in providing, organizing and caring for the means and structures in a

way that guarantees tranquil and consistent development of the educational activity.

The financial officer has the particular duty of providing for the material needs, developing the best possible infrastructure, according to the needs of the persons, in compliance with the law and in harmony with the social milieu. In accord with the administration, he plans the appropriate steps of implementation. **305**

In the exercise of this role it is important to remember that material goods are a gift of Divine Providence. We seek to maintain a serene trust in God, who is an eager Father toward his children, and to respect the demands of social justice. **306**

This function belongs, in the strictest sense, to the financial administrator and to his collaborators. In a broader sense, it belongs also to the personnel employed in various services. **307**



## **Part Four**

### **EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURES**

#### **70. Introduction**

Our mission, while remaining open to any material, moral and spiritual poverty, favors those categories of persons and groups which the Founder entrusted, in a preferential manner, to our care. **308**

Those destined to receive our service are, particularly, children, youth living in material and moral poverty, the elderly, and those who are impaired at a psychological-physical level. Our service is primarily for those suffering deprivation of human support and necessary services, that is, "poor people:" those groups and multitudes who are socially and spiritually poor. **309**

Our centers care for them in a specific way, and accomplish it by following the educational procedures proposed here.

## **A. PROMOTION OF PERSONS**

### *Chapter One*

#### CENTERS OF EDUCATION-REHABILITATION-ASSIS- TANCE

##### *a) Objectives*

### **71. Formation of Children, Adolescents and Youth**

**310** There are various categories of children, adolescents and youth entrusted to our care. There are those who primarily need food, those who need education, and those requiring social rehabilitation.

**311** We have, at heart, their bodily health, an important factor for a balanced personality.

Therefore, while seeking to shield them from those risks that may compromise their integrity, we look to the harmonious development of their physical capacities. We teach them to take care of themselves and the wise use of their energies.

**312** On the psychological level, we work toward formation of character. We develop within our youth a sense of their own and others' dignity. We teach them to plan and construct their own lives on the basis of sound ethical convictions and to actively participate in social life.

We want to guide them toward the more important objectives such as, a serene acceptance of reality — their own and others' — the world's reality and each reality relative to history and to the discovery of personal aptitudes and conscientious preparation for their own mission. **313**

As to the religious dimension our aim is to guide them toward closely following Jesus Christ, their faithful friend, in the ways He proposes, and to live the Faith of the Church together with their community. **314**

We present to them, in a particularly lively way, the vision of God, our Providential Father, who infuses trust, security and joy, and we invite them to imitate His goodness, committing themselves to His plan of love for humanity.

We want to make known and freely propose to believers of other faiths our faith. While so doing, we mean to furnish them, as well, the means and occasions in which to live and deepen their own religious beliefs. **315**

## **72. Assistance and Support to the Elderly**

Father Guanella reminds us that “the elderly are venerable in the eyes of true philosophy and **316**

of the real Christian. The elderly and the chronically ill suffer physically and emotionally. We need to consider each through the eyes of faith, rather than through any physical limitation of theirs.”

**317** Animated by these reflections of the Founder, we dedicate ourselves to the care of their physical health. We direct attention and intervention, above all, to the maintenance, as far as possible, of their sensory-motor abilities so as to slow down the degenerative process of their physical energies.

**318** We direct equal attention to their psychological world and to the process of maturation brought forward during the course of their lives. Every human life is in continual growth, from the moment of conception until the last breath.

Because of this we intend to lead them to a serenity which encourages a positive emotional assessment of themselves and of their condition. Such feeling has them draw, from personal experience, a more serene vision of reality and of life, bringing them to the friendly acceptance of others.

**319** Keeping in mind that not only their physical but also their psychic strength diminishes, we propose to animate their inner energies and the



relational and creative capacities of which they are capable. So animated, they identify themselves as valuable members of society.

The elderly, particularly, feel the need for religion. **320**

Thus, we assist them in cultivating a relationship with God, characterized by serene acceptance of His will and by trustful prayer. This Divine relationship seeks to inspire living this period of life as a precious time, giving greater authenticity to faith and toward the preparation of each for the final encounter with the Father.

### **73. Care and Comprehensive Rehabilitation of Handicapped Persons**

The education of those persons which our tradition calls “good children,” aims at their comprehensive rehabilitation in the greatest measure possible, with a purposeful view toward their attainment of the most independence possible and the true joy of living effectively with others. **321**

For this reason we care for their physical well-being, striving not only for good health but also for harmonious growth of the development and maintenance of their sensory-motor faculties. **322**

**323** Convinced that, although limited in intelligence, they possess a special interior richness; we propose to guide them to psychological growth in all its aspects.

We assist them, in particular, to develop a sufficient sensitivity to mature ethical values. We help them to activate their great need of giving and receiving love and of attaining good communication and integration with their family members and with others.

**324** As to the religious aspect, the objective is that of leading them to an authentic, living and joyous experience of God in the heart of their own community, even to sanctity.

**325** In this journey of growth they are not hindered by physical and intellectual limitations. Paradoxically, they are capable of opening themselves to the world of the divine with an availability that does not place conditions on the action of grace.

### *b) Specific Criteria*

## **74. Totality of the Person**

**326** By this term we imply vigilance to all the

dimensions of the individual, as well as to all the stages of his life.

We are convinced that promotion goes beyond overcoming deficiencies and beyond the satisfaction of particular needs, and that there is not any time unusable toward the growth of the person. **327**

In the plans, as well as in the activities, we take into account all the areas of maturation, their unity and interdependence, avoiding the risk of giving preference to one to the detriment of the others. **328**

Let each take advantage of the possibilities offered by the various stages of life, never considering the work of formation concluded. As Fr. Guanella taught, "The work of instruction, of education in general and in particular, is a work of every day in one's life." **329**

## **75. Respect for Individuality**

Development, although it refers to a common frame of principles and educational values, is not achieved in an identical way for all. It is applied individually, realizing that plan of life corresponding to the aspirations, aptitudes and ability of each person. **330**

- 331** The guiding criterion in the development and actualization of the individual educational plans is on the one hand, constant attention to the local educational plan, and on the other, respect and evaluation of all that constitutes the individuality of the person: his history, his life, his present condition, his culture and his social environment.
- 332** Above all, in the specific case of the elderly and the handicapped, the objectives are established based on the effective personal potentials of each and not by the reasoning of conventional standards of conduct. In this way, the educational goals have stability and do not seriously compromise the serenity of the persons.

## **76. Gradual Development and Continuity**

- 333** The criterion of gradual development obliges us to respect the various phases of the process of maturation and to reassess the plans from time to time in proportion to the age and rate of growth and the strength of each individual.
- 334** Let us then try to avoid quick movement from one phase to another to avoid demanding premature responses. Let us instead provide the time and patience necessary so that the various pro-

posals can adequately be assimilated by the person.

Gradual development progressively integrated with that of continuity calibrates the daily work to a well-balanced moderation, shunning the alternating of extremes of euphoria and of hasty formative activity with moments of composure. **335**

We are obliged to respect the progress already made following it with the contribution of one's own abilities. We must overcome any temptation to begin again without keeping account of the work accomplished previously by others. **336**

Finally, in preparing the educational plans, one must take into account the necessity of preparing and following the persons in the successive phases of their formation, even should actuation be expected to take place in another educational environment. **337**

## **77. Formation of Values and Habits**

A valid instrument for our educational work is the encouragement of the acquisition of good habits, assisting the person, according to his abilities, toward establishing his own. Indeed, good **338**

habits are an effective means toward reaching freedom and independence in the management of daily, personal, and social life.

**339**

We must always encourage the personal desire to discover and interiorize true values as an indispensable condition of maturation. This interiorization pertains, as well, to persons with limited intellectual abilities. We must remember that, as experience teaches us, these “good children” grasp by intuition those values which “normal people” assimilate with the effort of reasoning and reflection.

**340**

Each criterion, the formation of good habits and the interiorization of values, is kept always in mind even if, later on, it is the task of the educator to take advantage of one rather than of the other in relationship to the actual situation of the individual.

### **78. Priority of Experience over Theory**

**341**

Our action is often directed to persons who have difficulty in understanding but who are capable of accepting values or, on the other hand, to persons of normal intelligence who have psychological problems in accepting the proposed educational norms.

Therefore, in education, we favor the experiential method over the speculative. The former contains formative proposals, is more incisive, and is closer to the educational style of God toward humanity. **342**

Not overlooking the lecture method of transmitting knowledge and values, we offer various techniques. In this way, the individual may grasp them through the concrete experience of life and contact with nature, consistently assimilating them to a greater degree.

In instruction we give preference to the use of examples and anecdotes taken from daily life and history over abstract concepts. This method better facilitates the understanding of knowledge and values as well as pointing to the path by which to live them. **343**

## **79. Education in a Group Context**

Our educational system, according to the ideas of the Founder, is family education. Consequently, the educational relationship and the path of each individual's advancement occurs normally within a group. This group constitutes the means of formative messages **344**

with its richness and variety of interpersonal relations, of life situations and of educational stimuli.

**345** Because of this, we make every effort that the person be well placed within the group, that he has input into his own plans and is able to participate in them actively. At the same time, we make every effort toward the group's commitment to the growth of the individual and support of him in his formative commitment.

**346** To insure that each person develops well, we are careful to provide a stimulating group environment. As our attention goes to the individual, to his specific problems and potentials, so too, does it attend to the group as the soil in which the person is rooted and on which he lives.

### *c) Activity Guidelines*

## **80. Introduction**

**347** Among the multiple directives of action suitable to the development of persons, we propose those that better correspond to the thought and practice of the Founder and to modern educational thinking.



These have a preferential character and do not exclude the opportunity of being integrated with those which science and experience of others holds as valid. **348**

These directives, which later must be definitely stated in our own educational programs based on the culture and needs of the people, apply in general to every one of our centers.

## **81. Instruction**

In the fulfillment of this educational and pastoral mission, Fr. Guanella, first of all, wanted to be sure that people receive adequate instruction, believing it to be the right of all, even of persons with mental impairments. **349**

For him instruction was the simultaneous formation of mind and heart. It is inclusive not only of the teaching of academics but also of the art of living. For this reason, he had to transmit the values and the abilities necessary to solve daily problems, and to discover their application and insertion into society with dignity. **350**

Following his thinking, we strive to impart to all and within every one of our centers this type of instruction, conducting it in a serious and pro- **351**

grammed manner, attentive to the new discoveries of the human sciences.

**352** We pursue instruction intensely for children and youth in the area of academics, which constitutes their principal role.

**353** We impart it also to persons who are developmentally impaired, making use of all inherent personal potential to achieve the multiple possibilities offered them by technology and experience.

**354** Instruction in its true meaning knows no limits of age and is meant to be pursued during one's entire life span.

Therefore, we also offer the broadening of knowledge and cultural interests to the elderly with the possibility of their remaining efficient and of contributing to keep their inner world alive.

## **82. Health and Rehabilitation**

**355** Convinced that all have the right to both physical and psychological health, we seek to implement plans to prevent and care for illness. For this reason we are concerned that each person has a healthy and regular diet, good person-

al hygiene, suitable and appropriate clothing, and adequate time for relaxation and rest. Periodic medical examinations and therapeutic care are provided according to individual needs.

We also strive to offer suitable exercises that reinforce and maintain the body's well being. **356**

To the elderly and the handicapped we offer all the available therapies for psycho-physical rehabilitation that favor their total well-being and the development of their specific areas of need. **357**

In therapeutic choices, we consider the general and specific working criteria indicated by this document, those of proven scientific validity, of local culture, and of the effective and reasonable possibilities of the individual centers. **358**

### **83. Creative Expression, Recreation and Sports**

Fr. Guanella understood the importance for all in education and of time dedicated to the artistic-expressive possibility, to leisure activities and to sports. He considered these as occasions revealing the sentiments of the soul. Within each **359**

are created bonds of friendship which thwart sadness and depression. These activities animate the environment, making the daily routine more serene and less monotonous.

**360** We program and put into action various and multiple activities of these types. These programs are to adapt and be useful to individual categories of persons and seek to give that touch of novelty and freshness which make them attractive.

**361** Joyful events in the life of individuals and the community provide opportunities for celebrations in which the family spirit grows, souls are reconciled, regain courage, and discover the joy of being together.

**362** Particularly attentive care is given to recreation and sports of various forms for children, adolescents and youth, and those with mental impairment. These activities are used as a means of formation in self-control and commitment, for times of true freedom from inner tension, and for physical development.

Sports and group activities are especially preferred because within them one is encouraged to put personal capabilities and actions at the service of common objectives.

## **84. Orientation and Professional Preparation**

Along with academics, Father Guanella provides the possibility for learning an art or a skill permitting one to gain what is necessary to live in dignity. **363**

This concept of the Founder maintains its validity, constituting for us a commitment of great value.

Based on different situations and real possibilities we want to direct and prepare adolescents and youth for a specific career that corresponds to their aptitudes and places them in a position to carry out a useful activity for themselves and for society. **364**

We respond to this need through organized programs in our centers or by directing youth to specialized schools. To those with physical and mental challenges, a means for vocational preparation is also offered and adapted to their abilities. **365**

For this reason we prefer activities that do not result in futile exercises, but test the individual's effective abilities, forming to a sense of work and teaching specific work skills. **366**

## **85. Work**

- 367** Work is intended as a means of expression and development of the creativity of the individual and of his sensory-motor capacities, a time of empowering the will and intellectual abilities, an occasion of socialization and of participation in social life.
- 368** For this reason, everybody, including youth occupied primarily in academic duties, are guided to apply themselves in adequate measure to some activity.
- 369** Even the elderly, when their strength permits it, are occupied in small activities within their capacity. These activities keep their interests and their work abilities alive, and therefore, contribute to the maintenance of their serenity and inner vitality.
- 370** In the education of the mentally impaired, work is important for its rehabilitative meaning. It increases one's self-esteem, reinforces self trust, provides the joy of feeling useful and also helps in the understanding of abstract concepts. Without neglecting house work, among the many activities to be offered to them, we prefer those easily executed and, simultaneously, of rich per-

sonal interest to the individual. Where it is possible our Founder prefers work related to nature.

## **86. Affective Education**

The human person, made in the image of God who is love, loves and needs love. Sentiments and emotions compose his life and are his greatest interior wealth, especially when the physical and intellectual capabilities are limited. **371**

Convinced that all people, even those bearing psychophysical limitations or social poverty, possess great potential for love, we aim at the greatest development possible of the emotional capacities of each. We try to increase each person's ability to subordinate the sentimental and emotional world to the guidance of conscience. **372**

Our educational purpose, in particular, is to help each to overcome his own fears and egotism. We encourage an openness of heart to others, and the building of friendly, sincere and stable relationships in which one is able to exchange affection with others in joy and gratitude. **373**

For this purpose, our guidance of each is toward a management and positive resolution of **374**

inner conflicts and the self control of emotions, of impulses and of reactions. Above all, our formation promotes true sharing and a gratuitous, generous giving of self harmonious with the state of each and in the fulfillment of their personal mission. Our formation fosters each life as based on and surrounded with love.

### **87. Sex Education**

**375** Sex education is strictly bound to affective education.

**376** Our educational commitment in this area of personality is that of guiding individuals to accept their own and others' sexuality as a positive element involving the whole person. We guide individuals to put their sexuality in the service of love according to their state of life.

**377** Therefore, we educate each to express oneself in daily life according to the characteristics typical of their femininity or masculinity. We validate relating to the other sex, not with a spirit of superiority or a sense of inferiority, but conscientious of an equal dignity, respecting differences and in valuing the complementarity of the different sexes.



We encourage the channeling of the sexual drive into each individual's sense of compassion, sublimating it in the giving of oneself to the good of one's neighbor. Chastity is appreciated and lived according to one's state of life as a means of developing the capacity of loving and in the freeing of sexuality from egotism. **378**

Having considered human frailty, we are supportive so that, through a progressive effort and with the strength of the grace of God, each may know how to discipline his sexual drives, refusing permissive cultural models contrary to the plan of God. The directives of the Magisterium of the Church are binding for us and also for all those who work with us in our educational programs. **379**

## **88. Social Education**

"Man," affirms Fr. Guanella, "is sociable and needs to pour out his heart into the heart of his brothers and sisters, to hear their voices, to feel their love and to communicate with them." **380**

In teaching each to be sociable, we guide the persons entrusted to us to willingly seek relationships with others and to communicate with them in an authentic manner, without deception, in a **381**

spirit of friendship and service, avoiding domineering attitudes and behaviors.

**382** We instruct them to graciously accept others, especially those less gifted in respect to their intelligence and lifestyle.

**383** Above all we cultivate the ability to dialog with others, despite the differences of age and culture, and of active participation within different contexts or socio-cultural groups.

**384** Besides teaching those in our care to communicate, we educate them to an always greater acquisition of a social mentality, in which flourish the lively sense of belonging to one's group and the spirit of universal friendship.

**385** Finally, we encourage each one to actively participate in the life of the ecclesial and civil community in which he lives by making its problems, projects and initiatives his own. According to his role and capacity, each proffers his services for the material, moral and spiritual growth of the community.

## **89. Vocational Education**

**386** We are deeply convinced every life is fundamentally a vocation; that everyone is called to

discover and to realize God's plan for them along the course of their life. This is the only way we can reach our human and Christian maturity.

In general, we propose to help people to live their daily life as that call, choosing for themselves a plan of life based on the will of God. **387**

In particular, we support each individual in the search and in the free choice of that state of life and of that role in society and in the Church to which he feels called and for which he possesses aptitudes and capabilities. **388**

Convinced that all, even persons who have physical and mental challenges, have a right to free choice and that no state of life or social role is precluded "a priori," we attempt to help each to overcome potential social difficulties, and to courageously and joyfully pursue the path of their individual vocation. **389**

Our guidance is toward the discovery of inherent talents, listening carefully to the call of God discerning the ways of Providence in events and in ordinary and extraordinary encounters. **390**

We also prepare each to be aware of personal duties and obligations connected with his specific state of life and precise role. Furthermore, our preparation is toward the assumption and respon- **391**

sible completion of these personal obligations, in generosity and with the knowledge that the fundamental human vocation is love.

## **90. Moral Education**

**392** Through moral education we lead persons to assimilate the true values of human life and to conform to them in their thoughts, affections and actions.

**393** We help them to seek and accept the great truths of life, of society and of the world according to the Plan of God. At the same time we guide them to understand and to interiorize those standards of judgment and principles of conduct derived from these truths, assuming them freely as reference points and guides for thinking, feeling and acting.

**394** We seek to arouse love and the appreciation of these values, so intimately bound with the dignity of human life with its expectations and supreme destiny. Values give meaning and quality to life even when it is strongly marked by physical and emotional suffering.

**395** We assist each in the formation of an upright conscience, molded by continual dialog with the

depths of their innermost being and by a sincere quest for truth and good.

We encourage the expression of these values in concrete choices and in specific behavior because, only at this point, does the life of an individual become moral and conformed to his dignity. **396**

For this reason we encourage the cultivation of interior motives verifying daily life with ethical principles for the experience of their motivating energy and for the strengthening of the will, even in little things, by making use of human interventions as well as divine grace. **397**

In this educational endeavor, we seek to propose ethical values, tirelessly and with conviction, especially those characteristic of the Guanellian charism such as, goodness of heart, solidarity, service, graciousness, and forgiveness. **398**

## **91. Religious Formation**

For education to be complete, we also need religious formation, since all have the right to know God and to experience His Love. **399**

Therefore, we guide persons in our care to a joyous discovery of the presence of God within **400**

us, in history and in the world. We bring them to the understanding of the marvelous things that He has fulfilled, and fulfills, through Jesus Christ for the salvation of humanity.

401 In this manner, we seek to lead them to the awareness of how much God has loved and loves all as a Father, arousing in their hearts a response of faith and love, which is expressed in an always greater trust in Him and in a greater union with His Will.

402 At the same time, we inspire them to permeate this experience of God and of His Word with interior attitudes, behavior, thoughts and words, so that their whole life becomes a living Gospel.

403 We instruct them to celebrate and to announce their faith and to witness the merciful love of God with sentiments and gestures of love and service to their neighbor.

404 For this religious formation we make use of the means suggested by the Church and pointed out by the Founder.

405 In particular, with methods suited to the various categories of people and according to the receptive capacity of each, we offer religious education, widely utilizing signs and images

strongly rooted in Sacred Scripture and in communion with the Magisterium of the Church

We care that prayer is frequent and filial, animated with songs and with gestures that facilitate an encounter with God and involve the whole person. **406**

We give special attention to the Sacraments, above all to the Eucharist, that Sun which illumines, warms, and calls forth the fruitfulness of the earth. We strive that the sacraments be celebrated with proper preparation and with living faith, admitting and inviting all to receive them frequently. **407**

## *Chapter Two*

### PASTORAL CENTERS

#### **92. Sent by the Church**

**408** This part of the document refers to pastoral ministry (catechesis, preaching, celebration of the sacraments, charitable services, etc.) which we exercise by mandate and in the name of the Church in our pastoral and educational centers or in helping the local Church.

**409** Therefore, we follow the objectives, directives and criteria of the pastoral plan of the Church, and we bring to it the richness of our charism.

#### *a) Objectives*

#### **93. Filial Rapport with God**

**410** By the power of grace given to us by the Spirit, in the education to the faith, we favor a path where God is perceived and loved as a Father. We are invited to live a filial rapport with Him which becomes confident prayer and an imitation of His merciful love toward all, especially the most frail and needy.

**411** In living this filial relationship, we invite persons to be inspired by Jesus who is the supreme



revelation of the love and mercy of the Father. He is our older brother and sure guide, who accompanies us in our pilgrimage toward Him and asks us to conform our life to His Gospel of Charity.

We also guide them to recognize, in the Virgin Mary, the tenderness of the Father and to learn, from her example, solicitude toward those we find in need, thus witnessing the experience of her maternal concern. **412**

#### **94. Merciful and Active Love toward Our Neighbor**

In our pastoral activities there is a strong concern that the evangelical love toward our neighbor, just as it is proposed by Jesus the Good Shepherd and the Good Samaritan, be constantly announced and lived. **413**

People are encouraged, first of all, to make room in their own hearts for their neighbor, particularly the needy, with an attitude of love that urges us against judgments but toward understanding individual situations. **414**

Since evangelical love is a gift of oneself for others, we guide each to pledge himself accord- **415**

ing to his abilities and the possibilities offered by his surroundings, in concrete gestures of unity and support, even when requiring personal sacrifice.

- 416** Finally, we invite everyone to introduce into every relationship great respect, courtesy, simplicity and frankness toward all, enriching these qualities with that human warmth that characterizes the family spirit willed by Father Guanella.

### **95. Community, Evangelizer of Charity**

- 417** We also educate the Christian communities entrusted to our pastoral care to become active promoters of charity, primarily and personally assuming the task of witnessing the love of the Father for all, with a special preference for the poor.

- 418** Therefore, we cultivate within them a marked sensitivity to the material, moral and spiritual needs of the area, together with an openness to the great problems of humanity. We are also concerned that from them comes a courageous effort in response to these needs.

- 419** We inspire communities, in particular families, to welcome those who have no home, no

family, nor a familial environment adequate to respond to their fundamental material and educational needs.

We invite them to sensitize other communities and Christian families to the awareness, acceptance and service needed by the poorest. **420**

We are convinced evangelization mandates us to introduce into the social fiber the mentality of the Gospel and to modify, where necessary, the standards of judgment and the models of life. **421**  
Therefore, we ask our communities to make themselves present in groups and in social organizations so as to increase the sense of human and Christian solidarity.

***b) Criteria***

**96. Shared Pastoral Ministry**

It is our pastoral concern to involve individuals and the entire community in the development of projects, as in the decisions and the execution of what is established, so that each one, according to his gifts of nature and grace, may contribute to the work of evangelization and human advancement. **422**

**423** For this purpose we ask for an ever greater commitment by all, provoking awareness of their baptismal duty. We seek, besides, to actuate a clear and effective distribution of responsibilities and duties by entrusting various ministries according to the charisma of each individual and community.

**424** Constantly and deeply aware of serving the unique mission of the Church, we want to harmonize our pastoral programs with those of the local and particular Church, and to keep up an intense dialog with other communities of faith, putting our energies together toward the realization of such programs.

### **97. Special Attention to the Least**

**425** Following the example of Jesus, we want to consistently give a privileged position to the least, including those from whom there cannot be expected any contribution to the organization and to the activities of the community.

**426** Overcoming the temptation of allotting only spare time and energies to them in the pastoral projects, we, instead, give priority to their human and Christian formation, investing adequate material and spiritual resources.

We take care to integrate them, on a par with others in human equality, into the whole of the community life, yet keeping aside times and means especially for them. **427**

In the various manifestations of ministry we try to keep their needs in mind and to act in such a way to encourage their active participation so that they may feel they are members of the same family. **428**

## **98. Pastoral Ministry Directed to All**

Like the universal love of the Father, our pastoral ministry embraces not only the faithful who are practicing Catholics, but also those who do not practice the faith, those who are non-Catholic, and even non-Christian. **429**

Our ministry is particularly open to various groups and Christian movements. We receive them and recognize them as manifestations of the multiplicity of the charism of the Church, dedicating the necessary care to each, so to effectively collaborate in the building up of the kingdom of God. **430**

Making room for non-Christian groups and movements working sincerely for the true **431**

advancement of men and women, our ministry recognizes in them the free initiative of the Spirit acting even outside the borders of the Church.

- 432** In the development of the various pastoral ministries we strive to make use of simple forms, rich in symbol, which speak to the heart as well as to the mind of all. These signs involve the whole person, so that everyone, according to their own abilities, may more easily be open and accepting to the grace of God.

### *c) Activity Guidelines*

## **99. Spiritual Growth**

- 433** Among the pastoral means advised by the Magisterium and by the tradition of the Church, we give a privileged place to those more greatly corresponding to our charism and suggested by the Founder.

- 434** The Word of God is the guide for individuals and for the entire community.

Catechesis, as preaching, is frequent and well planned, simple and rich in examples, addressed to all but also distinct according to various audiences.

The liturgy is lived as the source and culmination of the whole life of the community. The celebration of the sacraments is frequent, well prepared and shared fervently by all. **435**

The Eucharist is celebrated and lived as the center of life; the sun that illuminates, warms and yields benefits for all; the bread of life given to us daily; the real presence of Christ in the midst of His own.

In the community, the prayer of praise and supplication is continually raised to the Father. We have frequent and familiar encounters of prayer, and foster especially the apostolate of prayer. **436**

Particular devotion is given to the Virgin Mary, venerated and invoked as Mother of Divine Providence, to St. Joseph and to the saints of charity. We keep various expressions of popular devotion alive seeing that they are true manifestations of faith and that they help us live the centrality of the mystery of Christ. **437**

We try to accomplish suitable works of vocational ministry which lead each person to discover God's plan for him or her and to respond to it generously. **438**

Where the seeds of religious and priestly vocations are noted, we strive to make an explicit

proposal of a total consecration and to offer assistance in a journey of discernment and of the maturation of a convinced response.

### **100. Human Growth**

**439** Together with spiritual needs, our pastoral activity also addresses the moral and material needs of the people entrusted to our care.

**440** We have, at heart, instruction for the various groups of people and for their professional formation, supporting them and establishing suitable activities.

**441** We are concerned with the hygienic and sanitary conditions of the community.

**442** With an intuitive sensitivity, we attend to the poor, the sick, those who are abandoned and isolated, able to devise immediate responses in emergencies.

**443** Within the limits of our possibility, we create and maintain an animated and joyful place of encounter and growth for children and youth, in which play, instruction, catechesis and prayer constitute different moments of our unique formative intention.



## ***B. PROMOTION OF A MORE UNITED AND FRATERNAL SOCIETY***

### *Chapter Three*

#### **PATH FOR THE SPREAD OF CHARITY AND BUILDING OF COMMUNION**

##### ***a) Objectives***

### **101. Promotion of Evangelical Solidarity**

Society is marked by common attitudes of egotistic withdrawal and indifference in the face of material and moral suffering of persons and entire peoples. The chasms between rich and poor peoples intensify. We work, instead, so that attitudes and behaviors of openness and of reciprocal help may be established among people. **444**

With this, we embrace a double commitment: to favor the growth of a mentality and social climate of respect and acceptance toward people in a situation of moral and material poverty, having their cause more at heart, and to put resolute responses into action. **445**

Urged by our charism of charity, we aim to arouse a social sensitivity of preferential concern which imitates a family bond where special care is given to those who suffer or are weaker. **446**

The Gospel teaches that true solidarity lives **447**

in free giving, pardon and reconciliation, and is expressed in gestures of service and acceptance. We educate people to these values and to make themselves available to help anyone, for whatever reason, if they are in a state of need, no matter their cultural and racial origin.

- 448** As the occasions and the means at our disposal permit, we work to arouse consciences and to stir institutions from passivity and indifference. We strive to move them toward the effective recognition of the dignity and rights of the poor, coercing them, if necessary, to set laws and effective programs favorable to the underprivileged. We solicit society, furthermore, not to allocate left-over resources for the poor, but to offer them the possibility to access equitably moral and spiritual goods necessary and useful toward a life truly worthy of a human being.

## **102. Defense of Life**

- 449** This commitment is requested of us not only by our charism which places us at the service of life, frail and defenseless, but also by the poor, whose life is threatened materially or morally, as well as by the Church which, with all men and

women of good will, is greatly concerned over the extensive and systematic attacks on human life.

We wish to defend the whole of human life, as natural and spiritual, destined to transcend the boundaries of this earth and to reach its full development in communion with God. **450**

We work, first of all, to keep alive the knowledge of the value of life in ourselves and in others, beginning with the persons entrusted to us. **451**

With equal determination we support the role and the educational mission of the family, the cradle and sanctuary of life. **452**

To contrast the phenomena and the cultural models which are in clear contempt of human life such as genetic manipulation, legalized abortion, euthanasia, violence and kidnapping, we acclaim a culture that affirms and defends the sacred and inviolable value of human life, from its conception to its natural conclusion, in every phase of its development and in every condition. **453**

At the same time we seek to sensitize the social order so that it may promote respect for every human life, healthy or afflicted; and that quality of life fully worthy of the human person. **454**

- 455 We support movements and groups working for peace, for a just share of material resources and for the respect of nature as conditions for a full development of human life when they are engaged in promoting an evangelical culture of life and which are compatible with the directives of the Church.

### **103. Promotion of the Culture of Charity**

- 456 With the promotion of the culture of charity we agree to mold the thinking, feeling, and acting of people, so that all that creates culture, from philosophy to art, from legislation to social customs, may be inspired toward love, developing solidarity toward those who are disadvantaged and favor the encounter between peoples.
- 457 Therefore, we strive to spread messages, criteria of judgment and models of behavior which exalt these values and oppose all that stifles them.
- 458 We seek, then, to defend through culture the dignity and the rights of the poor. For this purpose we move in diverse directions facilitating consciousness of the moral and spiritual richness which the poor bear. We support their right to

full development and to the goods of society. We firmly denounce the situations of injustice and marginalization, those causes and the processes which deprive persons, groups and entire peoples of the means necessary for a dignified life.

Through culture we want to increase the social knowledge that the advancement of disadvantaged persons is a duty of justice besides that of love, and that a society is truly civilized only when it takes care of the least. **459**

Finally, we work to spread the ideas and models of life that bear peace, reconciliation, mutual respect and reciprocal esteem. **460**

#### **104. Social and Moral Elevation of People**

Faced with the material and social poverty in which entire multitudes find themselves, we intend to contribute to the defense of their dignity and to the cultural and religious values that have woven their history and have made them a people. **461**

According to our charism and in proportion to our energies, we unite ourselves to their efforts of liberty and growth toward a more effective solidarity and communion. **462**

**463** While we care for the weakest in a special way, we are careful to keep alive and to reinforce in the people the conscience of their human, social and Christian identity.

**464** We strive to offer environments conducive to the establishment of initiatives and methods favoring encounters between persons and groups which create bonds and arouse wills toward building together for the common good.

### *b) Specific Criteria*

#### **105. Priority of the Formation of Consciences**

**465** We are convinced that the path for a kinder and more agreeable world begins with an interior renewal of persons. We gear our activity toward our primary concern, the formation of conscience.

**466** Consequently, we guide people to adopt criteria of judgment, lines of thought and models of life which aspire to fraternal and universal love and respect for every human life, above all the weak and defenseless.

**467** We try to sensitize those who work with us or whom we meet to the needs of the neighbor in

difficulty. We strive to elicit in them the will to concretize, in their daily life, solidarity toward the suffering beginning with those who are nearby. We nurture in them the desire for peace and universal brotherhood.

In society, our commitment is that of contributing to the formation of a collective conscience sensitive to the problems of the disadvantaged and decisive in the will to build a “civilization of love.” **468**

### **106. To Value Daily Encounters and Actions**

Without neglecting the possibility of initiating special projects, we generally choose the method of building solidarity and fraternity in the encounters and gestures of daily life. **469**

Before committing others to this task we seek, first of all, to permeate our relationships with all those with whom we come in contact with cordiality and friendship, expressing a message of goodness and serenity through our actions and words.

We strive, then, to form persons who live in solidarity and fraternity not only in times of joy and sorrow or only with those found in a state of **470**

need or suffering, but also in the familial and social encounters of everyday life.

- 471 Finally, we encourage those who live or work with us and those whom Providence permits us to meet, to value the occasions that daily life offers us and to always and everywhere be bearers of love and peace.

### **107. To Seek Always that which Unites**

- 472 On the basis of this principle we work to discover the good present in others and to find in it a reason for meeting and uniting.

In fact, we believe that everywhere there are good hearts and that in every person and in all people are present great moral and spiritual values. We are also convinced that in diversity there are many common values at the level of what we believe as well as what we live.

- 473 We strive to keep our eyes ready to see and our hearts available to accept, in all its fullness, the positive in persons and in their cultures, in situations and in events, resisting the temptation of letting ourselves be blocked by negativism.

- 474 We try to emphasize and to appreciate common values as points of convergence and to make



them the starting point for both planning and educating as well as in working for the spread of charity and the building of communion.

*c) Activity Guidelines*

**108. Our Service: Visible Witness of Our Charism**

A service well done toward the needy is already a message capable of shaking the conscience of society and encouraging it to put into action true advancement of the spirit of solidarity. **475**

Thus, also, the witness of educational communities who live and work in harmony, although they have different mentalities and cultures, is the first contribution for a world of peace. **476**

Our centers, therefore, must be concerned with the caliber of their service and life so that they may be a visible witness of our charism. **477**

So that such witness may be better understood, they should make known to the region the principles guiding our educational communities, their promotional activities and the style with which they act. **478**

This presentation should be well planned, mindful of the mentality of the environment and of the available technological means in such a way, that the values of our system of life and education may be better received and appreciated.

### **109. Communication and Direct Involvement**

**479** Our charitable mission urges us to go beyond the activity and the daily problems to explicitly announce the values of justice, solidarity and peace. Where it is necessary, we denounce situations of marginalization, individual, group and class egotisms and their cultural, political and social causes.

**480** For this reason we make use of mass media as an indispensable vehicle for spreading the culture of charity and life investing appropriate financial and moral energies to take full advantage of their enormous educational power.

**481** In keeping with the ideas of the Founder, we are motivated to build community centers which, in particular, help in the understanding of problems of poverty and related issues.

**482** We propose also to establish initiatives which progressively create the mentality of dialog and

solidarity as occasions of encounter and the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Finally, we try to sensitize those having social and political responsibility and encourage our friends to transmit into their sociopolitical arena an awareness for the urgency of charity and the will to build a more solid and fraternal society.

**483**



**Part Five**  
**EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES**

*Chapter One*

GENERAL CRITERIA

**110. Promotion of People and Educational Culture**

Every one of our centers is to be not only a place where an educational activity to help people is carried out, but also a place where we promote a healthy educational culture providing a specific contribution on the themes relative to those we serve. **484**

This is accomplished by organizing periods of reflection and of study and by offering solid documentation with archival and library availability. We also wish to spread suitable information through competent professionals. **485**

According to their possibilities and with the consent of the educating community, our centers collaborate in serious scientific research in the biological, psychological and educational field. However, we are concerned and demand that it be carried out with respect for Christian ethical principles and the rights of the persons involved. **486**

Following the Founder, we also search to improve the educational methods, in line with the **487**

Guanellian Educational System. We strive toward this improvement through serious documentation and their presentation to society at large.

### **111. Experience of Guanellian Educational Formation**

**488** Given the validity of our educational system, witnessed by more than a century of experience, it is our duty to model our centers in a way that make them places of permanent formation in the educational field.

**489** Therefore we offer the possibility of structured experiences to those who want to improve their educational competence or learn the Guanellian educational system first hand. These persons are willingly accepted, establishing with them a relationship of trust and of dialog which facilitates reciprocal enrichment.

**490** These are given the necessary assistance so that they may understand the Guanellian values. Toward this purpose, periods of practical apprenticeship are alternated with theory, so as to make their stay with us a genuine formative experience.

## **112. Openness to the Region**

Faithful to Guanellian Educational Principles, our centers maintain good relationships with the local people, the authorities and the various social agencies facilitating the cohesion of their energies for the solutions of our people's problems and finding them ways and means for a better quality of life. **491**

Our centers respect current local laws, but are dedicated to safeguard the primacy of the Law of God and the necessary autonomy to maintain our own identity. **492**

Within the forms accepted by society, we participate, with analytical judgment and prophetic courage, in the preparation and realization of the programs of intervention destined for disadvantaged people. In this way our programs may truly elevate those in need to their full human and Christian potential. **493**

According to their possibilities and in respect for the local educational project, our centers place spaces, structures, human resources and techniques at the service of the local community. Reciprocally, they fully utilize the resources present in their own area. **494**

### **113. Meaningful Witness of Human Promotion**

**495** Conscious of the educational mandate received, our centers are concerned with caring and improving their quality of service and of their operation and structures, in the measure afforded by their own human and economic resources.

**496** At the same time, they are careful to coordinate everything for the growth of the person in such a way that it is a motivating example for society, offering meaningful and achievable models for human advancement.

**497** Our centers pursue our goals with humility and seriousness. They are aware of their own limits compared to the greatness of the educational task and know how to appreciate the experience of others, learning from it all that can enrich their own.



## *Chapter Two*

### CRITERIA FOR OPERATION

#### **114. Acceptance of and Attention to People**

Consistent with our educational principles, Guanellian Centers aim at an operation accepting of and attentive to people. **498**

Our centers will conduct the educational activity with a rhythm balancing the seriousness of the commitment with the serenity of the relationships. Regarding the commitment that each one must carry out, our centers offer the possibility of meeting and of listening to the members of the educational community. **499**

The general aim of our centers is a flexible management capable of adapting to each one's rhythms of growth and to their evolving needs, as well as to internal organizational needs, and, after having carefully examined them, to the requests of the civil and ecclesiastical community. **500**

We try to show warm and considerate attention to persons crossing our path — beggars, foreigners, the needy in general — and within the limits possible, find those forms of help prompted by the heart. **501**

### **115. Functional Operation**

**502** In the operation of our works we seek efficiency without neglecting the use of our resources and energies in the best manner possible to obtain optimum results while guaranteeing serenity for the people and their environment.

**503** For this purpose we try to clearly identify all the needs of our people as well as those of the institution. This is necessary for a harmonious integration of the various areas of intervention, for a well ordered organization of means and activities and for their wise application. In this way results can be obtained proportional to the resources invested and useless dispersion or harm can be avoided.

**504** The educational work is never left to chance or improvisation unless we are dealing with emergency circumstances and situations. Instead, the programs and interventions must be planned well in advance and reviewed periodically with appropriate means, according to the established priorities.

### **116. Unity of Operation and Direction**

**505** The two preceding criteria (114, 115) must be closely connected to unity therefore making par-

ticipation effective and expressing the awareness and the joy of working together for the same project.

Everything must harmonize with the local project and converge toward the established objectives. **506**

Not only the general organization, individual activities, and team programs of each worker, but also the decisions required by everyday life or by unexpected situations, must refer to the directives and to the established work guide lines.

Consequently, everyone overcoming the repeated temptation of a sterile individualism, subordinates his own choices and activities to the common project. **507**

A united operation requires also that each sincerely accept the decisions of the competent authority and that this authority effectively exercises its decisional power at the right time.

## *Chapter Three*

### CRITERIA FOR PHYSICAL STRUCTURES

#### **117. Homelike Atmosphere, Simplicity and Good Taste**

**508** Even the buildings of our centers should be in harmony with the principles of Guanellian education and favor its fulfillment.

**509** The organization and the quality of the space are to reflect the most homelike environment possible, respecting each one's privacy while facilitating living together and encountering others.

**510** The form and the furnishings of the building should be dignified. They should express the sense of the dignity of the human person offering sufficient freedom of movement and expression while guarding physical safety in such a way that everyone may feel valued and protected.

**511** The rooms, especially those for housing, should be light and open, so as to arouse the joy of living. Avoiding every form of luxury, they should be simple, in good taste, and give a feeling of family warmth.

#### **118. Functional Operation and Respect for the Local Culture**

**512** To be functional we set aside all the spaces

and areas, internal as well as external, which are necessary to the development of educational activity.

The various buildings and areas, as far as possible, are distributed and connected for easy access avoiding lengthy transfers and loss of time. **513**

Considering the difficulties of limited mobility of many recipients of our service, we offer a barrier free facility. **514**

The structure must be considerate of the homes of the common people, but at the same time be an inspiration for a habitat more respectful of human dignity. **515**

Facility planners must consider, as much as possible, the advancement of engineering standards and techniques of construction, as well as new services required by the unfolding social needs. **516**

## **119. Compatibility with the Entire Educational Program**

Together, with the necessities of everyday living, the buildings of our centers need to respond to the overall needs of the diverse categories of **517**

people, as well as to the expectations of the local educational project in all its purposes.

**518** While respecting local customs and avoiding the superfluous, we equip our centers, not only with what is strictly necessary, but possibly also with those areas and means considered useful and suitable for instruction, psychological, physical rehabilitation and appropriate recreation.

**519** A meaningful place and special care is reserved for the house of the Lord. It is a place to meet with Him and among ourselves.

By its location, structure, style and furnishings, the church must be a visible sign of the presence of God, our Provident Father, in the life of the center and express the faith that inspires our entire activity.