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THE VOICE OF PROVIDENCE
APRIL-MAY 2024



**A VISIT TO THE WORKSHOP
AT NAZARETH**

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

Now and at The Hour is a non-profit bi-monthly publication of the Divine Providence Province of the Servants of Charity, a Catholic Religious Congregation founded by St. Louis Guanella, (1842-1915).

Cover Image: *St. Joseph and Jesus. Pious Union of St. Joseph.* As a carpenter, St. Joseph knew the importance of work. He did not shy away from manual labor, but rather embraced it, with all of its trials and hardships. By giving these difficulties to God, St. Joseph shows how we, too, can sanctify our work, no matter how challenging or mundane it might seem.

Center Image: *Madonna of the Roses* by Gabriel von Max. On a warm spring day, Mary and Jesus enjoy lovely and fragrant wild roses. Jesus' head leans against his mother; their love for each other is clear. We are all Mary's children and she loves us as dearly as she loved Jesus. Let us then remember her this Mothers' Day, and entrust our cares to her.

St. Joseph: **THE RECONCILER**

BY FR. LEO JOSEPH, SDC

“Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness, no one will see the Lord.” Hebrews 12,14

The world is indeed in need of liberation, forgiveness, and reconciliation – all byproducts of holiness. Many of the conflicts and tragedies we witness – murders, suicides, quarrels, and wars – stem from the inability of many individuals to embrace forgiveness and reconciliation. When people hold onto grudges, resentments, and grievances, it often leads to further strife and suffering – for themselves as well as for others. Caught in the middle of the resulting violence, people around the world weep and crave peace.

Unfortunately, the world today will only be able to experience a true sense of peace, one that accompanied St. Joseph throughout his life, when the human race is ready to embrace the spirit of reconciliation. Reconciliation is a profound concept that embodies the journey towards healing, forgiveness, and restoration of relationships. In a world marked by conflict, division, and hurt, the pursuit of reconciliation becomes essential for fostering peace, understanding, and unity among individuals and communities.





God sets a powerful example for us as individuals and as a community of believers. In fact, God Himself is the first example of reconciliation. After Adam and Eve sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, they hid from God in shame and fear. However, instead of abandoning them or condemning them outright, God sought them out and engaged them in conversation. God's first question, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3,9) demonstrates His desire to restore the broken relationship between Himself and humanity. Eventually, His desire to reconcile us to Himself led Him to send His only Son to die for us so that reconciliation could become possible.

Created in the image of God, we are called to emulate His qualities, including His willingness to reconcile and restore relationships. Joseph, the foster father of that Son, through his holiness and self-sacrifice, became the perfect model of reconciliation. When we go through his holy life we come across many occasions where Joseph was called upon to forgive others to assure the safety and peace of the Holy Family.

As we reflect on Matthew 1,18 - 21 concerning the birth of Jesus we come to realize the nobility of Joseph in reconciling himself to God's plan for him. Confronted with Mary's silence about her pregnancy, though greatly troubled, he prayerfully determines to break their relationship secretly to safeguard Mary's reputation. However, once God reveals to him His plans for him and Mary in salvation history, Joseph accepted God's plan with humility and obedience. He submits to the Father's will in the face of the certainty of countless suspicions and possible condemnation from those the Holy Family encountered.

Later on, God led St. Joseph to triumph over various trials and upheavals, moving him from one place to another. Throughout these trials: the Holy Family's journeys, parental anxieties and fears while bearing the weight of God's will, he revealed the path to peace and holiness in times of trouble. His kindness, thoughtfulness, and love become apparent at every step in his life's journey because of his submission to the will of the Father. He wove that path through the dangerous travels and difficulties of raising a family with loving tenderness and a gentle heart that brought his family a clear sense of peace and calm. Joseph demonstrated remarkable patience and suffered his pain in silence.

We witness the magnanimity and inner freedom of Joseph in reconciling with his foster Son. Only a person who has a clear understanding of reconciliation could walk with such integrity, compassion, and transparency as Joseph did. Most importantly, aware of the Divine within and guiding his family, Joseph learned to live in harmony with the troubles and challenges of his role through a perfect trust in the Father's will.

Another of St. Joseph's connections to the significance of the value of reconciliation lies in his role as patron of the Suffering and Dying. As Anchor News noted, "St. Joseph is known as the patron of the dying because he suffered the trials and agony of death and yet he is also the patron of a happy death because he died a singularly privileged death in the consoling presence of Jesus and Mary and was given a powerful intercessory role on behalf of the dying who invoke his aide." (Anchor News, May 10, 2021)

St. Joseph remains vigilant in support of those who invoke his aid in reconciliation with Jesus. Part of an often-used prayer to St. Joseph reads "... remove from me every kind of sin, and obtain for me that death may not come upon me unawares." The focus of his role is to assure reconciliation for the dying. Woe to those who fail to gain this blessing.

For St. Joseph, this condition was fully assured by his commitment to the love of his Son and his trust in the call that he followed to serve the Father with complete diligence. This led Joseph to be a person fully calm and unperturbed; that this inner peace remained with him was evident in every event of his life. Endurance and patience, virtues demanding a great store of humility, characterized Joseph's demeanor. The peace and joy that reigned in the Holy Family and in Joseph's workshop tell the tale of a man who enjoyed freedom and peace—the fruits of a reconciled life.



As St. Joseph discovered, a commitment through the practice of humility, prayer, and service to God's will leads to an easy reconciliation as a path to true holiness and a happy death. Let us continue to pray for his support, a gift that leads to holiness and reconciliation with our Lord. Let us continue to pray for peace in our lives, in the lives of our neighbors, and in the hearts and minds of all those in the world who yet seek to poison others with hatred, fear, and violence.



SHRINE NEWS

BY FR. LEO JOSEPH, SDC

Many events have happened at the shrine recently. The Lent Retreat, on March 9th, offered a talk on the Gift of the Holy Spirit, confessions, and Mass. Afterwards, lunch was provided by the Women's Guild. Many people attended the retreat, and were able to prepare their hearts for Easter.

St. Joseph's Feast Day saw many pilgrims visit the Shrine. Chaldean Groups from Troy, Sterling Heights, and Bloomfield came to honor St. Joseph on his special day. They lit candles, went to the gift shop, and recited the Rosary. Several groups attended Mass, and also enjoyed donuts, tea, and coffee afterwards. Special thanks to Mr. Robert Dallo and his wife, who drove eight hours round-trip to volunteer that day.

The Pascal Triduum began with Holy Thursday Mass at 7:00 pm, with silent adoration following. Stations of the Cross and a Service took place on Good Friday. After the solemn commemoration of Christ's death, we remember his glorious resurrection: God's ultimate victory over sin and death. On the Sunday after Easter, the shrine will hold a Divine Mercy Service, with an opportunity for us to approach the merciful Jesus in the sacrament of confession.

As we move into spring, we look forward to Mothers' Day. God created mothers to nurture us and to demonstrate beauty to the world. Let us always hold them dear to our hearts.

I would like to thank you all for your generous donations to help with the printing and mailing costs of the magazine. Your efforts help us continue our work of evangelization.

Happy Mothers' Day

From the Inbox *and the Mailbox*

Dear Pious Union of St. Joseph,

I want to thank you for being a part of my life. (It seems like only yesterday that Sister was on EWTN with Fr. Mitch explaining the proposal at Grass Lake). I have so enjoyed “Now and at the Hour” and seeing you all, the prayers, and the learning...

Please keep your publication and positive attitude.

Thank you and God bless.

Rose | Gridley, CA

.....

Dear Editing Team,

Thank you for the lovely “Now and at the Hour” little magazine.

Beverly | Mayfield Hts, OH

.....

Dear Fr. Rinaldo,

As an annual contribution to the Pious Union of St. Joseph, I am happy to be part of your effort. Also, I enjoy reading the Now and at the Hour magazine, especially St. Louis Guanella’s words.

P.S. Would you kindly send me the Holy Cloak of St. Joseph?

Margaret | Houston, TX





A VISIT TO THE WORKSHOP AT NAZARETH

BY THERESA CAVICCHIO, OFS

Joseph of Nazareth was a truly unique human being, tasked with a singular divine commission. Just as the Virgin Mary was chosen by God to be the Mother of His Son, so was Joseph chosen to be His earthly father in every respect except that of physical generation.

As we celebrate St. Joseph's May 1st feast day, it is fitting for us to contemplate one particular aspect of that divine commission: the arena of human life we refer to as our work.

In Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*, we find a simple, clear introduction for our topic: "St. Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labor."

Providing that bread was part of St. Joseph's extraordinary mission, within which there was a life – from all appearances, a most ordinary life – to be lived.

In fact, on the surface, it would appear that St. Joseph's mission was as basic as the bread earned as "the fruit of [his] own labor." And yet, in this unique case, all aspects of that life and mission – including Joseph's work life – would have been elevated, given the divine Son entrusted to his care.

For helpful insights into both the mundane and the loftier facets of St. Joseph's life, we turn to *Joseph the Silent*, written by Father Michel Gasnier, O.P., and first published in 1960, four years before the author's death.

In his Preface, Fr. Gasnier attests that, rather than merely "a work of the imagination," his book relies on the Gospels; it also adheres to Church teachings, drawing "considerable support from the meditations and conclusions of the Fathers of the Church, the Doctors, theologians and hagiographers."

With Fr. Gasnier as our guide, then, we travel to the workshop at Nazareth as a typical workday may have occurred – unseen visitors, glimpsing St. Joseph's everyday life as breadwinner for the Holy Family, Jesus at his side.

FROM ST. JOSEPH, JESUS LEARNED THE
VALUE, THE DIGNITY AND THE JOY OF
WHAT IT MEANS TO EAT BREAD THAT
IS THE FRUIT OF ONE'S OWN LABOR.

"At dawn they entered the shop. They opened the shutters and sunlight flooded the whole place. Everywhere was the good healthy smell of worked wood. The workbench stood in the center of the shop. The tools hung from huge hooks on the walls ... They began their preparations by putting on their leather aprons ..."

The day's work would have proceeded, father and son laboring together seamlessly. Jesus, having spent years learning from the best, worked as diligently as his father-teacher. Results of their efforts would have included various articles of furniture, small and large; cartwheels or yokes – sturdy utilitarian pieces built to last, products of expert craftsmanship. Many of their tools continue in use on woodworking tasks today – hatchets, saws, hammers, and mallets among them – although none in so holy a setting.

Continuing our hypothetical visit, we alert our senses to see, hear, and smell the atmosphere of the workshop. We watch and listen as strong arms wield



hammers and saws, their repetitive sounds approaching the musical. “The shavings flew and the chips whirled about. With their sleeves [Joseph and Jesus] wiped away the beads of sweat gathered on their foreheads.”

As another long, hard day for father and son comes to its end, we commiserate: “... their hands were stiff and swollen, their backs ached from leaning over the workbench. But now all was well. They were at home with Mary.” On that heartwarming note, we take our leave as the Holy Family prays together before sharing their evening meal.

We can be assured that the work of St. Joseph, so dutifully carried out with Jesus beside him in their carpentry shop here on earth, continues in the same way – foster father to foster Son – interceding tirelessly for us now from heaven, if we only ask.

Accordingly, Fr. Gasnier provides our conclusion with a quote from the French poet Francis Jammes, writing of St. Joseph: “O my dear ones, I promise you that he who goes about like one of the common herd, like one of us, with his tools on his shoulder and a smile in his beard ... he will never abandon you.”

Theresa Cavicchio is a wife, mother, grandmother, and professed Secular Franciscan.

THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE AND ITS GIFTS

BY ROBERT MARCERO

Perhaps the most misunderstood element of Catholicism is the power and beauty of the Catholic Mass. I have found that the concept of beauty is often confused with the grand churches and cathedrals in which it is celebrated or the sounds of majestic choirs that often accompany its celebration.

While these things can add aesthetic value to a liturgical celebration when it accompanies the Mass; and, while they are certainly a testimony to the great faith of those who built or created them, the Mass's real beauty lies in the manner in which it brings us face to face with Jesus and the depth of God's love for us.

Through the presentation of His word and His sacrifice, which every Mass offers, the mystery of God's vast love for each of us becomes real. In the celebration of the Mass, Jesus invites us into a personal relationship; He



“Thirsts” for us so much that He invites us to “remain in Him” as He “remains in us.” He desires us to be in personal communion with Him; He wants us to give Him everything that we are - our successes, our faults, our brokenness - so that He can work with our hearts and our spirit to heal us and make us whole. The beauty of this is that He does not demand anything from us but our surrender - to His love and His will.

The Power of the Mass is amazing in its many dimensions. The Blessed Mother told the visionaries at Medjugorje that, “The Mass is the greatest prayer to God. You will never be able to comprehend its importance.”

One of the ways that this occurs is through the miracle in which it brings Heaven and earth together in one resplendent celebration. St. Gregory, Doctor of the Church, proclaimed, “The heavens open and multitudes of angels come to assist in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.” St. Augustine added that the Holy Angels “surround and help the priest when he is celebrating Mass.”

THE MASS'S REAL BEAUTY LIES IN THE
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TO FACE WITH JESUS AND THE DEPTH
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United with the Church Triumphant in joyful celebration, the power of Heaven brings God and man together and we become “living tabernacles of God.” When we embrace His physical presence in communion, it creates in each of us a “joyful spirit!” For me, this is the greatest gift. The true power of the Mass lies in the Eucharist, the presence of which one source called the, “superfood of the soul”; united with our Savior, I receive the assistance I need to live a good and true life and to use an outpouring of grace to bring Jesus to the world.

The power of the Mass is also present in the effects on those who, with an open heart, attend with devotion and a spiritual desire. As St. Augustine proclaims, “He who devoutly hears holy Mass will receive a great vigor to enable him to resist mortal sin, and there shall be pardoned to him all venial sins which he may have committed up to that hour.” Father Michael Rennier notes that what the Mass does is reorder our desires - that “God’s intention for us is that we desire what He desires and that it will become a joy to follow His commands. . . It empowers us to seek God naturally and easily.”



In addition, the Mass can provide temporal and physical relief. St. Jerome, Doctor of the Church proclaimed, “Without doubt, the Lord grants all favors which are asked of Him in Mass, provided they be fitting for us; and, which is a matter of great wonder, oftimes He also grants that also which is not demanded of Him, if we, on our part, put no obstacle in the way.”

In one instance, I had a Mass said for a lady of great faith who was suffering from terminal leukemia; her husband later related that, on that day, she was able to get up, eat, exercise and go about her day as though she was not ill. She had gained a day of relief from her symptoms, a day of peace. Though the Mass was offered for her spiritual benefit, her relief from pain was a great blessing.

The power of the Mass is also demonstrated through cases of conversion. There are many testimonies of individuals’ lives being changed by the Mass. One personal one that I encountered was a story that a man, a vice-president of Johnson Controls, related to me. When he was a college student in Boulder, CO, he rose every morning to do schoolwork; and, while sitting at his desk, each day he noticed an elderly woman struggling up a steep hill to the Catholic Church at the top. One morning, in the midst of a nasty snowstorm, he was astonished to see her crawling on her knees up that hill. He decided that “I had to find out what was so important to her. What I discovered was the Mass in all its beauty and power; and, even today, I attend as often as I can. It has never lost its wonder.” Would that we could have that same love for the power and beauty of the sacred liturgy - that we, too, might draw others to its glory!

Robert Marcero is a writer and editor who spent 38 years teaching literature and writing after receiving his BA and MA from Michigan State University. He and his wife Dianne live in Irish Hills, MI where there attend St. Joseph Shrine. Both are semi-retired after raising 6 children. Bob continues to assist others with their writing while assisting in a variety of ways in parish life. He is also a 4th degree member of the Knights of Columbus and the Program Director for the Irish Hills Council.



THE VISITATION: *JOURNEY OF LOVE*

BY ST. LOUIS GUANELLA

“You are my beloved disciples if you love one another.”

We see this in the Blessed Virgin Mary. She already had the Author of Grace, Love, living in her. She enjoyed listening to God’s voice, and it was this voice that urged her to hurry and help her cousin Elizabeth. We can see Mary setting out quickly, caring little about the discomforts of her journey. She traveled, and on the wings of charity, found herself at her cousin Elizabeth’s house.

Mary’s heart beat with total and pure love! Your love must be fervent, too. We can keep St. Paul’s words in mind: “Jesus loved me so much: how can I live without showing kindness to others?”

Vincent De Paul, Raymond of Pennafort, Charles Borromeo, and countless other saints gave themselves to the service of others. You should desire to help people, like Francis Xavier who said: “I wish I could travel around the world and draw all pagans and infidels to the Savior’s cross.” Your love must be like that. It must be unselfish. It must be like Mary’s when she hurried to help her cousin. Even Christ’s enemies act with kindness when it suits them. To love always and in everything is proper only to holy Christians.

This was very true during the Crimean War (1853-1856). Many were wounded or died on the battlefields. Into this carnage came the Sisters of St. Vincent De Paul. Like angels of charity, they hurried to answer the cries of every wounded soldier. They were true Christian women, for like Mary, they carried the flame of Jesus Christ's charity within themselves.

During the war, rich London ladies heard of the heroines and felt called to imitate them. Unfortunately, these ladies were too pampered and selfish. They often refused to help soldiers because it might endanger their own lives. The Catholic Sisters did not agree. They saw Jesus dying on the cross to save sinners. They knew how unbelievers converted, in times of hardship or pestilence, when the saints showed them love. Then the young sisters asked themselves: "Will we then trample on the saints' example, and abandon Christian charity?" We still hear unbelievers today say: "This man is a good one, for he does good to everyone." Mary, over 2000 years later, is still blessed for her kindness. See to it that that everyone has a reason to bless you for your charity.

Go back to Mary visiting Elizabeth. As soon as they saw each other, they embraced. Their hearts encountered one another. What Mary thought, Elizabeth imitated. What Mary wanted; her cousin desired. For the three months they spent together, they enjoyed meals with a shared heart.

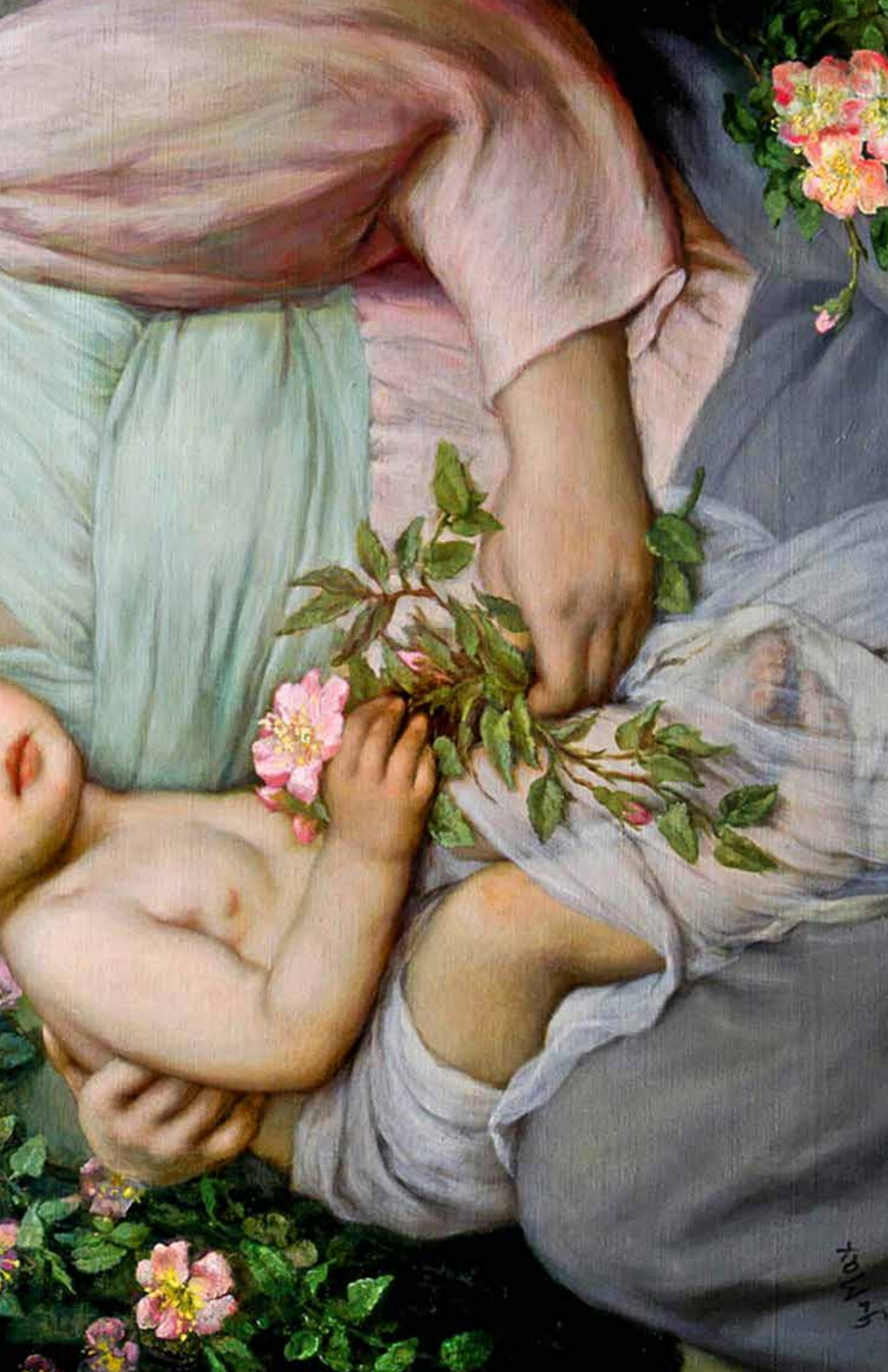
But I am afraid that you do not love Jesus as you should. He is the Father of all and if you do not love Him who is so good, how can you love His children who are so wretched?

Mary loved Jesus Christ with all the strength of her immaculate soul. Thus, she obtained all sorts of blessings for Elizabeth's house. John was sanctified in Elizabeth's womb. Zacharia, who had become a deaf mute, instantly regained the power to hear and speak. Through it all, Elizabeth's spirit rejoiced profoundly.

May it please God if, by loving your Lord Jesus Christ so much, you also bring blessing to others. Pray to Mary for this grace and say: "Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation." Then, to show her a sign of love today, do at least three works of charity, corporal or spiritual, for the sake of your neighbor.









St. Louis Guanella: **MARTYR OF CHARITY IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. JOSEPH**

BY FR. AMAL, SDC

Just as St. Joseph participated most closely in the lives of Jesus and Mary in the work of redemption, others have followed. St. Louis Guanella's dedication to his work of charity, especially to the suffering and dying, reveals how St. Joseph's obedience to God's will inspired St. Louis Guanella to become a martyr of charity.

St. Joseph endured many sorrows in his role as foster father of Jesus Christ though they are not recorded in the Gospel. He heard the priest Simeon's prophecy that Christ would suffer and that his spouse's heart would be pierced. He protected the Child from the blood-thirsty Herod, who sought to destroy Jesus in His infancy as the holy family fled to Egypt. He searched, sorrowing for the adolescent Christ when He was lost for three days before finding Him in the temple.

St. Joseph understood the delights and sufferings that accompany a disciple of Jesus Christ. St. Louis Guanella, understanding that no man was closer to Jesus

than St. Joseph, chose to embrace him as a mentor, and then to imitate him as a martyr of Charity.

The Communion of Saints is the more mysterious and extended relationship. Dedicating his life to the vulnerable of society, St. Louis Guanella was aware that the practice of charity was not easy; it required the help of constant prayer through which the soul dialogues lovingly with God the Father and draws strength from Him to benefit others. His love for the abandoned neighbor takes the form of continuous service that requires the ability to suffer. He embraced a path which understood that prayer and suffering also belong to the life of every baptized person who follows Christ; Fr. Guanella devoted himself to prayer to the Father during his life on earth and to offer himself, as Joseph did, as a victim to assist his adopted Son free humanity from sin and death.

ST. LOUIS GUANELLA FULFILLED THE
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CHARITY TO STEADFASTLY WORK FOR THE
SALVATION OF THE WORLD.

Following the example of St. Joseph, St. Louis Guanella heroically walked this path and pointed it out to his disciples as a model Servant of Charity. He was the father of the poor, an apostle of charity, but also a man of constant prayer. In fact, he communicated with the Father in filial love by abandoning himself in His arms as St. Joseph abandoned his entire life in God's will. He combined genuine piety with an intense pace of work. As an example of constant prayer, in his room at Traona and then in Como, he opened a little window toward the altar of the most Blessed Sacrament so he could spend long periods in adoration. To the Servants of Charity, he asks fidelity to personal and community prayer to rekindle the fire of love and zeal of apostolate.

As was with St. Joseph, suffering was something he welcomed as a necessary and providential way to carry out his mission of charity - for his prayer and struggle, devotion, and work. With love and Spirit guiding him, he accepted the sufferings and tribulations to do God's will - to serve neighbors in need: love authenticated his sacrifice.



The sacrifice that the Founder asks of the Guanellians is to carry their cross daily in the fulfillment of their own duties to the glory of God, for the spreading of His Kingdom. The focus of this love was the generous service of their most abandoned brothers and sisters. The love for the poor and the exercise of charity, in tune with the announcement of the Gospel of Jesus, involves sacrifices and difficulties in daily life. This is the main penance of the Servants of Charity, the cause of mortification for their purification, their growth in virtue, and the effectiveness of their apostolate.

Like St. Joseph, St. Guanella accepted the necessary sacrifices. In writing to his followers, the Servants of Charity and the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence, St. Louis Guanella insisted that Jesus Christ rose gloriously and triumphantly after the torments of His passion; but, if you avoid suffering, how can you receive lasting joy? He insisted that the Servants of Charity ought to excel in the exercise of mortification by bending their shoulders to their engaging but constant chores.

The path that St. Louis Guanella journeyed reflected that, as followers of Jesus, poor and troubled, they must bravely accept, with a spirit of faith, hope, and love, the weight of poverty and everyday toils at every encounter in life. Tribulations and consolations alternate in life but they must be gratefully accepted to deserve the consolations of the spirit and the salvation of those they serve. In this way, St. Louis Guanella fulfilled the purpose for which God had called him, just as He did St. Joseph, as martyr of charity to steadfastly work for the salvation of the world.

Yet, one of the most striking ways St. Guanella emulated St. Joseph's life was his trust in Divine Providence. Joseph, when asked by God to do something, never questioned how it was possible; instead he simply followed the path he was asked to take with full trust in God that somehow it would happen. This was a basic pattern for St. Guanella as he purposefully set out to form the Servants of Charity,

and to build the foundations of service for the poor and disabled that became the trademark of the order.

On one occasion during the construction of the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Como, the administrator sweated all afternoon because there was no money to pay the workers at the end of the day. Meanwhile, St. Guanella spent the afternoon in prayer. When the priest administrator started panicking as the end of the day came, St. Guanella told him, “Quit acting like a crazy man; spend some time praying to someone more powerful.” At that point a gentleman came to the door and, when he witnessed the commotion, St. Guanella told him the situation. The man, whom no one was able to identify, opened his wallet and gave him 500 lira to cover the cost of the wages due.

A comment a priest made later echoed a continuing thought among those who had similar experiences with St. Guanella. He said, “I know for sure that that priest had Divine Providence in his pocket.” Just as Joseph trusted the Lord every step of the way in his service to Jesus, so St. Guanella adopted that same loving trust in God for every need.

Together both of these holy men faced the difficulties and struggles of daily life with a smile and a light heart because of their firm belief in the love and trust in their Heavenly Father to provide, protect, and guide their lives.



PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

*O Mary, Immaculate Virgin
and Mother of Divine
Providence keep my soul in
the fullness of God's grace:
govern my life and direct it
in the way of virtue to the
fulfillment of the divine will.*

*You are the Mother of
Providence; you are the
Virgin of pardon; you are my
hope on earth. Grant that I
may have you as my Mother
in the glory of heaven. Amen.*

Hail Mary ...



THE TWO JOSEPHS

BY FR. AMALRAJ, SDC



WHAT'S IN A NAME? DO PEOPLE WITH THE SAME NAME SOMETIMES HAVE MUCH IN COMMON? WE CAN LOOK AT TWO FAMOUS MEN IN THE BIBLE, BOTH NAMED JOSEPH, AND SEE THEIR SIMILARITIES.

Joseph of the Old Testament is the first Joseph. The Church refers to him as a type, or foreshadowing, of Christ. But many saints hold that the first Joseph is also a prefigurement for St. Joseph. Let us consider some parallels between Joseph of the Old Testament and St. Joseph;

First, both of them had a father named Jacob: Remember the biblical references to the great patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Jacob's son was Joseph. Matthew's Gospel, which traces the family tree of Jesus, says that Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary of whom Christ was born.

The second parallel is that both of them were from royalty: The first Joseph was a patriarch, following the great line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He was the last and perhaps the greatest of the Old Testament patriarchs. St. Joseph also was royalty since he was a descendant of King David. Some Scripture scholars speculate that if Rome had not occupied Palestine at the time, and if the Davidic line was still intact, St. Joseph would have been eligible for the throne.

The third parallel between Joseph and St. Joseph is that both of them suffered and put up with the difficulties of their daily life without complaint: The first Joseph was minding his own business going out into the fields to see his brothers, and they plotted to kill him. They seized him, stripped him and threw him into a well. Then, when they saw a caravan going to Egypt, they sold him into slavery. Joseph could have said, "Lord, here I am; a good man. Why are you allowing this suffering in my life?" Isn't that what we say at times? When we have difficult times in our life, we often ask "God, why me? What have I done wrong?" But, sometimes God allows us to go through suffering and pain for a greater good, just as he did with Joseph in Egypt. Because Joseph was able to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, Pharaoh made him lord and ruler over his house. Joseph, formerly a shepherd boy, was now one of the most important men in Egypt.



St. Joseph had to go through many sufferings as well. Mary was well along in her pregnancy when, as members of the House of David, they had to journey to Bethlehem to take part in the census ordered by the Roman rulers. That involved a difficult journey of perhaps 85 miles on a donkey with no advance lodging reservations. But Joseph obeyed the law. He went and could find no lodging since Bethlehem was packed with other visitors who came for the same purpose. He kept knocking at the doors, but found no room. Think what was going through Joseph's mind. He was the husband, the provider, and knew that Mary's child was of Divine origin. Finally, they found a cave in the countryside where the shepherds tended their sheep, and Jesus was born in a place where animals were sheltered. The King of heaven and earth was laid in a manger - a trough where the animals ate. Think of the suffering, the difficult time that Joseph went through. But, looking at it, good came from even that trying experience. For example, the prophecy that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem was fulfilled.

The fourth similarity between Joseph and St. Joseph is that both left their homes and went to Egypt: Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to Egypt. St. Joseph fled to Egypt with his family to escape Herod's wrath.

The ability to understand dreams is the fifth similarity between the two. In the Old Testament, Joseph gained fame for this ability. While still in prison, he was able to interpret the dreams of the baker and the cupbearer of Pharaoh. When Pharaoh had a strange dream of 7 fat cows

being devoured by 7 skinny cows, he couldn't understand it. Pharaoh also had the dream of the stalk, which had seven healthy ears of corn. Suddenly there was a stalk with 7 withered ears of corn, which swallowed the healthy stalk. Pharaoh couldn't understand these dreams, so he called his magicians but they could not interpret the dreams. Pharaoh had heard of Joseph's ability, so he sent for him and asked him to interpret these dreams. Joseph gave Pharaoh the interpretation - that God was going to bless Egypt with 7 years of plenty, but after that would come 7 years of terrible famine. Because of this insight into the future, Pharaoh picked Joseph to be the manager of his house and ruler over all his possessions.

St. Joseph also understood the meaning of his dreams. The New Testament relates four dreams, which St. Joseph understood and unhesitatingly acted upon. The first was when he had doubts about whether to take Mary as his wife. The angel said "Fear not, Joseph, to accept Mary as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this Child." Joseph recognized the guidance in the dream as coming from God and followed the angel's bidding. Likewise, he recognized the urgency of the message conveyed in the second dream - "flee into Egypt. Herod is trying to kill the Child." In the third dream, Joseph understood that it was safe to return to Palestine since Herod was dead. Lastly, in the fourth dream, Joseph accepted the angel's advice to return to Nazareth because Herod's son had become king. St. Joseph's ability to recognize the divine guidance sent to him in dreams literally saved the Holy Family on several occasions.





Lessons from Vietnam

BY MARY GRACE BLUNT

Jackson, Michigan welcomed Robert (Bob) Johnson into the world on January 13, 1947. After graduating from Catholic high school, Bob attended junior college. Soon, he realized it wasn't right for him, and enlisted in the Marines in September 1966.



After training, Bob landed in Du Nang, Vietnam and was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, Delta Company.

At first the new Marines felt like they'd sweep in, wipe out the North Vietnamese Army (NVA), and win the war. But an assignment on the deadly Operation Swift dampened their spirits. Bob and the others arrived on a recent battlefield, littered with eighty Marine bodies. After loading helicopters with the dead to be sent to America for proper burial, anger surged through Bob. "I wanted to kill them all!" He says today. But as he continued the gruesome task, reality sank in. "I don't know who was inside of those bags. But it was a real wake-up call." This experience and advice from older Marines helped him realize that "the worst thing you can do is go off half-cocked because you'll wind up in a body bag, too."

Though death constantly hovered over Bob, God watched over him, guiding his steps. Once, the NVA trapped Bob's platoon against the ocean. A bullet ripped through the jaw of one of the Marines; a helicopter swooped in to evacuate him, but it was soon shot down. NVA guns hammered Bob's platoon, as another helicopter landed and rescued the injured Marine. Through it all, Bob kept firing his machine gun, and earned a Bronze Star for valor.

**WE'RE AMERICANS.
WE WERE BROUGHT UP IN FREEDOM.
AND WE WANT TO TEACH THE
WORLD FREEDOM.**

During another incident, NVA troops began shelling the Marines. A huge mortar slammed into the ground and threw Bob fifteen feet into the air. Though the blast initially knocked him out, Bob walked away unscathed.

But tragedies still hit close to home. The NVA attacked Charlie Company, wiping out many green soldiers. Bob also remembers walking through South Vietnamese villages during a break in fighting. "And then the next day we might go back and there would be four or five of the people gone. The North Vietnamese had come and killed them because they had even talked to us."

Whispers of revenge circulated among the Marines. Though Bob had wanted to kill all the NVA when he'd first arrived, and he'd witnessed countless atrocities, he called the Marines together, advocating the merciful approach. "I told them

that we don't massacre people. We're still Americans. We were brought up in freedom. And we want to teach the world freedom."

After discharge, Bob returned to his hometown and married a friend from high school. The couple had four children, and Bob now enjoys fifteen grandchildren. But even with his thriving family, Bob knows his life could have turned out very differently. With many close calls in Vietnam, God, in His mercy, protected Bob, and Bob continues to pass on this mercy to others. "I think God kept me safe so I could help people," he says. "The Pious Union, it's like another family. A lot of people are afraid to wear their hearts on their sleeve because someone might make fun of them. But I don't care. I'm going to help until I die."

While many Vietnam Veterans returned bitter and broken, Bob chose to look at life's bright side. He loves meeting new people and also works with disadvantaged and disabled youth, through the Kiwanis Club and Special Olympics.

On Memorial Day, we remember our deceased loved ones and those who have fallen in the line of duty. But though lost, they are not forgotten. Their kindness and love, their courage and strength, continue to live on in each of us. As God spared Bob all those years ago, he continues to mercifully spare us, hold us, and sustain us for the work we have yet to accomplish. Let us then reach out to others, in mercy and love, as Christ has done to us. And Bob believes that this dream can become a reality: "We come from different families, but we think an awful lot alike. And we're all here to become a team and to live as brothers and sisters."





Minutes on the Mass

The part of the Mass known as the Liturgy of the Word continues as the congregation listens to the homily or sermon. This is the part of the Mass when the priest talks about things that are sacred and holy in light of the scripture they have just heard. It helps the people understand how these ancient texts can relate to our lives today.

Once the homily is complete, the congregation stands again to make a profession of faith. The most commonly used version used is the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed that was refined at Constantinople in 380 AD. The Liturgy of the Word ends, but the people remain standing for the Prayers of the Faithful, or General Intercessions. The intercessions are not required, but if they are included there should be at least 4 but no more than 10.

These intentions help to fulfill one of the four ends to the Mass: petition. The other ends to the Mass include adoration, reparation, and thanksgiving. Stay tuned to learn how these ends are fulfilled as we transition into the Liturgy of the Eucharist, starting with the offertory.

Recently the Relevant Radio YouTube channel has organized this series into a playlist that is easy for you to find. I highly encourage you to watch these short instructional videos for yourself. Fr. Rocky covers every detail to help you more fully understand each aspect of the Mass. Look for “Lenten Lessons on the Mass” playlist here: [youtube.com/@RelevantRadioNetwork/playlists](https://www.youtube.com/@RelevantRadioNetwork/playlists)

Fr. Rocky has been a regular contributor to the Relevant Radio programs and is a weekly co-host of the popular show Go Ask Your Father. He was appointed Executive Director of Relevant Radio in April, 2010.

The Pious Union Library

Blessed Clare Bosatta

Clare was a young girl, who at the age of 29, reached the summit of sanctity. St. Louis Guanella had a strong influence on Clare's spirituality. We can understand how his deep relationship with Sr. Clare was decisive for his experience as a Christian, priest, spiritual guide, and founder. By publishing this book about her holiness we hope to further her cause for canonization.



Pious Union Rosary

The Rosary is considered the most powerful weapon in the world to combat demons, evil spirits, and more. It serves as an exceptional means to contemplate, meditate, and communicate with God.

While there are numerous Rosaries associated with saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary, a special Rosary is dedicated to St. Joseph, the patron for suffering and dying souls. The Pious Union of St. Joseph offers two distinct colored Rosaries, light green and brown, in honor of St. Joseph.

The green color is derived from the lily flower held in the hands of St. Joseph, symbolizing virginity and the purity of mind and heart.

The brown color represents the hue of wood, reflecting Joseph's occupation as a carpenter. It emphasizes that, like St. Joseph, we should be active workers both spiritually and physically.



If you would like these, or any of our other items send your request and a donation to the Pious Union of St. Joseph, 953 E. Michigan Ave., Grass Lake, MI 49240. The Pious Union Rosary is a donation of \$10.00, plus shipping.



ST. RITA OF CASCIA

Rita was born in central Italy in 1381. Her husband scorned the faith and often abused her; but he repented shortly before being murdered by a rival gang. Rita's two sons wanted to avenge his killing, but Rita prayed and both sons died before they could commit the mortal sin.

After this, she became a nun famous for her miracles and mystical experiences. Rita is an example for how good mothers should always want the ultimate good for their children.



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

Shrine of St. Joseph Sacraments and Hours of Devotion

Mass times: Sun 10:00 a.m. • M, Tu, Th, Fr and Sat 11:30 a.m.
Wed 8:30 a.m. followed by Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament

Benediction: Wed 3:45 p.m. • Divine Mercy Chaplet: Wed 3:30 p.m.

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

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

Confession: Before and after Mass, upon request

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

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