



Priestly People

SERVANTS OF THE PARACLETE

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Maria Bolognesi was beatified in her hometown of Rovigo, Italy on September 7th, 2013.

It was at that time that the Very Reverend David T. Fitzgerald sP placed the Congregation of the Servants of the Paraclete under Maria Bolognesi's patronage and asked that through her intercession the

congregation and its members and ministry might receive spiritual aid and guidance in their daily life and ministry. "We are grateful for the prayers, sufferings and sacrifices that she endured and offered for the sanctification of priests and we commit ourselves to model our lives after her example."

Honoring Blessed Maria Bolognesi

We find ourselves together again this year, celebrating a memorial Mass in memory of Blessed Maria Bolognesi in the Church where she was baptized and where her mortal remains are venerated.

The prayer of the Collect of the Mass invites us to look at Blessed Maria as a sublime example of charity and patience. Her greatness does not depend on great achievements according to the standards of the world, but from a life that in her childhood was filled with immense poverty and privations of every sort yet supported by a strong faith and love for God.

Maria Bolognesi, in fact, although poor from a human standpoint, had the grace to be able to live in a special state of intimacy with the Lord, through a spousal bond, as is evidenced in the Scripture readings selected in the memorial Mass which refer to the image of the marriage bond.

From the many aspects recorded of the sanctity of Maria Bolognesi, I would like to underline her vocation to collaborate in the work for the salvation of souls and for the sanctification of priests.

I have stressed correctly the term “vocation,” because of the obligation, and the response to the call she received from the Lord. We read in her diaries that at the beginning of 1944, the Suffering Servant Christ appeared to her in a dream, covered in sweat and blood, asking her to pray earnestly for the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of priests.

Prayer and the self-offering for the sanctification of priests was a characteristic trait of her spirituality, a trait which I hold to be very important, more than ever in our present time.

With a compassionate heart for the sanctification of priests, one is to listen to the ministers of the Church we belong to, they are part of us, and in a way their sanctification depends upon us. The Church is the Body of Christ, and the various members are intimately united. We depend upon one another. In that way the body of the Church, lay and sacred ministers, intimately united, can and more importantly must sustain each other in the corresponding vocation which the Lord has gifted each one of us.

Since it is easy to understand the ministry priests give to the laity, it must not be overlooked, the support, not only materially, but also the spiritual support with which the faithful must support priests.

Priests are disciples on a journey, men who are sinners, and have need of the grace of God, to remain faithful to their call and the power to serve the People of God.

Confronted in the face of their own weakness, the response must not be scandal or criticism, but fraternal solicitude, which is expressed, above all, through intercessory prayer, and if it is the case, in fraternal correction done with humility and loving care.

Maria Bolognesi knew of the weakness of priests, and sometimes although she felt not understood by some of them, she knew how to react through prayer and the offering of the necessary suffering, she never permitted herself to be caught up in the controversy, or the temptation of creating division in the local Christian community.

Often, it has happened that as a bishop, I have received complaints regarding priests. Some were inconsequential, others were the result of misunderstandings, or a lack of tact, or discretion. It struck me at times that from persons coming to me, they saw the priest, as the enemy. They wanted a pastoral service from the priest on their terms, forgetting that the priest has Church laws to obey, or use his pastoral discretion in the matter presented. Such behavior causes tension, anxiety, which causes priests to suffer, because they are considered “the enemy.” Consequently, the atmosphere in the parish community is not that of co-responsibility, but of opposition and coldness.

We all need to learn from Maria Bolognesi to welcome and accept priests, like brothers, to help and support them, struggling/suffering with them in their limitations and weaknesses, making ourselves collaborators in our and their sanctification.

+ Pierantonio Pavanello
Bishop of Adria-Rovigo, Italy

Celebrating 65 Years of Ordination!

Fr. Mario D'Agostini sP celebrated 65 years of ordination (3/19/1954) along with his 90th birthday (3/10/1929) with the local servants of the Paraclete community in Dittmer MO. Fr. Mario, born and raised in Brazil and made his way to the Servants of the Paraclete community in Argentina. After a time, Fr. Mario entered the US where he has remained.

Fr. Mario spoke after the celebratory mass and had these kind words to say to his brother priests and religious brothers.

"I would like to thank everyone who came today to help me celebrate 90 years of my life and 65 years of my priesthood. A special thanks to Fr. David for making this possible.

I thought I would like to share a little of my life. I hope I won't bore you.

I was born in a small southern town in Brazil to a large Italian family on March 10th, 1929 – the last of 14 children. We spoke Italian and Portuguese in my family.

In 1940, I entered the seminary and in 1950 I was sent to Rome to complete my theological studies. While there, I was ordained on March 19, 1954., I said my first mass on the tomb of St. Peter. In Rome the language was Italian and in school it was Latin.

When I finished my studies, I came home to Brazil – finally – only to be sent to Argentina about 10 years later. In Argentina, Spanish was spoken, so I learned Spanish.

I became acquainted with the Servants of the Paraclete and joined them. I professed final vows on September 24, 1969. I will celebrate my 50-year Jubilee in



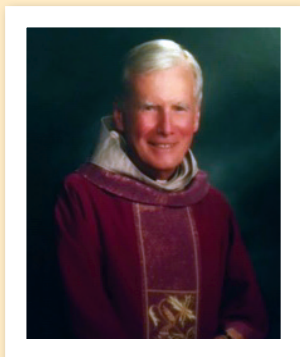
September. The house was closed in 1977 after just 10 years due to the political unrest in the government. There were killing people and we had to get out.

My new home became the United States. I said to God "I hope this is the last"! I was forced to learn yet another language – English -w which was the most difficult. With the suggestion of my good friend, Andy, I went back to school to learn English. After 7 years, I became an American citizen with the help of Fr. Liam Hoare, and I am forever grateful to him.

As I look back to 1940, I never though in my wildest dreams that my life would take so many turns. God has certainly been good to me for the path he has taken me on. I only hope He does not decide to send me to yet another country and force me to learn a new language. I am a bit too young for that!

Thank you and God Bless you!"

— Mario D'Agostini sP



FATHER GREGORY MCCORMICK sP

12-24-1922 – 11/7/2019

Serving Christ in His Priests!

A mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Missouri where Fr. Gregory lived in retirement and in New Mexico where he served as pastor of Our Lady of the Assumption in Jemez Springs. He was buried in the servants of the Paraclete cemetery in Jemez Springs. Rest in Peace, Fr. Gregory!



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