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June 7, 2018  
Feast of the Sacred Heart

Dear Stigmatine Lay Member,

This month our Stigmatine reflections will follow a slightly different pattern. Enclosed here, I offer some extensive reflections on the Sacred Heart and then also on the celebration of Divine Mercy. Many think that there has occurred spiritual development here within the universal Church. This may be so to some extent because of the critical reflections after Vatican II, of the traditional Church celebration of the Solemnity of Sacred Heart. The eminent theologian, Fr. Karl Rahner, SJ, offered some rather pointed observations concerning the former ways of observing the Feast. His views were brought together and deeply analyzed in a Doctoral Thesis [cf. Sr. Annice Callahan, RSCJ, Karl Rahner's Spirituality of the Pierced Heart – a Reinterpretation of Devotion to the Sacred Heart: University Press of America 1985, pp. 177].

Perhaps, though, more than this influence, there might be concluded that the Holy Spirit seems to be leading the Church to an even more sublime and consoling development of the Devotion of Divine Mercy – with its well known Icon, resulting Sr. Faustina's work – using the same symbols for the Sacred Heart, now applied to the Pierced Side, in that this development now presents more the Pierced Side of Jesus Christ, the source of the Precious Blood and water flowing from the side of Christ [cf. Jn 19: 31-37], that is the more considered. [In this regard, please note the magnificent Encyclical on the Sacred Heart, by Pope Pius XII, Haurietis Aquas, May 15, 1956].

At any rate, there is a NT document – the Document to the Hebrews – that has been much pondered as will be presented in this letter, comparing the torn temple Veil with the Pierced Side [cf. Heb cc. 6, .9, 10]. This Wound is also preserved in His Risen Body, indicating the Course of the Apostolic Mission [cf. Jn 20: 19-29]: ... AS the Father sent Me, now I send you!

The NT Document to the Hebrews seems to be a kind of NT theological and spiritual commentary on the OT Book of Leviticus. The unknown "Hebrews", for some interpreters, seem to have been a group of recent converts living in *diaspora* - where they were not accepted because they were Jews; and had come home for the "High Holidays", and were not welcomed because they had become Christian. The Document to Hebrews encourages them by making use of the familiar Jewish theology of Martyrdom and Sacrifice. The unknown Author offers them a "Word of

Encouragement” by delivering this extended message of hope-filled exhortation to persevere – almost like an Easter homily during the persistent Lenten experience of the Church. [Incidentally, St. Barnabas, also celebrated in June on the 11<sup>th</sup>, is remembered as a “Son of Encouragement” [cf. Ac 4:36]. Such a spirit surely seems to remain a central challenge for the Stigmatine “Apostolic Mission”, based on the integral Stigmata: the Sorrow ones of Good Friday, and the Stigmata of Mission on Easter Sunday. [cf. Hebrews scholar, Harold W. Attridge].

Our late Stigmatine Confrere, Fr. Cornelio Fabro, noted that the atrocious sufferings endured by St. Gaspar Bertoni throughout most of his long life, played a providential role in his Spirituality of Holy Abandonment. Fr. Fabro noted the combined profound impact of the Blessed Sacrament and physical suffering had in the life of St. Gaspar. Fr. Fabro wrote:

... For almost fifty years, Fr. Bertoni would hide in silence, the recurring phenomena of his interior life; it is true that this would burst forth in his sermons, in his correspondence, and in the guidance to souls of every age and social level – from the young men in the Oratory, to priests and bishops, from those condemned to death as well as the founders of religious families, including the great Anthony Rosmini. The last mentioned was able to declare that at the beginning of the foundation of his Institutes, he went to see Fr. Bertoni who: *... after having seen the rules, he provided me with a most efficacious encouragement, dissipating my every doubt. So it is that in some manner, this enterprise has also been born in their house*<sup>1</sup>. For reasons such as this, Fr. Bertoni was called an ‘angel of counsel.’

Such experiences were most vibrant, much like spurts and flames, which reached the depths of one’s soul. In this, our conclusion to these reflections may serve as a kind of a confirmation, of which just a few brief hints would suffice: the characteristic is that they have as their center the Eucharistic mystery, which was through his life something like an expansion, or indeed, an effect of the Real Presence. The forms of this ‘divine contact’ are many and varied. Here are some examples: “... many tears of compunction and affections” – ‘a most vivid sentiment in the presence of our Lord [after Mass] and the sentiment further of offering myself to suffer with Him... experiencing very sublime reflections concerning God, but a profound recognition of myself.’

In something like an ‘ecstasy’ at the altar of St. Ignatius, St. Gaspar wrote: ‘... much devotion and recollection with a great internal sweetness and some tears...’ – and this was followed by energetic references of invitation addressed to the Saint. He experienced a powerful stimulus to work with perfection and a vivid sentiment of the fragility of human existence. He wrote: ‘... I experienced a strong movement to follow more closely our Lord at the cost of my own life for His poverty and shame He endured. During his teaching of Catechism he felt that ... there were opened for him those paths even to being able to arrive at a persuasive lesson.’ This almost seems like the level of a rapture.

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<sup>1</sup> Written from Stresa, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 1846. Cfr. C. Fabro, *L'enigma Rosmini*, Napoli 1988, p. 68.

The visit to St. Ignatius' altar noted in his *Spiritual Diary* [Sept. 15, 1808] was decisive for the foundation of his Congregation: '...Onward soldiers of Christ, bind yourselves with boldness.' There follows then a powerful thought on death. His catechism experience of that September was strong 'union with the divine Son.' As a kind of preamble there were opened for him very easily those paths even to providing a most persuasive lesson. There followed then certain thrusts of 'suffering and being rejected for Him'. And he experienced an understanding what a great gift it was to suffer something for the love of God.' The most intense, though, seems to be that of October 9<sup>th</sup>, which needs to be reread often in its entirety for the depths of his experience of the supernatural in this young priest, already having reached a high point in loving contemplation.

While St. Gaspar did not often quote the NT Document to the Hebrews, it seems to have served, as it did the early Christians, an exhortation to a group of early believers suffering immensely in their Priesthood of the Baptized and not the least of which meant enduring the shame that was foisted upon them by their lived choice of the Faith: ... *Jesus endured the Cross, heedless of its shame*... [Heb 12:2]. It is not accidental that St. Ignatius encourages retreatants to live their lives in poverty like Jesus, and to accept even the extreme poverty of shame as a privileged way of following Christ.

St. Ignatius speaks of shame in these terms [cf. Sp. Ex # 48]:

The Second Prelude. I will ask God our Lord for what I want and desire. ...in a contemplation on the Resurrection, I will ask for joy with Christ in joy... in a contemplation on the Passion, I will ask for sorrow, tears and anguish with Christ in anguish. Here it will be to ask for shame and confusion...

Surely, as already noted in Hebrews, Christ suffered truly painful shame as will we. Fr. Bertoni was quite familiar with it as can be noted in his Spiritual Diary [with Fr. Stofella's rich commentary]:

### **25th SEPTEMBER 1808**

[51.] Meditation. The Kingdom of Christ. Strong [inner] motion to follow Our Lord closely, at the cost of [my] life, through Poverty and Humiliation.

... The Retreat is finished. It seems that Fr. Bertoni wanted to fill in the gaps of an incomplete course of *Spiritual Exercises*, picking up and considering more deeply some Ignatian themes which had been neglected. Here Fr. Da Ponte is his teacher. In the Manuscripts of Fr. Bertoni, [cf. MssB - Fascicle n. 92] we have the organized points of more than 50 Meditations of Da Ponte. Titles and sub-titles in such a way that each point could make for a complete Meditation. The first carries this title: *The Kingdom of Christ*, which in Da Ponte's is just a page heading, but Fr. Bertoni put it as the title to the whole collection. The Journal too carries here *The Kingdom of Christ*. Fr. Gaspar says that he felt a strong inner motion, which may indicate a supernatural experience, towards what is the utmost *fruit*, as Ignatius calls it, of this Meditation. Fr. Gaspar feels like one of those generous souls which give away all for all:

... Those Religious who imitate the Apostles have as their aim to get concerned not only about their own salvation and perfection, but also about the salvation and perfection of their neighbors. They offer themselves with enthusiasm for any labor perfection of their neighbor... and... profess to be companions of Jesus in this enterprise. They offer themselves with enthusiasm for any labor...

### **29th SEPTEMBER 1808**

[57.] The recognition of what great good it is to suffer something for the sake of God. *Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice. Blessed are you when they will curse you and insult you and reject your name as bad and they will say any evil against you, falsely, for my name. Be glad on that day because your reward is great in heaven.*

This text does not allow us to interpret the nature of that misunderstanding St. Gaspar was enduring. We think that after the intense experiences of the previous days, it should have been something of the same nature as those previous graces. It was also an authentic penetration of the spirit of the Beatitudes. In this case too we leave it as "*the secret of the King*" [Mt 5:10; Lk 6:23].

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During the last days of that September and the very first ones of October, Fr. Gaspar had to keep himself busy in preparing the *panegyric* (a special homily for the annual solemn liturgical feast) honoring St. Francis of Assisi, in the church of St Firmus Major, which was served by the Friars Minor Conventuals. Fr. Gaspar must have worked very hard for that *panegyric*, day and night. We have two different drafts of that labour for the homily. Both carry the title by the hand of Fr. Gaspar: *Panegyric of St Francis of Assisi, preached in St. Firmus Major on 4th Oct. 1808, Verona*. While one of them looks almost complete and ready to be written for the finished copy, the second one has a different format but still incomplete. We think that, during the actual sermon, Fr. Gaspar must have included in the first structure some elements of the second draft.

What strikes us here is the connection between these drafts and the *spirit and letter* of this Journal. It is the spontaneous exaltation, with open heart, of that spirit of detachment and self-abnegation which, in his Journal, is the constant leading motive and pattern. Is that not the pattern which St. Francis of Assisi lived in a more perfect way?

Here are some extracts from that *panegyric*:

... To talk about this most holy Hero is to talk about the most perfect spirit of Penance, and the most sublime spirit of the Cross and the most fervent spirit of love towards Christ crucified. Hence we can easily apply to him those words of Christ:

*"If one wants to come after me, let him deny himself!"* This is the spirit of penitence.

*"Let him take his cross".* This is the spirit of the cross.

**"Let him follow after me" (Mt 16, 24). This is the spirit of love.**

**These are the principles, these are the steps and this is the perfection of his holiness.**

**Here is the way traced for those who want to follow it: "*If one wants*". For those who want to run this course, not relying on one's own strength but on the divine mercy: "*let him come after me*". All this fits Francis very well. I am sure that while hearing these things, though said in my poor way, you will be inflamed by the desire to imitate him who imitated Christ.**

**If one wants...!**

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May these pages serve as a suggestion of our thoughts for living the spirit of our Founder's Solemnity, June 12, 2018 – the 165<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. May his spirit remain alive in all of us who pray to him and for his Community.

Respectfully submitted:

*Fr. Joseph Henchey, CSS*

Acting Spiritual Director

Appendix:

The Stigmatine Calendar for the month of June. Compiled and translated by Rev. Joseph Henchey, CSS [1967].

Enclosed documents:

- Solemnity of St. Gaspar Bertoni – June 12, 2018
- The Sacred Heart of Jesus – Biblical Reflections
- Reflections on the Mystery of Divine Mercy
- Three "Franciscan" Panegyrics
- Roster of the Deceased Stigmatines in June.

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**JUNE****1**

**1785:** Fr. James Bertoni died – he was the brother of Gaspar Bertoni [Sr.] - the Grandfather of St. Gaspar Bertoni.

**1796:** French troops enter Verona.

**1814:** In his letter this day, Fr. Bertoni seems to express a much broader view for the education of women than did many of his contemporaries: he also offers some views on class-room procedures and concludes with the thought that suffering is the best school.

**1875:** Attorney Brasca wrote again to Fr. Rigoni and told him the long ordeal in the Courts that had just been concluded was one of the most difficult cases that he had ever handled and one that had a better solution than most cases he had handled.

**2**

**1831:** Feast of Corpus Christi – Louis Zozza entered the Congregation: he was described as a ‘man of good will.’

**1835:** Fr. Bertoni and Fr. Marani began a retreat for 20 young men about to receive Holy Orders. One of them, a young man by the name of Sartori, made his retreat privately, under Fr. Brugnoli.

**3**

**1826:** Francis Bongiovanni, a Doctor of the Law, had not settled the difficulties with Fr. Galvani’s heirs. In the meantime, he had passed away about one month earlier. Fr. Bertoni then asked Fr. Guerrieri’s<sup>2</sup> help as he was most learned. Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet that he could not cede St. Teresa’s Convent to her until he himself legally owned it.

**1871:** Andrew Sterza and Michael Lanaro were ordained Priests.

**1875:** Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, on this first Thursday of the month, preached a day of recollection to the Diocesan Seminarians of Verona in the place of Fr. Maestrelli, recently deceased.

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<sup>2</sup> This Dominican is often noted in Fr. Bertoni’s *Epistolario*.

4

- 1814:** Ember Saturday<sup>3</sup> – Bishop Liruti ordained John Mary Marani a Priest. On this same day, Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet and told her that he was confined to bed.
- 1829:** Fr. Guerrieri was of the opinion that Fr. Bertoni should cede the Convent of St. Teresa's to Mother Naudet for as long as her Congregation lasts.
- 1836:** Fr. Bertoni thanked Fr. Bragato for having the 'Holy Prince', i.e., Prince d'Hohenlohe, or Alexander Leopold Francis **Emmerick** – pray for him.
- 1858:** Frs. Lenotti and Benciolini went to Montorio to preach a Mission. When it was over, they traveled through many little villages of Valle di Tregnago for a number of Missions.
- 1864:** This date marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fr. Marani's ordination. A painting was made of him that is still retained.

5

- 1803:** Fr. Bertoni preached on the Law of the Gospel – it is the richest state of all and promises eternal happiness.
- 1814:** Trinity Sunday – Fr. Marani, ordained the day before, celebrated his First Mass in St. Paul's Parish. Fr. Bertoni was ill so could not attend. He wrote to Mother Naudet and offered her suggestions on how to write to the Pope. He advised her to keep copies of her correspondence on file.
- 1867:** Fr. Lenotti preached at the Seminary of Trent on the occasion of establishing there a Congregation of Prayer to the Sacred Heart for the Priests of the Diocese.
- 1875:** Fr. Alfieri arranged two audiences with the Holy Father, Pius IX, for Fr. Rigoni, one private and one public.
- 1896:** The corner-stone of the new Church of St. Bernadine Vecchio, Trent, was blessed.

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<sup>3</sup> Ember days (corruption from Latin *Quatuor Tempora*, four times) are the days at the beginning of the seasons ordered by the Church as days of fast and abstinence. They were definitely arranged and prescribed for the entire Church by Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) for the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of the same week, in conjunction with the four seasons of the year. The Fall *Tempora* (in the North hemisphere) occurs after September 14<sup>th</sup> (Exaltation of the Holy Cross); on Winter, after December 13<sup>th</sup> (St. Lucy); on Spring, after Ash Wednesday; and, on Summer, after Whitsunday (Pentecost Sunday).

6

- 1815:** French troops under Napoleon, moved north, toward Belgium
- 1817:** Bishop Liruti granted broader faculties for the Priests at the Stimate that Fr. Bertoni had requested.
- 1860:** Frs. Benciolini and Lenotti preached a Retreat to the Daughters of Mary.

7

- 1800:** This was the original date for Fr. Bertoni's Ordination – it was postponed, as Bishop Avogadro was prevented from coming.
- 1867:** Bishop Riccabona took part in the closing ceremony at the Seminary of Trent of the erection of a Congregation of Prayer for the Priests of his Diocese that had been preached by Fr. Lenotti.
- 1837:** Bartholomew Perrazzani and Bellino Carrara were ordained Priests this day.

8

- 1800:** Gaspar Bertoni, a Deacon, preached his first sermon in his home Parish of St. Paul's and he spoke on 'Humility'. It is a virtue needed by saint and sinner alike – it is practiced eminently by St. Aloysius Gonzaga.
- 1814:** Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet and told her that he was feeling better but was still unable to offer Mass.
- 1846:** Fr. Lenotti seemed to have some fear of preaching – Fr. Bertoni suggested three simple rules for him: just before going out to preach, remain quiet, without studying; while preaching, try to imagine that it is God Who listens; rest a while after preaching, to regarding your strength and reflect on what you have preached to others. [In these days, sermons were sometimes about 45 minutes long, as a matter of routine – Fr. Bertoni often noted after the title of his text how many minutes it took to deliver his sermons].
- 1875:** Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Fr. Rigoni, Procurator General, who was in Rome, to tell him that he was most pleased that Cardinal Franchi [Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the faith] had seen him and that they had discussed a possible mission field for the Congregation.



9

- 1814:** Feast of *Corpus Christi* - Fr. Bertoni left his home [that of Joseph and his Aunt Rosa Ravelli Scudellini] to offer Mass.
- 1826:** Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet to tell her of his happiness regarding the Rescript that the Sisters had received from Rome that granted a Plenary Indulgence on Entrance and Profession Days.
- 1829:** Francis Solari entered 'one month after the departure of Louis DalForno', the House Chronicle notes.
- 1846:** Then 'Way of the Cross' was erected in the Church of the Stimate.
- 1874:** The little Church of *Santa Maria del Giglio* opened its doors to the public this day. An old diary left by the then Cleric, Joseph Zandonai, called it 'magnificent.'
- 1891:** Fr. Anthony OssBals who had endeared himself to the people in and around the Church of San Martino, Trent, died this day. His place was taken by the ailing Fr. Peter Beltrami.
- 1896:** On this date, Fr. Tabarelli signed an agreement with the Confraternity of the Crucified, which ceded the use of the Church and the adjoining house of San Nicola dei Prefeti in Rome to the Congregation. It required that the Congregation should take care of the Church and the House and their upkeep, and the Confraternity would retain the rights to the Church for certain of its special Feasts.

10

- 1814:** Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet and told her that he had received a copy of Corneille's *Tragedies*. He stated that he was waiting for Certicelli's Italian Grammar.
- 1836:** The Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus – Fr. Bertoni said Mass for the first time in many months. Fr. Marani celebrated at St. Sebastian's in fulfillment of a Novena that had been suggested to him by the holy Prince d'Hohenlohe.
- 1903:** The Court of Appeals heard the case of Louis Marchesini vs. Stephen Rosa concerning the will of the late Fr. Joseph Marchesini.

**11**

- 1797:** Sunday – Bishop Avogadro conferred the last two Minor Orders, Exorcist and Acolyte, on Gaspar Bertoni.
- 1801:** Charles Pacificus Fedellini, son of Peter, was born at 9:00 a.m., and was baptized this same day.
- 1851:** Fr. Bertoni dictated a letter to Bishop Mutti, which Fr. Lenotti wrote – the Bishop had sent Father Bertoni a book on Religion for his perusal and, in this letter, Fr. Bertoni offered his critique of it.
- 1856:** Sunday – Frs. Marani and Benciolini began a Retreat for young girls at St. Anastasia's. At its conclusion, they gave a two day retreat to the young girls at the Canossian Sisters, at San Zeno. Fr. Benciolini noted in his Spiritual Diary the practice of St. Paul of the Cross of praying to the Guardian Angel before preaching.
- 1866:** Bro. Paul Zanoli, the first Brother of the Congregation, died at the *Trinità* on this day, 'at the hour of sunset and without fear.'
- 1875:** Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, sent precise instructions to Fr. Rigoni, who was in Rome to speak with Cardinal Franchi, the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith. Fr. Rigoni was instructed to ask the Cardinal the following: [1] what studies future Missionaries should take up, and could they study in Verona, or would they have to go to Rome; [2] who would bear the expenses of their trips; [3] what dependence would be expected of them toward the Sacred Congregation, and in what would they be subject to the Superiors of their own Congregation in Verona.

**12**

- 1819:** Bishop Liruti extended for two more years the faculties that he had previously granted the Priests at the Stimmate.
- 1826:** A Dr. Philip Marai noted that he had been treating Fr. Francis Benciolini for shortness of breath caused by an inflammation of the thorax.
- 1842:** Fr. Cainer celebrated Mass this day, but not again for two months.
- 1846:** Bishop Mutti made a Pastoral Visitation at the Stimmate, and found everything satisfactory.

**1853:** A number of Priests at the Stimate went out to teach the *Fourth Class* [Catechism] in the parishes of Verona this Sunday afternoon. Fr. Marani had been attending the dying Fr. Bertoni and then handed the Ritual and stole to Fr. Brugnoli - after conferring the Last Sacraments. He then started out for St. Luke's Parish, where he was to teach. Then he decided to come back to Fr. Bertoni and sent word to the Pastor of St. Luke's – when he re-entered Fr. Bertoni's room, he made the responses to the prayers 'for a departing soul' offered by Fr. Brugnoli. Shortly, Fr. Brugnoli turned to Fr. Marani, and said: **'Don't you see that Fr. Gaspar is dead?'** Fr. Gramego came into the room and looked at the still form of Fr. Bertoni, and was recorded as saying: **It is now my turn to follow him soon.** [He died six weeks later].



The dying Fr. Bertoni, with his confreres.  
The Crucifix was the only ornament of his room ever.

**1854:** A letter arrived at the Stimate from Fr. Bragato urging Fr. Marani to hasten to Rome and visit Bishop Riccabona there.

**1855:** Fr. Raimondi, SJ, former member of the Stimate, died on Fr. Bertoni's second anniversary.

- 1864:** The Golden Jubilee of Fr. Marani's Ordination observed this day - Fr. Bragato came and assisted at the Solemn Mass. Maestro Gagliardi composed and conducted the music at the evening *Accademia*. Count Fietta and his wife, the Countess, commissioned a portrait of Fr. Marani – the Countess also presented Fr. Marani with a reliquary of St. Rose of Viterbo.
- 1873:** The feast of *Corpus Christi* solemnly observed by the Students at Sale di Povo. A Solemn Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart was made in honor of the long legal battle just ended for the return of the property that had been confiscated by the government.
- 1875:** Fr. Rigoni took part in a public audience granted by Pius IX and got close enough to kiss the Pontiff's feet – he had the rosaries blessed, as Fr. Lenotti had requested.
- 1890:** Monsignor Battandier, Consultor to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, made some important observations concerning the Constitutions and the Congregation. It was he who pointed out that the Congregation had no right to confer the title *Apostolic Missionary*, as this title was the prerogative of the Holy See.
- 1903:** The Court in Verona ruled that Louis Marchesini had no valid case against Fr. Stephen Rosa - Marchesini appealed the case to a higher court, still claiming that he was the rightful heir.

### 13

- 1829:** Bishop Grasser ordained Louis Biadego a Deacon in the Cathedral of Verona this Ember Saturday.<sup>4</sup>
- 1848:** Fr. Benciolini and Fr. Venturini were released from house arrest in the Seminary after nine days, due to the intervention of Marshall Radetski.
- 1853:** Fr. Marani, Director of the Oratory, gave a talk to the Sisters of the Holy Family on the passing of Fr. Bertoni - he frequently broke down during his talk. Fr. Fedelini, who had left the Congregation, wrote to Fr. Marani on this day, and asked if he could one day return to the Congregation.
- 1899:** Lady Giacomina Guicciardi Simonetti left the 'Guicciardi Palace' in Gemona to the Congregation in the person of Fr. James Marini, for use as a school

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<sup>4</sup> i.b.: footnote 15, p. 75.

and Oratory. In the beginning, two Priests took care of Gemona, coming from the community in Udine.

## 14

- 1819:** Fr. Bragato left the Congregation on this date, due to a chest ailment. He re-entered the Congregation on October 30, 1828 – and died as one of its most illustrious members, on October 12, 1874.
- 1854:** Fr. Bragato arrived too late for Fr. Bertoni's funeral.
- 1858:** Fr. Marani was ill at this time – most of the Fathers were out preaching extensively through the mountains: in Ghiaccia, Compofontana, San Bartolemeo, Belca, Castelnuovo, Vestena Vecchia and Nuova, preparing these parishes for the Bishop's impending Visitation.
- 1861:** Pius IX answered Fr. Marani's petition in the affirmative, allowing the members of the Congregation to be ordained with the canonical title *mensa communis*.
- 1867:** Fr. Rigoni was in Florence and he wrote on this date, saying that the difficulties with St. Teresa's will soon be over – by the following August, this would prove to be an illusion!

## 15

- 1821:** Fr. Galvani gave the Stimate an annual endowment of 100 Lira, and asked permission from the government that it be opened for public worship. He was the legal owner.
- 1845:** The government of Lombard-Veneto approved Fr. Charles Fedelini for the Chair of Moral Theology in the Diocesan Seminary.
- 1882:** Fr. Peter Vignola, Superior General, convoked a meeting of the General Council, and the **Graduati Fathers** – i.e., those Priests who had been raised to the title of **Apostolic Missionary** - to discuss Fr. Morando's proposal concerning Bassano. Five Priests were needed for the ever-expanding work there.
- 1891:** About this time, Fr. Pio Gurisatti, who was sent to Rome to care for the Church of S. Nicola dei Prefeti on a temporary basis, returned to Verona, and his place in Rome was taken by Fr. Louis Morando.

## 16

- 1809:** Fr. Bertoni noted in his Spiritual Diary that he, as a 'soldier', had to place himself on the field of combat every morning – he proposed to disavow his own will and of trying to do all things as God's Will.
- 1832:** Bishop Grasser ordained Charles Fedelini a Sub-Deacon.
- 1865:** Bro. Horace Negro, at the Stimate a mere six years, died this day at the young age of only 34. He was described as a man of great humility, wisdom and prayer – his death deeply grieved the ageing Superior General, Fr. Marani.
- 1869:** Fr. Marani wrote to Fr. Rigoni who had gone to Milan to consult a lawyer concerning the property. He told Fr. Rigoni 'to explain the case well to the lawyer'. He said that both he and Fr. Bassi were grateful to Fr. Rigoni for his two letters.
- 1875:** At 8:45 p.m., Fr. Rigoni was ushered into the presence of Pope Pius IX for a Private Audience with him. The Audience lasted one half hour. Fr. Rigoni wrote exuberantly that the Holy Father was a 'Miracle of a Pope'. As soon as he returned to his lodging in Rome this night, he wrote immediately to Fr. Lenotti. Fr. Rigoni received the following from the Holy Father: permission for the Blessed Sacrament in Trent; the commemoration of the day of the Espousals was raised to a Double of the 2nd Class, with an Octave – and the Pope promised his personal assistance to the Congregation in its efforts to obtain Papal Approbation.

## 17

- 1807:** One of Napoleon's edicts further explaining the ban of Oratories was signed this date by an agent named Guicciardi.
- 1812:** Louis Ferrari was born at Lughezzano, son of James; he would one day be a Brother in our Congregation, and a confidant of Fr. Marani, Superior General.
- 1853:** Fr. Lenotti did not preach at the regular Friday devotions at the Stimate – perhaps Fr. Marani preached – he had the reputation of being able to preach without formal preparation, with the same effect as 'one who had studied.'
- 1857:** Fr. Marani went to Stra to take Fr. Bragato's place at the Imperial Court. Fr. Bragato went to Bologna to obtain two favors from the Pope: that the members of the Congregation might be able to give the papal Blessing at the close of their Parish Missions, Retreats; that they might be able to bless

Rosaries and the like with special indulgences – and also the favor that the members of the Congregation might say Mass one hour before dawn, if there was a good reason.

**1872:** The Students left the summer home of Bishop Riccabona at Villazzano which had been the Student House for the past six years – and they moved to nearby Sale' di Povo. The Student House stayed here then two years.

**1873:** Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, was appointed extraordinary Confessor to a group of Religious.

**1875:** Fr. Lenotti, Superior General wrote to Fr. Rigoni in Rome and told him that the Confreres at the Stimate were most anxious to hear about Fr. Rigoni's private audience with the Pope the day before.

## 18

**1815:** Waterloo, Belgium – the battle raged for nine hours, 50,000 men either killed, or wounded – the Duke of Wellington – [Gen. Arthur Wellesley] defeated Napoleon and sent his Victory Dispatch from Waterloo, and history recorded it as the 'Battle of Waterloo'.

**1839:** Louis Ferrari and Francis Stevanoni, both 27, entered the Congregation on this date to be Brothers.

**1852:** Canonical Erection of the Congregation of the Sisters called 'The Handmaids of Charity of Mary Crucified of Rose', from Brescia.

**1853:** In the paper *Collettore dell'Adidge*, Fr. Fedelini authored a eulogy of Fr. Bertoni – he wrote: 'we have lost a treasure.' Fr. Fedelini had not as yet re-entered the Congregation.

**1875:** Fr. Rigoni wrote again from Rome concerning his Audience with Pius IX. In the exchange of letters between Frs. Lenotti and Rigoni, great emphasis was given to the fact that the Audience took place on the Pope's 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Election as Pope, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> centenary of the Apparitions to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. In answering these letters, Fr. Lenotti told Fr. Rigoni to pray to some saint that he [Fr. Lenotti] might be relieved of his terrible headaches.

**1891:** A Triduum was preached at the Stimate and at Pavia in honor of St. Aloysius. Fr. Bertapelle preached to the 500 members of the Oratory at Pavia and sent a letter to Rome that was on display for many years in the Saint's room there.

19

- 1834:** Fr. Oberrauch wrote to Fr. Rosmini and told him that Fr. Bertoni's advice to Fr. Rosmini concerning his acceptance of the Parish at Rovereto was most wise and founded on good reasons.
- 1866:** Fr. Lenotti preached at S. Nicola in Verona at the Devotions in honor of St. Joseph, as was done each month on the 19<sup>th</sup>, and he told his listeners how much he enjoyed preaching the entire month there.

20

- 1802:** Sunday – the actual date of the beginning of the Marian Oratory established in St. Paul's Parish by young Fr. Bertoni. This Oratory became the exemplar for so many other such organizations in the Diocese of Verona.
- 1833:** The first casting of the bells for the Stimate was done this day - they were to be 'as perfect as those at the *Trinità*. Fr. Cainer's Memories [a Chronicle of events in the Church of the Stimate] began this day.
- 1854:** A civil Decree bore this date, that permitted Fr. Bertoni's body to be returned to the Stimate for interment.
- 1867:** Feast of *Corpus Christi* - Fr. Marani left Verona for Villazzano, to celebrate the Feast there with the Students; Fr. Lenotti gave a brilliant discourse.

In Verona on this day, a sacrilege was committed against the Blessed Sacrament, that seemed to portend an unhappy time for the Church in Verona. As the procession went through the Piazza dei Signori, it was broken up by a band of ruffians, and the Blessed Sacrament was locked in a nearby Church.

- 1883:** Fr. Charles Zara, faithful Chronicler of the Congregation, died today – on this same date, Fr. Carrara left the Congregation to join the Jesuits in Trent.

21

- 1801:** Fr. Bertoni preached on this Feast of St. Aloysius, one of his special Patrons. He spoke on the Saint's love for neighbor – our advantage with God increases in proportion to our love for our neighbor.



- 1821:** Bishop Liruti extended for another two years the faculties of the Fathers at the Stimate. These were special faculties he granted in deference of Fr. Bertoni.
- 1834:** Special services were held at the Stimate in honor of St. Aloysius – it was a special service for men that began at 9:45 a.m., with a review of the Saint's life; at 10:15, the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, and a sermon by Fr. Bragato; at 5:00 p.m., a lesson from the Saint's life and Solemn Vespers, conducted by Fr. Lenotti.
- 1840:** Fr. Odescalchi, SJ [retired Cardinal] wrote to Monsignor Anton Mary Traversi – close friend of Pope Gregory XVI - and told him of Fr. Bertoni's 'devoted affection' for the Holy See.
- 1846:** Louis Morando was born.
- 1862:** Fr. Bragato celebrated his 'Name Day' at the Stimate by assisting at the Profession of a young man also celebrating his 'Name Day', Louis Morando.
- 1863:** Fr. Bragato again this celebrated his 'Name day' at the Stimate, by vesting two young students – Lawrence Pizzini and Bartholomew Perazzani. Fr. Marani was too ill to conduct the service.
- 1865:** Lawrence Pizzini and Bartholomew Perazzani completed their two year Novitiate and pronounced their First Vows.
- 1872:** Melchiade Vivari was ordained a Priest.
- 1873:** The Civil Court of Verona was informed officially that the government and Fr. Benciolini had worked out an agreement – thus, ending the long case concerning the confiscated property.
- 1891:** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Centenary of the death of St. Aloysius Gonzaga was celebrated throughout Verona – Fr. Morando wrote a short life of the saint that was published.
- 1905:** Fr. Fantozzi supervised renovations at the Stimate to house the endeavor of the Laborers' Patronage [*Patronato Operaio*] – consisting of a Boarding House, instructions and training established for Workers in Verona.

## 22

- 1816:** Fr. Gramego received Diocesan Faculties for men's Confessions only.
- 1833:** Some flaws were noted in the bells for the steeple of the Stimate.

**23**

- 1809:** It seems that Fr. Bertoni was thinking seriously these days about a future Congregation, as he wrote in his Spiritual Diary on this date, that there was needed almost heroic virtue for such an undertaking.
- 1854:** Friday – at 12:35 p.m. – Fr. Marani, Superior General, and Bro. Louis Ferrari left for Rome from Bologna – ‘350 miles in 54 hours!’

**24**

- 1816:** Louis Gagliardi was born – he composed and directed in later life the music for the Canonical Erection of the Congregation [held September 30, 1855] – and also for Fr. Marani’s Golden Jubilee celebrations [June 12, 1864]. He composed ***Su, Fratelli*** [Onward, Brothers!] that was sung also at Fr. Benciolini’s Golden Jubilee [September 19, 1879].
- 1834:** Fr. Cainer went to St. John’s in Valle to offer Mass – he left the House at 7:00 a.m. to avoid the confusion in the streets, customary for the streets of Verona for the Feast of St. John the Baptist.
- 1853:** Fr. Lenotti resumed his regular Friday preaching assignment at the Stimate – he was also made the Chronicler of the Congregation, which task he faithfully fulfilled [the source of much of the material for this ***Stigmatine Calendar***] until shortly before his Election as Superior General [July 1871].
- 1866:** A very bloody battle of Custoza was fought this day at the gates of Verona – all Religious Communities called upon to help with the wounded. Austria claimed victory over the Italian fleet.
- 1867:** Bishop di Canossa issued a strong protest against the sacrilege committed in the Piazza dei Signori a few days earlier on the attack on the Procession honoring the Blessed Sacrament. He also issued new restrictions for external manifestations of the faith for the future.
- 1872:** Pius IX, in response to Fr. Lenotti’s request of the previous May 6<sup>th</sup>, answered that the Congregation could ordain its members in the future even without the title of *Mensa Communis* [as the Congregation had been exiled from its property] – as long as the new Clerics would have some means of their own independent support.

## 25

- 1847:** Fr. Lenotti preached on the only true contentment this world can offer is to those who serve God – worldly people have a life-long *Mardi Gras*, followed by an eternal Lent!
- 1848:** Pius IX issued two Decrees: *Romani Pontifices* and *Regulari Disciplinae*, which treated specifically of the steps one would take in the religious life. These steps were not clearly delineated in Fr. Bertoni's *Original Constitutions*, that he was writing during these years.
- 1883:** Fr. Peter Vignola, Superior General, expressed sincere sorrow hearing of Fr. Zara's death – and some bitterness at Fr. Carrara's departure [for the Jesuits].
- 1900:** The Diocesan Tribunal in Verona concluded its examination that established the fact that no external cult had been shown to Fr. Bertoni since his death – which otherwise would have been an impediment to his Canonization.

## 26

- 1813:** This date marks the last recorded entry in Fr. Bertoni's Diary that has come down to us.<sup>5</sup>
- 1841:** Fr. Bragato, in the Imperial entourage, made a brief half hour visit to the Stimate.
- 1861:** Bishop Riccabona took over the See of Trent on the Feast of the Patron, Saint Virgilius, in ceremonies at the Cathedral dedicated to this Saint in Trent.

## 27

- 1802:** Fr. Bertoni preached on St. Aloysius Love for God – a lover becomes like his beloved; the soul becomes more unto God's image the more it loves.
- 1841:** Fr. Bragato and the Imperial party left for Vienna at 8:00 a.m.

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<sup>5</sup> There is a slight discrepancy here: Fr. John Ceresatto has on p. 131 of his Life of the Founder, that his Spiritual Diary covers from July 1, 1808-June 26, 1813 – then on p. 184, he states that **June 28, 1813** is the last note in the Diary – most likely, a printing mistake.

**28**

- 1831:** Fr. Bertoni cautioned Leopoldina Naudet on this date against joining with some Sisters of now defunct Congregations, as each of them would be imbued with the spirit of her own Foundress, which would make union difficult.
- 1854:** Fr. Marani and Bro. Louis Ferrari arrived in Rome on the Vigil of St. Peter: they took up lodging with a Canon Bertinelli.
- 1858:** Pius IX wrote to Fr. Marani – he thanked him for the receipt of the Biography of Fr. Bertoni [written by Fr. Giacobbe]. He also expressed happiness on learning that ‘his’ Little Flock - our Congregation – had grown somewhat – the Pope sent his Apostolic Blessing to Fr. Marani and the Congregation.

**29**

- 1824:** John Baptist Bandoria came to the Congregation as a candidate for the Brotherhood to help Bro. Zanoli in the ‘sea of work’ in which he was then immersed.
- 1831:** Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet concerning a passage between the Stimate and St. Teresa’s, which he wanted closed off.
- 1846:** Fr. Cartolari became ‘painfully ill.’
- 1854:** Fr. Marani and Bro. Ferrari saw Pius IX at a Papal Mass on the Feast of St. Peter – they wrote that the scene was so magnificent that they could not express it.
- 1883:** This day was celebrated the ‘Name Day’ of Fr. Peter Vignola, Superior General – the new kitchen and refectory at the Stimate was used for the first time.
- 1908:** Pope Pius X issued an Apostolic Constitution which revamped the offices of the Holy See. The Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars was split, and became the Sacred Congregation of Religious.

The Capitular Commission elected by the 17<sup>th</sup> General Chapter [September 18, 1906] was working on the Constitutions to bring them into accord with the *Norms* issued by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars – issued in 1901]. The Commission suspended its activity for the time being, until the competency of the Sacred Congregation of Religious was more determined.

**30**

- 1817:** A long stairway for the Stimate was contracted for with a builder named Maceta.
- 1857:** Pius IX, in his own hand, signed Fr. Marani's request presented to him at Bologna, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1857.
- 1860:** Fr. Charles Fedelini died at 9:00a.m., on this day dedicated to Mary. It was noted that he had been most devoted to her throughout his life.
- 1891:** At the end of June, Fr. John Baptist Tomasi joined the Community of the Congregation in Rome to prepare himself for the Doctorate in Theology.

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