

News and Views

Newsletter of the Divine Providence Province



Lord, to Whom Shall we Go? Jn 6,68

April 2020

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Masks are wonderfully paradoxical in this way; while they may hide the physical reality, they can show us how a person wants to be seen – Joanna Scott

Masks.....Corona..... Covid-19..... Sanitizers..... Hand washing..... Quarantine.... Social distancing – These are the often heard and spoken slogans of society today at large. More than ever we are at the crossroads of corona, a life of paradox: Gone were the times longing for holidays and spending a few more hours with the kith and kin; when should I get out of my home...Will they extend this quarantine? Where will I go for food without work? How will I pay the bills? Where is my payroll?... Everyone is counting the days of self-imposed quarantine. Handshakes and embraces have given way to bowing.

Perplexed and baffled are the people: what to do next? Jobs are lost, farming is barred, offices are closed, factories are benumbed, transportation is stopped and finally people along with their children have attempted to walk on the highways at least to get back to their natives to look for some food and sustenance. While the developed nations are struggling to meet this challenge, the developing nations are gasping with fear and apprehension.

Why are you afraid? Have you no faith? – the reflection of Pope Francis in his *Urbi et Orbi* message redirects our withered hearts to wake up toward a strong faith in the Lord all the more. Let us reinforce our supplications to the Lord and ask for His healing intervention like the younger son I will get back to my Father (Lk 15,18), why have I to prolong in this misery, I am sure he will do something for me. We have understood more than ever

in this pandemic situation that we are fragile beings, living at the mercy of the Lord; that only the Lord can save us from this storm while all our strength, science, wealth and power have failed us. We are taught once again that If one human is hurt, the whole world is hurt- in other words we are all interconnected though there are manmade boundaries and differences.

We feel united with the whole bruised humanity, we express our solidarity with the people of our communities in any possible ways within the limits prescribed by the law of the land, we continue to carry our confreres, residents, workers of our facilities all over the world, especially in Italy in our prayers and fraternity.

Easter is the feast of tombstones taken away; rocks rolled aside. The Risen Lord, the Lord of Hope will remove these tombstones of discouragement, joblessness, sicknesses, poverty and bring us to a life of serenity, peace and joy.

Have a hope-filled Easter!

Fr. Ronald J. SdC
Provincial Superior



“ The life of the Christian is an on-going tension: if you hope, you will never be disappointed. ”

Pope Francis

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Growing in Spiritual Communion

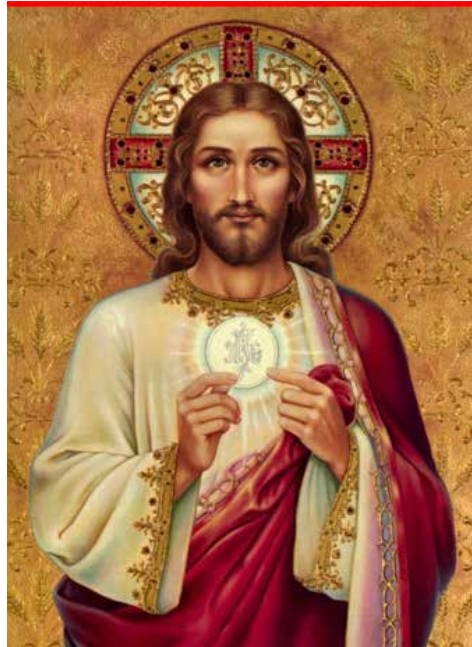
By Fr. Franklin Arockiadoss

“Today’s world is facing a challenging situation. There is fear, anxiety, depression, and a sense of crisis in the hearts and minds of us all. Facing isolation from friends and family, many are found distraught weeping; and, at this time of chaos,” our beloved Holy Father Francis said; “I am thinking of the many people who are mourning, isolated people, in quarantine, the elderly; people who are alone, in the hospital, parents who do not foresee receiving their salary and do not know how they will feed their children.” He then continued: “Many people are weeping. We, too, from our hearts, accompany them. It wouldn’t do us any harm to weep a bit as our Lord wept for all of His people,”

The human world is disturbed; its dreams are scattered - brought almost to a standstill. Everybody cautions one another “stay home and stay safe,” an action that guarantees for many a despairing loneliness. Many mistakenly see the pandemic as a warning - an example of the wrath of the Lord. Indeed, it is not. Our Lord Jesus too wept at the tomb of Lazarus and over Jerusalem. In fact, the Lord promised that He would be with us always - the Lord will never abandon us. Though He knows we will face great difficulties, just as He promised the Apostles, He will always be with us because He loves us; nothing could stop Him from loving us.

Our beloved Holy Father Pope Francis shared his sermon for Mark 4,35 - 41. He noted the following: “When evening had come” and the disciples in the boat trembled in fear when faced with a vicious storm, He had to admonish them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” (Mk 4,35). The Gospel passage reminds us that our situation is similar. For weeks now it has been evening. Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets, and our cities; it has taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice in people’s gestures; their glances give them away. We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel, we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time essential and needed; all of us are called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. Just like those disciples,

who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying, “We are perishing” (v. 38), so we too have realized that we must live our faith; we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together how we can do this. “Teacher, do you not care if we perish?” (v. 38). “Do you not care?” They think that Jesus is not interested in them, does not care about them? One of the things that hurt our families and us most when we hear it said is: “Do you not care about me?” It is a phrase that wounds and unleashes storms in our hearts. It would have shaken Jesus too.



At this time of crisis and difficulties, it is essential to understand that the Lord cares for each of us. As He promised in the Gospel, He will not abandon us, for He promised that He will not leave us as orphans (Jn 4,18). He is always with us. The question often raised is, “Do you not care about me?” shakes everyone who listens; no one wants to hear these words. At this time we need to say to each other that, “I care for you and I will never let you down”; it is a challenge to all of us and we need to face it. In the most difficult moment of her life, our Blessed

Mother stood at the foot of the cross. She looked at her son, beaten, whipped, kicked, ridiculed, criticized, challenged, undermined, and finally made equal with criminals, thieves, and murderers. How many could accept such a situation? Yet, Our Blessed Mother was able to bear her sorrow because of her spiritual communion with her Son. This spiritual communion made her strong; it reinforced her patience in her faith and hope in His resurrection. Today, faced by our loneliness and fear, we, too, need to be in spiritual communion with our Lord Jesus and with one another. So, to remain in spiritual communion, St. Alphonsus Liguori had taught us the following prayer. It is during times like this that we need to say this prayer as often as possible.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You, above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Way of the Cross

SIVAKASI - On March 1st, St. Antony Shrine, Thiruthankal, and St. Arockia Anni Church, Mariyanus Nagar, parishioners came to St. John De Britto Church, Vadapatti, as part of a local tradition to visit nearby Churches and receive the Graces of God during the Lenten season. Parishioners walked

to the church, gathering in the evening to pray the Way of Cross animated by the fathers. Fr. Vincent celebrated Holy Mass and Fr. S.P. Samy preached the homily. Lent is the time to change ourselves and truly become children of God. God is so merciful to forgive our sins. The evening ended with a dinner shared by all.

Lessons in Charity

KULITHURAI - The Cherukol catechism conducted the Third Tamil Academy on March 1st with the topic 'Charity.' The 'Wings of Jesus' group animated holy Mass. The 'St. Louis Guanella' group animated the academy. The students, through skits, explained charity towards animals.

Children memorized Biblical verses that tell about charity. Girls danced and showed how God loves us and therefore we have to love our family. The chief guest instructed the children to love nature, nation and language. Then children enacted a skit about how St. Guanella loved good children. To close the event, everyone sang the Guanella anthem. The academy ended with the distribution of the images of St. Louis Guanella, Blessed Clare Bosatta and Pious Union of St. Joseph images.

Prayers for Public Exams

CUDDALORE - The Don Guanella Boys Home Students prepared day and night to be ready for the public exams. This year twelve students from twelfth standard and another twelve students from eleventh standard went to take the exams. They got up early morning, usually by 4:00 am to prepare for their

exams. They worked hard, putting their heart and soul into doing well on the exam. The Director, Fr. Lourduraj, and other confreres encouraged them in many ways to study well. The Twelfth students started their exams on March 2nd after a special mass and prayer service offered for them. Eleventh students started their exams on March 4th following a special Mass. Accompanied by the confreres all the other boys prayed and wished the students to do the exams well. Twelfth students finished their exams on schedule without any problem. However, the spread of Covid-19 affected the Eleventh students. It was doubtful whether they would have the



last few exams or not. Somehow they managed but indeed they couldn't complete all the exams. Since a curfew was declared and home quarantine is in effect until April 14th, it is unclear when the exams will be completed. In the meantime, we hope and continue to pray for the students.

Farm Training

SIVAGANGAI - A three-day training program on country chicken farm development was conducted by Indian Institute of Agriculture Research Centre in Kundrakudi. Fr. Arputha Raj, the director, and Miss Gunasthana Mary, Special Educator, participated. The program offered a number of techniques and information to develop this industrial form such as: management of the farm, breeding and rearing chicks,

paring, diagnosing and controlling disease, marketing and finance. The district collector awarded the trainees with a certificate. Having successfully completed the farming techniques and poultry management skills it will be soon



established at Yesuvanam. This production will serve as vocational training for the adult MR children.

Guanella Day Devotion

CUDDALORE - Don Guanella Boys Home instituted a special day to spread our Founder's devotion on every first Thursday by inviting the Guanellian Lay Movement and Parishioners for holy Mass. As it began the first time Fr. Lourduraj, the Director of DGBH, celebrated Mass, followed by a blessing with holy oil to heal the people from illness and infirmity. The GLM animated the liturgy.

The Mass was offered for the all the people who are affected by the Corona virus as well as prayed for all the sick people. After Mass Mrs. Elizabeth, in celebration of her birthday, sponsored snacks for all the boys and the GLM members.



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By His Cross ...

CHENNAI - On March 6th, Don Guanella Major Seminary organized the Way of the Cross for the faithful of the local parish in Karayanchavadi. It was a beautiful occasion for the brothers to participate the Way of the Cross with the faithful of the local parish. Many faithful partook and meditated upon the passion reflections given by the brothers of DGMS. After this prayer, DGMS fathers concelebrated holy Mass. Fr. Benson, the Superior, was the main celebrant and Fr. Micheal



gave a homily, highlighting the *Seven Last Words* of Jesus on the Cross. At the end of Mass, the local parish priest showed appreciation and thankfulness for the Guanellian presence in the local parish and helping the faithful to meditate on the passion of Christ. How good it is to receive salvation through the cross of Christ.

Lenten Practice

KULITHURAI - Every year we make plans for Lenten practices, but we must be flexible. Every year an unanticipated thrust emerges and interrupts our attempts to make it meaningful. The people from Anbium Cherukole went to an orphanage, a home for the mentally ill and visited twelve churches as pilgrims on March 7th. Lent is a time to check the spiritual GPS and make sure that we have not gone astray from the recommended route. Through this pilgrimage the Anbium people made a meaningful journey to renew themselves.



Prayer for Protection from Covid-19

CUDDALORE - As the deadly epidemic Covid-19 troubles the whole world, Guanellian Lay Movement members gathered under the guidance of Fr. Francis, local superior and GLM in charge. In the morning on March 7th, the GLM members gathered at Our Lady of



Perpetual Help Church, Samupillai Nagar and prayed for the protection from and defense against this corona virus. Ten members prayed with Fr. Francis. It was a timely proposal and good initiative on the part of GLM. May God protect the whole world from this pandemic virus.

Lenten Pilgrimage

CHENNAI - Don Guanella Special School went on a pilgrimage to St. Joseph's Church, Pazhanchur, near Chengalpattu, on March 7th. Fr. Lourdu, staff and special children went on foot to the church. It is more than 7 km away. They departed at 9:00am and arrived around noon at their destination. Prayers were offered to St. Joseph to give a pleasant journey and good health to the children. We felt the protection and helping



hand of St. Joseph in many ways on the way to church. Upon arrival they prayed the Stations of the Cross before lunch. They returned home by bus, thanking the Lord for His guidance and spiritual nourishment throughout the day.

Women Honored

THALAVADI - Currently Nazareth Illam includes 64 residents among them are 28 women. Though these women are mentally ill patients, they are hard working despite their uniqueness and limitations and do support the community. There are also six women staff members. So we are waiting for the chance to honor and respect the hard work of these women. International Women's day was on March 8th so we decided to take the opportunity to honor our women, so on March 9th we celebrated in



grand manner. The women made this day successful by their presence and wonderful cultural program. We also had a cake cutting and distributed sweets to everyone. The six women staff members were honored with shawls. The chief Guest was Sr. Jincy Francis (ASMI) administrator of Asisi Karuna Nilaya. Fr. Vanathaiyan was the Program Coordinator; Fr. Loyola gave the inaugural address and Regent Bro. William was emcee for the program.

Regents Meet

CHENNAI - A regency gathering was held for four regency brothers on March 10th-11th. They were happy to meet each other and share their year of experience in their respected mission house. Fr. Prakash made their vision clear on the first day for the goals of the mission. It

was so helpful for them to plan their theological studies which would begin soon. Later they went to a movie for a bit of relaxation from their busy schedule. Fr. Antony Samy SdC, in a talk emphasized 'The Evangelization in Mission'. He shared his own mission experience in connection with this topic. Fr. Benson SdC, gave a talk on 'Basic Educational Qualities and Style of the Guanellian Caregiver'. He shared about the attitudes and care towards special children. Participants came with great joy and expectations and left with fulfillment of expectations and sweet memories.



There was a tea break followed by the GC General Councillor, Mr. Dominic, speaking on the discussions and proposals of the newly formed World General GC Council which took place on November 12-16, 2019 in Rome. Then the participants shared their opinions and asked questions. Fr. Provincial, Fr. Gnanaraj and Mr. Dominic answered their queries and doubts. Finally Fr. Provincial thanked everyone for their efforts.

Pilgrimage to Churches

CUDDALORE - The parish priest and the parishioners of our Lady of Perpetual Succor church went on Lenten pilgrimage. They visited 14 churches and prayed the Way of the Cross in Cuddalore as well as other places. It was a very special occasion for all the parishioners to visit the churches and the shrine to pray for all people in the season of Lent. The three most important churches they visited were St. Antony's Shrine in Melnariyappanur, The Shrine of our Lady of Periyamayagi in Konnakuppam, and Sacred Heart Church in Yercaud. In these three



churches they celebrated Mass and prayed the Rosary especially thanking God for building the long needed new church in Samupillai Nagar.

Youth Tour to Goa



BANGALORE - On March 14th the Guanella Youth Movement had an opportunity to visit the important places of Goa on a pilgrimage and tour with the help of the Guanella Preethi Nivas community. Under the guidance of Fr. Joseph Peter, Bro. Antony Samy and Mr. Chinnraj, co-ordinator and member of Guanellian Cooperators, the GYM members travelled happily to Goa, arriving in the morning on March 15th. They visited the Basilica of St. Francis Xavier and participated in Mass. They went to the Museum and spent the whole day exploring places near the Basilica. The following days they had the opportunity to visit the beaches of Goa: Baga Beach, Vagator Beach, Calangute Beach, Arambol Beach, Miramar Beach, and Dona Paula Beach. Then they went to Ship and danced. They happily spent three peaceful days at the parks and playing games on the beaches. They returned safely to Guanella Preethi Nivas on March 18th.

Pilgrimage for Students



KULITHURAI - The catechism class at the Kattuvilai substation is actively conducted with the support of the teachers. They offered these classes with utmost care

so that the children were given a better understanding of the faith and church. Therefore, during the Lenten season we arranged for the students and staff to go on a pilgrimage March 14th. Pilgrimages evoke our earthly journey towards heaven and are traditionally very special occasions for renewal in prayer. Students participated, praying for their families and visiting many churches.

Healing the Inner Child

BANGALORE - The Novices were privileged to attend the class, “The Inner Child Healing” in Dindigul, Tamilnadu, March 16th-21st. The six days were well organized with different topics and therapy exercises like: Child Development, Parental Stages, Child Abuse, Mind Locks, Contaminate Child, Emotion, and



Motivation. In order to release any hidden suppression they guided us in different ways through therapy. These classes were very useful for us to recall our own childhood memories especially the hidden issues. At the same time it helped us become courageous to overcome different difficulties. They fed our minds with a lot of input for the better growth of our souls. During the classes we became like children with the character of innocence. Brothers and sisters from different congregations also attended the classes.

Covid-19 Awareness Program

CUDDALORE - Miss Stella, Guanellian Co-operator from Bangalore, visited Don Guanella Boys Home. Because the whole world is frightened and very serious about Covid-19 she presented an awareness program and taught some



practical guidelines in order to protect the boys from the corona virus. She explained preventive methods such as washing hands frequently, maintaining social distancing, trying to avoid touching the face, avoid going out and not gathering with your friends as group. It was very useful and a good lesson for the boys to be aware of the virus and to protect their health.

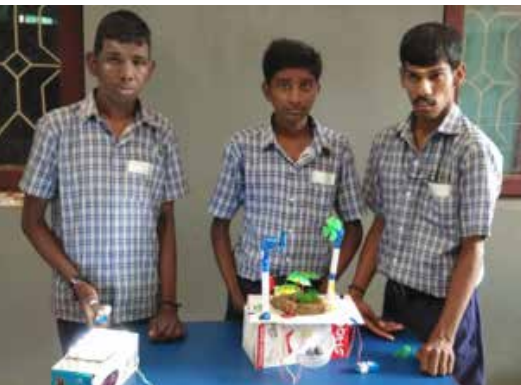
Legion of Mary Cares



KULITHURAI - As the season of Lent began, the Legion of Mary dispersed to Nanguneri Hosanna Illam on March 18th to share the love of Christ with the 25 good children. People looked through the eyes of faith more than through physical sight. The good children lack all sources of attraction that might win human affection. Through our presence the children have comprehended the love of Christ. Their actions and words really made the Legion of Mary happy and instilled a desire to serve them more.

Talents Revealed

CHENNAI - Don Guanella Special School offers different classes and many activities under one roof. One class is vocational training. The purpose of this course is to enable the special children to earn by themselves and live in society with dignity. We teach them candle making, handloom and other crafts. Our students S. Balaji and R. Ranjth were inspired by these activities, without any assistance from staff members, they created



a torch light and windmill by using waste plastics. They bought all the equipment from the shop and came up with this beautiful product. They were acknowledged

for their ingenuity and encouraged to come up with new inventions.

Training the Teachers

KULITHURAI - Part of the annual Cherukole catechism plan, includes a training workshop for the teachers. It was held at the Tuticorn pastoral center on March 19th. Fr. Starwin and his team conducted the class. The one day workshop was divided into three sessions. Bro. Maria Raja led the first session on how to prepare a lesson plan. The second session was a model class with some students led by Bro. Suthan. Then Bro. Dinesh taught them some action songs. The teachers enjoyed the process of teaching and learning.



Blessing of the New Main Gate

THALAVADI - On March 20th Nazareth Illam held a ceremony for the blessing of the new Main Gate. A new compound wall was constructed and integrated with

a new main gate for the home. That evening everyone gathered in front of the new gate for the prayer and blessing. The Engineer of the project, Mr. Antony, and



his masons and workers were present for the blessing. Fr. Gnana Raj, SdC, local superior, blessed the main gate and prayed over the people.

It was a very happy moment for all who participated in the ceremony. Mr. Antony gave sweets to all who participated in the ceremony as a sign of happiness.

Pandemic Prayers

CHENNAI - The whole world is in panic over Covid-19, the pandemic disease which invariably affects the whole world. In view of praying for control of the disease and cure of the affected people, the Don Guanella Major Seminary community arranged a 12-hour Adoration on March 23rd beginning at 6am and ending with

holy Mass at 7 pm. As the Government strictly insists upon staying home to stay safe, we pray that everyone stays close to Jesus and that we may be protected from Covid-19. We also started praying through the intercession of St. Corona for healing and prevention.



April Calendar of Events

- 5 Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion
- 8 Anniversary of the First Communion of St. Louis Guanella (1852)
- 9 Maundy Thursday
- 10 Friday of the Passion of the Lord
- 11 Holy Saturday
- 12 Easter Sunday of the Resurrection
- Grass Lake: Mother of Divine Providence Day - PUSJ
- 19 Divine Mercy Sunday
- Grass Lake: St. Joseph's Day - PUSJ
- 21 Anniversary of the Beatification of Blessed Clare Bosatta
- 25 St. Mark, Evangelist
- 30 Feast of St. Josphe Cottolengo

Best Wishes and Prayers to:

- 1 Fr. Fortunato Turati, Fr. Badugu Christuraj, Bro. Anil Merugu, Fr. Johnson: birthday; Fr. Piero Lippoli: ordination day
- 3 Fr. Jerin: birthday

- 6 Fr. Francis Assisi: birthday
- 8 Fr. John Paul Britto: birthday
- 13 Fr. Selvakani: birthday
- 16 Fr. M. Vincent: birthday
- 20 Fr. Gabriel G., Fr. S. Packiyaraj: birthday
- 21 Fr. Luigi De Giambattista, Fr. Silvio De Nard: ordination day
- 24 Fr. Antony Samy: birthday
- 28 Fr. Alfonso Crippa: ordination day



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

State Senator Visits

CHELSEA - On Friday, March 13th, State Sen. Lana Theis (R-22) visited SLC to tour the St. Louis Guanella Village Construction site, and listen to political concerns about state funding for Home and Community Based Services and how to preserve government funds intended for services to people with I/DD as opposed to the local units



of government who receive them. Sen. Theis also assisted with a ceremony at the end of the day that honored one of the residents for a heroic act.

St. Louis Center Responds to Covid-19

CHELSEA - As we close the book on the month of March 2020, the worldwide pandemic known as COVID-19 has taken its toll on the State of Michigan, as it has for the rest of the world. The State is reporting 7,615 cases of infected residents and 259 deaths as of March 31st; and 25% of those cases are from the City of Detroit, a mere 60 miles to the east of SLC. There are now 305 confirmed cases in Washtenaw County with 7 deaths, and S.E. Michigan is now ranked as the fourth most serious hot spot for the virus in America. So how has this crisis impacted SLC?

As cases began spiking in the state, Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued an executive order on March 16th barring non-essential visitors from entering health care and direct care facilities. As a result, SLC has taken the following steps to keep our residents safe. Several families have taken their loved ones home, however that still left the majority of our children and adults to be cared for. The Direct Care and support staff have done a superb job of reporting to work and caring for the residents, and the Administrative Staff has provided great leadership. However non-essential staff working in an administrative support role are now working remotely from their homes.

When staff report to work, they are required to have their temperatures checked, and the results are documented. Any staff not feeling well with potential symptoms from this virus are asked to stay home and self-quarantine, and the major construction projects for St. Louis Guanella Village and the Social Work department have been suspended until the crisis subsides. Along with that, major events such as the IACL Dinner Dance in April and the 60th Anniversary celebration slated for June 17th have been postponed. All school and work programs have been cancelled, and as a result, additional

staffing is needed to fill the day shift with no school in session. Housekeeping is keeping high traffic areas disinfected, and hand sanitizer and hand washing is a requirement throughout the day for personal safety. President Trump has extended the “Stay Home” recommendation through April 30th, and it will be several weeks before things are back to normal. In the meantime, SLC will do everything it can to keep the residents safe.

In Memoriam: Julian Early

CHELSEA - St. Louis Center is saddened to announce the passing of Julian Lamont Early, a longtime resident who passed peacefully unto the Lord on the morning of March 14, 2020 at the age of 59. Julian always knew that SLC was his home, and all the residents were all members of his extended family.



Julian was born in Detroit, MI on October 7, 1960, and he had been a resident of SLC since October 26, 1974.

Julian’s smile could light up a room, and everyone loved him because he was such a “Gentle Soul.” He had a great love of sports, especially the Detroit

Tigers and Detroit Red Wings, and he also enjoyed bowling, dancing, bingo, watching NASCAR racing on television, and Bible study. In previous years he worked at Cottage Inn and Macaroni Grill in Ann Arbor through Michigan Ability Partners, and his last job was working in the dining room at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital – Chelsea.

Julian’s parents were Samuel Allen Early, Jr. and Marjorie Settles-Washington and they preceded him in death. He is survived by his half-brothers Walter House (Eleanor) of Reynoldsburg, Ohio, Stuart House (Kathleen) of Orinda, CA, and brother Allen Early III of Detroit. Burial will take place at the Chattanooga National Veterans Cemetery in Tennessee. A memorial service will take place to honor Julian at SLC at a future date. The family has requested that donations in Julian’s name be sent to SLC.

Remote Mass

GRASS LAKE - The Bishop of the ansing Diocese, Most Rev. Earl Boyea, has ordered that all public celebrations and gatherings be cancelled including the celebration of Mass. Fr. Leo Joseph, director of the Pious Union, has been livestreaming Mass daily on Facebook to provide spiritual food to the faithful.