

## Rosary with Pier Giorgio

### *Blessed Pier Giorgio's "120<sup>TH</sup> Birthday*

*"The striking thing about him was his purity, his radiant joy, his piety, his freedom as a child of God for all that is beautiful in the world."*

*- Karl Rahner*

Pier Giorgio's devotion to Our Lady and his fidelity to the daily recitation of the Holy Rosary is well known. It is surely by meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary and looking up to the Blessed Virgin that Pier Giorgio learned to contemplate the *Tota Pulchra's* splendour and to cultivate every highest virtue; among these, purity of heart and chastity of body. For this reason, through this simple and powerful prayer, we want to invoke the intercession of Pier Giorgio and Our Lady, in order to obtain the desire to seek a such derided virtue.

Pier Giorgio makes a gesture, as cornerstone of his charity, with his prophetic adherence to the Angelic warfare Confraternity (*Angelic Militia*). This was founded by the Dominican François Deurweders in 1644, after having been to Vercelli where he visited the belt that the angels tied around Saint Thomas Aquinas to protect him from sexual desires and keep him in chastity.

Chastity is the powerful expression of a pure gaze, of a smile free from any ambiguity, of feelings that rise from mediocrity and are expressed in words and gestures capable of respecting every sensibility and exalting the dignity of the heart of the person in front of me, for which Christ died and rose again. This is the thread that leads us through the contemplation of the glorious mysteries, in which chastity becomes a meaningful sign and pledge in our lives.

Our Pier Giorgio, fully conscious, faced the great battle to guard such a precious gift and entrusted himself to the powerful militia in order to come out victorious. It is the response of he who completely understood that the higher the value to be defended, the higher must be the defense be aimed, in order to rise from the miseries of this world and go "to the Heights". All this makes him closer to us and at the same time urges us to a serious response in our life: that we may raise our gaze "to the Heights", finding him, strong and bold, as our defender in the fight- together with the army of angels that God puts next to us to achieve victory!

## **The First Glorious Mystery: The Resurrection of Jesus Purity of Gaze**

*"Blessed are the pure of heart for they will see God." (Matt. 5:8)*

I met Pier Giorgio in the autumn of 1924. At that time I was in Turin as quartermaster of the 41<sup>st</sup> Artillery Company. One Sunday – I don't know whether it was in September or October – I was off-duty and went to Mass in San Secondo Church, the last Mass at 1 p.m.

I went in and stood amid the crowd of people. When Mass was over, I received Communion. When I returned from the altar and went to my place, I saw Pier Giorgio. He was standing up straight, and he had a rosary in his hand. He looked at me, and it was as if lightning flashed from his eyes. It was just a moment, but it was an eternity.

I will never forget that glance. I buried my face in my hands and tried to concentrate on thinking about Jesus, but all I could see was that flashing light from those eyes, a glance that had something about it that seemed mystical, gigantic, and strong. When I left, the church was deserted. But outside on the street, I saw a truly handsome young man standing in the sunshine. It was Pier Giorgio Frassati. He came up to me, with a bit of a grin on his face, and I remember one thing in particular: he lowered his eyes.

"May I introduce myself!" he said. I felt as if John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, was standing before me.

I looked at him and impulsively stuck out my hand. "Thanks," he said. I didn't know whether he was thanking me for having received Communion or for having extended my hand. "I'll go with you. Tell me where you're going and where you're from." I put my hand lightly on his arm and told him that I was from a village in the Alps. I couldn't have told him anything better, because he lit up with joy. He loved the mountains so much!

When we arrived at the red doorway of the barracks, he said to me, as if he were giving me an order, "Why don't you get a group of soldiers together every Sunday and bring them to San Secondo?" I didn't reply, but I shook hands as a sign that I would. The next Sunday, more than twenty soldiers from my Company went to Communion. And from the shadowy silence of the nave, I saw Pier Giorgio Frassati's deep joy.

It only took one word from him to work a miracle, because life in the barracks didn't lend itself to going to Mass. (*Gianni Brunelli*)

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, Glory Be...

**Holy Angels, who present our prayers and our promises to the Most High, pray for us.**

## **The Second Glorious Mystery: The Ascension of Jesus**

*Purity of Smile*

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)*

(Costa) I was sick with three children in a tender age, and he took care of the children. He entered my house with great respect, greeted the little one, Teresina, with affection and guided her to her grandmother, by her hand. He sat and asked me about how my children were behaving, and comforted me with words and gifts.

One day he asked me why I didn't enroll Teresina in kindergarten and I responded by saying that I didn't have the means to do so. He smiled and responded by saying that he would take care of it. He put her in school, bought her apron and shoes, and then always asked the nuns how she was doing because she was a child with poor health.

When he came to my house, little Teresa would celebrate immensely. He asked her if she prayed to God and Teresina told him yes. Then he said, "pray also for me, I need it a lot." And he comforted me with many beautiful words because I was mourning my husband's death. (L. Frassati, *My Brother Pier Giorgio: Charity*)

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, Glory Be...

**Holy Angels, who sustain us in the battle, pray for us.**

### **The Third Glorious Mystery: The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and Mary**

#### *Purity of Gestures*

*"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word." (Psalm 119:9)*

Mario Muratori remembers him with his arms full of wood in the winter, climbing stair after stair to the narrow and dirty outlying neighborhoods, to bring the comfort of a little heat to his poor. And when there wasn't enough wood, he thought about the gas bill, paying for it himself. He did not let a day go by in which his poor would be deprived of those few comforts that he could manage to obtain by his resourcefulness. He went above and beyond. Where a moral vigilance was necessary, he didn't turn back. He directed the habits of the boys and girls so that they would manifest that purity and honesty of feelings, which he considered as indispensable for the Christian life. (L. Frassati, *My Brother Pier Giorgio: Charity*)

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, Glory Be...

**Holy Angels, who fly to our aid when we are in danger, pray for us.**

### **The Fourth Glorious Mystery: The Assumption of Mary**

#### *Purity of Words*

*"Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false." (Psalm 24: 3-4)*

I'm asking you to pray for me a little so that God will give me an iron will, that does not bend and does not fail in His projects. (to A. Severi 13 April 1925)

In today's struggle, I cannot but thank God because He has willed in His Infinite Mercy to grant this sorrow to my heart so that by means of these arduous thorns I might return to a life that is more interior, more spiritual. Until this age, I was living too materially and now I need to refortify my soul for future struggles because from now on every day, every hour there will be a new battle to fight and a new victory to conquer. (to I. Bonini, 29 January 1925)

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, Glory Be...

**Holy Angels, who carry our souls to the bosom of the God of Mercy, pray for us.**

**The Fifth Glorious Mystery: The Coronation of Our Lady as Queen of Heaven and Earth  
Purity of Emotions**

*"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (Phil. 4:8)*

I have often been in the mountains with Her<sup>1</sup>, often with others; ... In my internal struggles I have many times asked myself why should I be sad? Why should I suffer, endure this sacrifice unwillingly? Have I perhaps lost the Faith? No, thank God, my Faith is still firm enough and so let us strengthen, let us reaffirm what is the only Joy with which one can be satisfied in this world. Every sacrifice is worthwhile if only for that; **then as Catholics, we have a Love which surpasses every other love and which after that owed to God is immensely beautiful, just as our religion is beautiful. Love, which had as its advocate that Apostle who preached it daily in all his letters to the various Faithful. Charity**, without which, says St. Paul, every other virtue is worthless. It is indeed that which can be a guide and direction for our whole life, for a whole program. This, with the Grace of God, can be the goal toward which my soul can strive....

Well, my plan in this is to transform that special liking that I have had for Her, which wasn't willed, to the end to which we ought to arrive, in the light of Charity, in the respectful bond of friendship understood in the Christian sense, in the respect for her virtue, in the imitation of her illustrious gifts, as I have for the others. Perhaps you might tell me that it's madness to hope this; but I believe, if you pray for me a bit, that in a short time I can achieve this state in prayer.

So this is my plan which I hope to achieve with the Grace of God, even if it will cost me the sacrifice of earthly life, but it matters little. (from a letter to I. Bonini, 6<sup>th</sup> march, 1925)

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, Glory Be...

**Holy Angels, who work ceaselessly to bring us true happiness with God, pray for us.**

LITANY OF BLESSED PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI

Lord, have mercy on us. *Christ, have mercy on us.*  
Lord, have mercy on us. Christ hear us. *Christ, graciously hear us.*

God the Father of heaven, *Have mercy on us.*  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *Have mercy on us.*  
God the Holy Spirit, *Have mercy on us.*  
Holy Trinity, one God, *Have mercy on us.*

Holy Mary, *Pray for us. (repeat after each line)*

All the angels and saints,  
Bl. Pier Giorgio,  
Loving son and brother,  
Support of family life,  
Friend of the friendless,  
Most Christian of companions,  
Leader of youth,  
Helper of those in need,  
Teacher of charity,  
Patron of the poor,  
Comfort of the sick,  
Athlete for God's kingdom,  
Conqueror of life's mountains,  
Defender of truth and virtue,  
Opponent of every injustice,  
Patriotic citizen of the nation,  
Loyal son of the Church,  
Devoted child of the Madonna,  
Ardent adorer of the Eucharist,  
Fervent student of the Scriptures,  
Dedicated follower of St. Dominic,  
Apostle of prayer and fasting,  
Guide to a deep love for Jesus,  
Diligent in work and study,  
Joyful in all of life's circumstances,  
Strong in safeguarding chastity,  
Silent in pain and suffering,  
Faithful to the promises of Baptism,  
Model of humility,  
Example of detachment,  
Mirror of obedience,  
Man of the Beatitudes,

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, *Spare us, O Lord.*  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, *Graciously hear us, O Lord.*  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, *Have mercy on us.*

Pray for us, Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

*Let us pray, Father, you gave to the young Pier Giorgio Frassati the joy of meeting Christ and of living his faith in service of the poor and the sick. Through his intercession, may we, too, walk the path of the Beatitudes and follow the example of his generosity, spreading the spirit of the Gospel in society. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. (card. Giovanni Saldarini)*

 *Testo a cura della BRIGATA FRASSATI- Salerno (2021)*