Immortality and Embrace with God

In our lifetime we try or like to play different roles and we think that we are going to live forever in this world! I asked the Lord, “If I am not playing these roles, then WHO AM I?” All I could see and feel with closed eyes was ‘infinite waves of ocean’! In that sacred moment I knew my real ‘SELF’ and tasted the immorality of this self. The words of scripture resounded in me, “Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?”

It was a profound experience, being an inseparable part of the cosmic energy… the energy that runs this body, this mind, and so on. In spiritual language we name it: being, consciousness, light, spirit, power, soul… Any word would do. What is important is the realization that I am the ‘being’, using this body and playing so many roles and responsibilities.

Navigators are trained to find the ‘eye of the storm’ where they can stop for safety in the midst of a storm. And in the storms of life, for us to find our safe refuge and stability is to be rooted in the immortality of our very being.

I have referred a book ‘On the Tombs of the Deceased’ by Fr. Louis Guanella who wrote this series of meditations on the Christian cult of the dead following the traditional setting of a novena in preparation for the feast of ALL SAINTS and the Commemoration of ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED. The family of the just on earth rejoice with the family of the blessed in paradise! What a delightful spectacle, what an illustrious and numerous family! Our founder is asking a powerful assistance for the sake of ourselves and for the sake of the souls of our deceased brothers and sisters and feel compassion toward the souls in purgatory.

On October 25, 2017 Pope Francis, during his general audience, spoke about hope’s fulfillment in heaven and reminded the faithful that no one should despair because God’s grace is always present for those who put their trust in Him. “Paradise is not a fantasy land or even an enchanted garden. Paradise is an embrace with God, infinite Love, and we enter it thanks to Jesus, who died on the cross for us.”

Our fraternity, considered by the Founder “a small communion of Saints” goes beyond the mere level of human relations and also with gratitude we cherish the memory of those members whom the Father has already called to his house and let us commend divine mercy upon them.

Fr. Soosai Rathinam.

November Calendar of Fr. Provincial

1 Chennai: All Saints’ Day Mass and Perpetual Vows - DGMS
13 DPP Skype Council Meeting
16-26 Visit of Superior General and Secretary
20-24 Pondicherry: Celebration of 4th DPP Provincial Chapter
25 Cuddalore: Evaluation of 4th DPP Provincial Chapter
29 Savariyarpattinam: Nuptial Mass
When my father died, I cried, I suffered and I missed him. But soon I moved on, came back to the States and my usual work. But when my mother died I had a different reaction. My mother, lying in a darkened room, was close to death. But as she reached for my hand and looked at me intently, she was fully aware that her youngest son, the one who left her many years ago, was at her side. She was ready to begin her journey home to God. The woman who had given me birth, nurtured me, taught me how to pray and read, was gone. I was fifty-five years old, but I felt orphaned. We may live to old age but we will always be a child in relation to our parents. Seldom, as adults, are we ready for a parent’s death. We may be busy building our careers, raising our families, traveling or seeking to settle down. Whatever the circumstances, it is virtually impossible to prepare ourselves emotionally for the loss.

Ironically, our society shows very little understanding about the unique pain of losing a mother or a father. However, in my heart I felt that I have every reason to grieve. My mother’s death left me with a sense of abandonment and even panic that caught me by surprise.

Well meaning friends and others tried to console me by saying, “Your mother lived a long, full life, she was suffering so much; surely it’s a blessing.” But those phrases ring hollow: my dear mother lies in the casket. I felt that I had every reason to grieve but I felt the need to move on and get out of the vacuum in which I was caught. Finally, I started to cry and talk with other relatives and friends. I visited the cemetery every day and imagined my mother talking to my father and other relatives. She was in a great place and in good, heavenly company. Calling aloud many times the word “Mom” was remarkably consoling and healing.

But despite our tears and sense of loneliness, we need to move to center stage to leave our mark in the world. But we do not move forward alone. We bring along with us a rich store of treasures from our childhood on; hard lessons learned and principles, fond and painful memories, family celebrations and traditions. We bring who we are, thanks to the love, nurturing and guidance we received in our formative years from the parents whose presence we now miss.

I was never able to assure my mother that I would accompany her on the final leg of her journey home. But as I continue the second half of my life’s journey, I can feel the power of her presence. She is my Mother!
To Bid Farewell

VATLURU - On October 4th the community bid farewell to Fr. Peter Sebastian, former superior, who served the community for the past four years. To express gratitude and commemorate his good works the confreres, sisters, boys and seminarians gathered at Guanella Bhavan. There was a cultural program organized to felicitate him. The dances and songs expressed deep sentiments of sorrow for missing him and at the same time wishing him well for a greater mission. Fr. Sunil Francis shared his experience with him and thanked him for being a model priest to all. Fr. Peter Sebastian was very emotional and he expressed his heartfelt thanks to all for being supportive. “Though I fly to a far off nation, still my heart remains here. I will miss you all,” he said. The evening came to an end with a sumptuous meal.

Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

KUMBAKONAM - Guanella Nagar Parish joyfully celebrated the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary at Jebamalaipuram. This substation has more than 30 Catholic families and is the only church dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary in the Kumbakonam Diocese. The feast began on October 5th with a flag hoisting by Rev. Fr. K. Arockia Samy, Chancellor & Minister. Then he celebrated Holy Mass during which he gave an inspiring homily on Mother Mary and the importance of reciting the Rosary. The celebration continued on October 6th when Fr. Rex Alex Silvester, Vice Rector of Sacred Heart Minor Seminary, Kumbakonam, blessed the car and the faithful prayed the Rosary while processing through the streets of Jebamalaipuram.

He also celebrated Mass and preached the homily. On October 7th Fr. Ansel Antony CMF, Superior of Claret Illam, Kumbakonam, celebrated the feast day Mass and addressed current problems of the world in his homily. He also gave two solutions; first it is possible by the Word of God and second by the recitation of the Holy Rosary. Many faithful attended the Holy Mass and the flag was lowered which brought the celebration to an end.

Bore Well for Anbagam

YESUVANAM - “Strike the rock and water will flow so that the people may drink”. On October 7th a project to quench the thirst of God’s most special children of Anbagam was officially inaugurated by Fr. Gnana Pragasam, recollection master of the Yesuvanam community. All the confreres were delighted to work on the bore well for the benefit of thousands of good children in the future. Water sprung on day seven of digging, symbolizing the water that flowed from the holy temple. The hard work of the community paid off despite many impediments. Through the intercession of St. Louis Guanella with the help of the Holy Spirit the well succeeded. Yesuvanam thanks those people who contributed to this success with their prayers and wishes.

Our Lady of the Rosary

SIVAGANGAI - The feast of Our Lady of the Rosary was commemorated at Guanella Yesuvanam October 7th. It was gratifying to entreat the blessings of Mary on our mission. The postulants created a ship for the Marian procession. In order to grasp the holiness of our Lord Jesus Christ, the mysteries of the Rosary were
enacted by the Guanellian Cooperators and postulants during recitation of the prayer. A good atmosphere in which to contemplate the rosary was created through the repetition of words and the creative presentation by the Guanellians. All who participated felt deepened in their faith in the fidelity to God and Mary and Jesus with them in the joys and sorrows of their lives.

Celebrating Father’s Birthday
CHASENAI - On October 11th the DGMS Campus celebrated the birthday of Fr. S.A Lourduraj, director of Don Guanella Special School. In the morning he was greeted by the good children and their teachers with prayers and gifts. The school put on a cultural program wishing him well and praying for his ministry. In the evening, he celebrated Mass with the community as a thanksgiving offering for the gift of his life and for Providence in his life. He also prayed for the congregation, the community and its welfare. The birthday celebration continued with a special program cut the birthday cake. Bro. Kumar felicitated him with poetic words on behalf of the community and the superior acknowledged him in a special way. With a delicious dinner and thanks from Fr. Lourduraj, the celebration came to an end.

Flag Hoisting, Novena and Rites
CHASENAI - In the footsteps of St. Guanella we walk to Christ. October is a special month in his honor at Don Guanella Major Seminary. A novena to the Founder began on October 15th when Fr. Soosai, Provincial Superior, hoisted the flag. Mass followed, celebrated by Fr. Soosai and during which three brothers received rites in the Church: Bros. Anil Merugu and Raja Rathinam received the declaration of Intent and Bro. Thambusamy received the order of Acolyte to serve the Lord at the Altar. After Mass, the community gathered for a meal and to congratulate the brothers.

Feast of the Apostle of Charity
CHASENAI - After the flag Hoisting, the Don Guanella Major Seminary community organized a novena and prayed for the intercession of the Holy Founder each day. The confreres gave a reflection each day on different topics. On the 21st, the evening school children participated in the novena. Fr. A. C. Periyayaganam shared his reflection on the Founder. On the 22nd, GYM and GLM celebrated the novena with a special prayer service and adoration followed by dinner with the community. October 24th was the grand celebration of the feast. The religious from the area, GLM, GYM gathered for the Eucharistic Celebration celebrated by Fr. Soosai Rathinam, Provincial Superior. Fr. Tony, who has been ministering in the Solomon Islands, gave testimony of his experience there. The novena closed with dinner in the name of St. Louis Guanella.

Family, the Cradle of Formation
CUDDALORE - St. Joseph’s Seminary, the formation house for Aspirants, organized the Annual Parents Meet’ for the current scholastic year on October 24th. Since it was the feast day celebration of our holy Founder, it was more pertinent for the young scholastics to make their personal and collective assessment of their initial formation with the parents and formators. The day began with a prayer service and Eucharistic Adoration. There was a conference by the Rector, Holy Mass and time for personal dialogue with the parents and seminarians. This particular program for the students...
helped them to make a triple examination of their formation through retrospection, introspection and prospection. Their parents realized that family is the first place of priestly formation; and spiritual parenting is the very basic phase for human, Christian, religious and apostolic progression. Everyone in the program was content and happy.

**Enthronement of the Apostle of Charity**

**CUDDALORE** - To make the feast of St. Louis Guanella a remarkable one and on account of the silver jubilee year of the Guanellian presence in Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, India, St. Joseph's Seminary was pleased to enthrone a beautiful and sanctimonious statue in the campus on October 25th. The statue was blessed and enthroned by local community superior Fr. Visuwasam SdC.

Fr. Francis Assisi SdC, Rector of the seminary, thanked and acknowledged all those who provided the means and blessings to actualize the project. In a special way he thanked Mr. John Bosco and his family from Velikoonankurichy, the sole sponsor of the statue. A solemn Mass was celebrated and fraternal Agape shared. Giving 'Bread and the Lord' in the footsteps of St. Louis Guanella was accomplished.

**Laity Honors St. Guanella**

**BANGALORE** - Every year the Guanella Preethi Nivas family proudly celebrates the Novena to our Founder as preparation for his feast. On October 18th the Guanellian Cooperators & Guanellian Lay Movement members lead the Novena. Many members came, though it was a work-day. In our formation we are taught how our Founder clung to the Eucharist to fuel himself to do God’s work, so the evening began with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. During Adoration there was a reading from the Constitutions: articles 1 & 2 and a reading from the Gospel. Fr. Fernandez shared a reflection, he began by asking us if we were proud to be part of the Guanellian Family? When the Church did not trust his vision and his own family didn’t understand him, it was the Laity who encouraged and supported him. They knew Fr. Guanella was doing something extraordinary, good in the eyes of God and they admired his work. Hence, Fr. Guanella believed that where the Clergy & Religious cannot reach, the Laity can and they are an integral part of the Guanellian mission; each might have different opinions, but our Founder confided more in the Laity. The Laity should remember that you have not chosen to do this work but it is God alone who called each one to do his mission. We must remember always to give credit to God alone and He will reward us for our good deeds. On the day of the Feast the foundation stone was laid for a Multipurpose Hall at GPN, this hall will be utilized for the evening tuition children, activities of the aged home and more. As our Founder believed the laity are important for the mission, Fr. Gnanaraj, Superior, and Fr. Adaikalam, Delegate (GC&GLM), had the names of the members written on the bricks, which made them feel more responsible towards the mission and the house, and blessed the site for the future structure. A chariot for St. Guanella was beautifully decorated by the Guanellian Youth. It was blessed and the Religious, laity and benefactors (Christian and otherwise) processed to the Chapel reciting the Rosary. Solemn Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Anthonyssamy, Chancellor from the Diocese. There was a sumptuous meal offered to all Feastday participants.
Outreach of Guanellian Cooperators

LEGAZPI - “The Human Heart is made to Love and Share with Others” was the theme of the annual ‘Dinner for a Cause’ held on October 7th at Harong Kan Sagrada Familia. Harong Kan Sagrada Familia. The event was to benefit our mission of caring for those who are in need, a voice for the voiceless in society. It woke up the hearts that are sleeping in the busy-ness of society. By doing the work of special education for special children, the Servants of Charity strive to give them what they deserve to have in life. Through simple teaching, they are guided to do the simplest things which are necessary for them to support themselves in daily life. As Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyễn Văn Thuận wrote in his book The Way of Hope, “The hopeful way starts by every single dot of hope. The hopeful life starts from every hopeful minute.” The program was successful by the many small presentations by the special kids, the people from the feeding program, youth choir, parents, residents with physical disabilities and staff … We put our hope in what we are doing in order to serve them as best as we can. Many thanks to our benefactors.

Theological Symposium

MANILA - The Ven. Aurelio Bacciarini Theologate (VABT) in the Philippines under the supervision of Fr. Rajesh conducted its 1st Theological Symposium on October 13th. The topic was ‘The Childhood of Fr. Guanella’ 1842-1854. Br. Mark Lanuza, 1st year theology student, presented the story of the early life of young Louis, and it was followed by Br. Erwin Azurin, 2nd year theology student, with his theological perspective. Br. Christian Magdaong, 2nd year theology student, facilitated the simple panel discussion with Fr. Charles, Fr. Charlton and Br. Mauro as special guests. The VABT community is grateful for the active participation of the confreres and seminarians. This event prepared them for a solemn celebration of the feast of St. Louis Guanella this year.

Pilgrimage Refreshes Souls

LEGAZPI - To commemorate the feast day of St. Louis Guanella, the Servants of Charity went on a pilgrimage to Naga City October 20th for all who had helped organize “Dinner for a Cause”. This trip was not only for relaxation, but also to discover new places and to go to the source of faith: Basilica Minore, the church dedicated to our Lady of Penafrancia Patroness of Bicolandia. Even though everyone was tired they were very happy for visiting this church and bringing many of our confidences in prayer before Our Lady. Their hope was renewed and peace deepened in the bottom of their hearts, strengthening them to face the reality of daily life. May our Lady of Penafrancia pray for all of us and bring us to her son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Novices Minister to Children

LEGAZPI - Part of the ministries of the novices during this remembering year for them is ministry to poor children. In this modern life, many children are lacking in love, which must start from their own family but reality is a bitter pill. Instead of receiving the love of their parents, they are neglected by their parents. Many spend the greater part of the day as orphans. We bring them what we have, holy Mass, with the hope of a bright future. We hope that through Mass they could see that life still
has love for them through the ministry of the Servants of Charity who are now with them and bringing them love. What we have, we share as St. Louis Guanella said “if we receive from the Providence of God with two hands, we should give to the poor with four hands”. We not only bring them love but also hope for their future.

Germany Welcomes New Born on the Solomons

Since last August, we have been attentively following the slow increase of this mission which is really at the end of the world. Our Catholic agencies are also open to Oceana. Since the beginning of the new mission shelter on the Solomon Islands, our Procura was feeling committed there for several reasons. Among them the fact that for a short period part of this new state was German Territory until 1920. During the last visit of Fr. Luigi, we felt compelled to create a new charity bridge and proposed a joint visit to Caritas Pforzheim Management. The new Guanellian priest from Noro to the director of CPM to accept this Guanellian 'newborn' as a target of a fundraising campaign before Christmas. Meanwhile a new flier in German containing relevant news from Msgr. Luciano Capelli, Salesian Bishop of the Gizo Diocese, along with drawings of the common shelter will be printed in a few days for mass publication among the generous Catholics in our district. This campaign will start mid-November and the amount raised will be directly transferred to the account of the Gizo Diocese. Photos received from our confreres on the Solomon Islands will adorn the German flier. We hope that this campaign will be useful for the start of the Guanellian presence at the end of the world.

May the Lord bless this charity campaign as a sign of our long commitment in all new DPP charity missions there, but also in the Philippines and recently also in Tanzania.

We would also like to thank confreres in the USA and personnel involved in the DPP News for diffusing our small contribution in creating new missions of charity at the periphery of the world. Let us commit in doing good before approaching His birth.

Gero Lombardo, German Guanellian Procure
Benefactors Enjoy a Taste of Chelsea

CHELSEA - This year’s Taste of Chelsea event started out with the Italian theme of “Alla Tua Salute!” meaning “To Your Health” in English. Approximately 200 people visited St. Mary Parish in Chelsea on Saturday October 7, 2017 to enjoy food and drink samples from all over the area. This included new entries this year from Chelsea Big Boy which donated one dozen fresh pies, Culvers on Jackson Rd. who donated 180 frozen custard cups, Los Tres Amigos which donated tortilla chips and salsa and the new Pontiac Bakery owned by Mary Oesterle who baked 20 apple crumb pies. In addition to our new entries, there were a total of 19 other restaurants who participated and 23 businesses and organizations that provided SLC with financial sponsorships. According to SLC Public Relations Director Joe Yekulis, “Our restaurants and sponsors were tremendous this year. It was a great night and people really enjoyed the Italian music of Francesco and David.”

Pancakes and Pumpkins = Fun

CHELSEA - In what is now becoming a yearly tradition, the Knights of Columbus from Council #6687 at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Michigan Center went all out to serve our residents breakfast during an early morning get-together called “Pancakes and Pumpkins” on Saturday October 21st. The breakfast service began at 7:00 a.m. for the early risers who had to bowl at Saturday Morning Challengers, and continued on until the youngsters in the children’s program were fed. After each one finished their meal, they were given a pumpkin to draw a face on with markers, returning them to their rooms to add color to their upcoming Halloween festivities.

Children Celebrate a Saint

E. PROVIDENCE - Students at Sacred Heart School prepared for the feast of St. Louis Guanella by learning more about his life. Each grade did projects for the event. First graders drew portraits and created alphabet books that used words to describe the life of the saintly Founder. The entire school community celebrated solemn Mass in his honor.

Residents Enjoy Trunk or Treat Fun

CHELSEA - The “Trunk or Treat” concept is an idea that is becoming ever more popular in the United States, and St. Louis Center held another of these events on Wednesday, October 25th for its residents. Supporters gathered together in the evening to dress up in spooky attire and pass out candy and other goodies to the children, (young and old) of the Center. Along with the “trunk or treating,” employees set-up a haunted house and the kitchen staff provided fun treats like Halloween pumpkin cupcakes and chocolate cupcakes with eyeballs; all in good fun. Our residents had a great time during this event.

Forum Addresses Family Issues

CHELSEA - In a continuing effort to be a leader in caring for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, St. Louis Center sponsored its second Special Needs Forum of the year on Thursday, October 26, 2017. The forum was attended by a number of family members who had loved ones with I/DD who were interested in hearing what the specialists had to say about their areas of expertise. Robert Stein, General Counsel of the Michigan Assisted Living Association was the first speaker, and he addressed the issue of Home and Community Based Services. Attorney Roxanne Chang who doubles as a psychologist, was present to address family needs in the decision making process concerning guardianships and power of attorney. Finally Dan Johnson of MassMutual Financial Group discussed the importance of long term financial planning for loved ones with I/DD to ensure proper care for their future.
### November Calendar of Events

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- 26: Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

### Best Wishes and Prayers to:
- 4: Fr. Promiyo, Bro. Robert J.: birthday; Fr. Promiyo: feast day
- 6: Fr. Peter Joseph: birthday
- 10: Fr. Leo Joseph: feast day
- 17: Fr. Enzo Addari: birthday
- 19: Bro. L. Praveen Raj: birthday
- 21: Bro. Solomon Raja: birthday
- 22: Fr. Dennis Weber: ordination day
- 27: Fr. John Peter A.: birthday
- 29: Fr. Achariyam: birthday
- 30: Fr. Adaikalam: birthday

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Have questions or comments about this newsletter? Email the Communications and Community Relations Office at: kellyf@stlouiscenter.org