

STIGMATINE REFLECTIONS:
“THE SODALITY GATHERED IN ASSEMBLIES”



PART I: THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

[MARANI – LENOTTI – P. VIGNOLA – GURISATTI]

PART II: THE ENTIRE 20TH CENTURY

**[TOMASI – ZAUPA – CHIESA – MARTINIS – FINI – CAPPELINA – L. DUSI
MOURA – NEMES]**

PART III: THE EARLY DECADES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

[MESCHI – BALDESSARI]

**The Commission for the Study of the General Chapters:
Fathers Joseph Henchey, Giovanni Zampieri and Livio Guerra
Patronal Feast of the Holy Espousals of Mary and Joseph, 2019**

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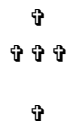
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FOREWORD

At the request of our present Superior General – Fr. Rubens MIRANDA - Frs. Zampieri and L. Guerra, and myself, have been asked to provide a reflection in our three central languages in the Congregation [Italian, English and Portuguese] - of our Stigmatine General Chapters, Superiors and Councils. These pages will be based on the “official” sources of our Community for the most part held in our General Archives in Rome.

From our Stigmatine tradition, we know that the General Chapters e os Councils of Superiors [these since 1970] are the legislating body of our way of life. Our effort will be to let the documents [Minutes of Chapters and meetings] speak for themselves. Should there be a difference of opinion in interpreting these pages, our hope is that through dialogue may ensue through the wonders of modern communications.

The avowed emphasis, though, will work hand in hand with our committed purpose: that of letting our Stigmatine documents to speak to us for themselves, and may hopefully present a further insight into the sincere work and struggles of the people who have preceded us, and the decisions that have been made over the years.

We find that our General Chapters, Councils and Generals, cover significant years of three centuries:

1. The Second Half 19th century: On the death of the Founder, the surviving members chose Fr. John M. Marani [+ July 1 1871] as the first successor to St. Gaspar [+ June 12, 1853]. This comprises the Introductory Part – the pre-chapter role of Fr. Marani. He would be followed by three other Fathers General in the late 19th century - all elected by General Chapters: Frs. Lenotti; P. Vignola; P. Gurisatti.
2. The entire 20th century with the elections of Frs. J. B. Tomasi [first one chosen in the 20th century]; J. B. Zaupa; Chiesa; [Zaupa again for a 3rd term]; Martinis; Cappellina [at this time, meetings of the Councils of Superiors were initiated]; Dusi; Moura; Nemes.
3. The early decades of the 21st century: Frs. Meschi and Baldessari.

Hopefully in sharing information, we might all experience in God’s grace a deeper appreciation of our Stigmatine vocation in these challenging times.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Henchey, CSS

Patronal Feast of the Holy Espousals of Mary and Joseph, 2019.

STIGMATINE REFLECTIONS:
“THE SODALITY GATHERED IN ASSEMBLIES”



Fr. John Mary Marani
The 1st Superior General
1855 - 1871



Fr. John Baptist Lenotti
The 2nd Superior General
1871 - 1875



Fr. Peter Vignola
The 3rd Superior General
1875 - 1891



Fr. Pio Gurisatti
The 4th Superior General
1891 - 1911

PART I:
THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

Introduction:**- SCHEMATIC OF THE EARLY STIGMATINE GENERAL CHAPTERS [1871 – 1911]**

<u>PLACE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>CAPITULARS</u>	<u>ACTS</u>	<u>SUPERIOR</u>
1. Verona-Massalongo	3-5 July 1871	13	Elec. of Sup.	J.B. Lenotti
2. Verona- Stimate	11-13 Sept. 1871	16	Change Const.	
3. Verona- Stimate	4-6 Oct. 1871	10	Sup. for 10 Years	J.B. Lenotti
4. Verona-Stimate	9-10 Sept. 1872	8	Business	
5. Verona-Stimate	25 Feb-2 Mar 1874	8	Business	
6. Verona-Stimate	5 Aug. 1874	6	Business	
7. Verona-Stimate	26-30 Oct. 1875	6	Elec. of Sup.	P. Vignola
8. Verona-Stimate	26 Sept-4 Oct 1876	10	Business	
9. Verona-Stimate	17-24 Feb. 1880	16	Business	
10. Verona-Stimate	16-26 Feb 1881	14	Elec. of Sup.	P. Vignola
11. Verona-Stimate	12-25 Sept. 1889	17	Change Const.	
12. Verona-Stimate	24 Sep-3 Oct 1890	24	Change Const.	
13. Verona-Stimate	23-24 Apr. 1891	12	Business	
14. [I] Verona-Stimate	24-28 Sept.1891	11	Elec. of Sup.	P. Gurisatti
15. [II]Roma – S. Nicola dei Prefetti	21-24 Sept. 1896	15	Business	
16. [III]Verona-Stimate	23-25 Sept. 1901	18	Elec. of Sup.	P. Gurisatti
17. [IV]Verona-Stimate	18-20 Sept. 1906	20	Business	
18. [V] Verona-Stimate	20-23 Sept. 1911	18	Elec. of Sup.	J. B. Tomasi

[NB: Roman numerals noted in Chapter 14-18 in parentheses [] denote the order of the Chapters after the Institute was approved].

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Introduction:

Some of the main personalities of the Early General Chapters [1871 – 1911] [Besides the Elected Superior Generals]



Marco Bassi

1828 - † 1896 (Age 68)

He was Novice Master, Superior of the Stimate and General Councilor. In his last years suffered from serious spiritual anxieties, that he carried with great patience.



Peter Beltrami

1826 - † 1891 (Age 65)

He specialized in Moral Theology. Very loved by Fr. Lenotti, stayed close to him at his death bed. Died in consequence of a sudden paralysis.



Francis Benciolini

1806 - † 1892 (Age 86)

As the general heir of Fr. Bertoni, he could win the court case against the State Property that last for six years with heavy battles.



Richard DaPrato

1812 - † 1872 (Age 60)

Canon of the Cathedral in Verona and Superior of the College of Acolytes. As Stigmatine he was Master of Novices and Dean of Studies in Trento. Greatly appreciated by Fr. Marani, assisted him when he became ill.



Louis Morando

1846 - † 1909 (Age 63)

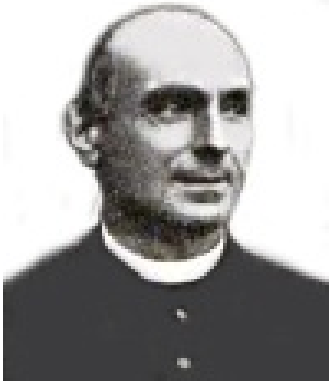
Taught for many years in Verona and Bassano, and in Vatican Seminary. Started the process of beatification of our Founder in 1906, and in that same year was appointed Bishop of Brindisi and Ostuni.



John Rigoni

1820 - † 1900 (Age 80)

His particular merit was to work with perseverance and skill to claim the assets of the congregation seized by the Liberal government. He was very dedicated to preaching and the Marian Oratories.

**Stephen Rosa****1860 - † 1922 (Age 62)**

Brilliant in almost all activities, he taught physical sciences until his death. He directed the Oratories of S. Maria del Giglio and of Stimate. He was superior of the Stimate and General Councilor.

**Joseph Sembianti****1836 - † 1914 (Age 78)**

He was treasurer of the Stigmatine Mother House; founded and became superior of a house of formation in Bassano. He left our Congregation in 1896 and joined the Combonians.

**Francis Sogaro****1839 - † 1912 (Age 72)**

He left the Stigmatine Congregation in 1874 and joined the Combonians. Consecrated as a bishop in Rome in 1885.

**Andrew Sterza****1847 - † 1898 (Age 51)**

Gave more than 300 missions to the people. Passionate student of classical studies. Obtained a brilliant degree at University of Padua, and literary awards in Amsterdam.

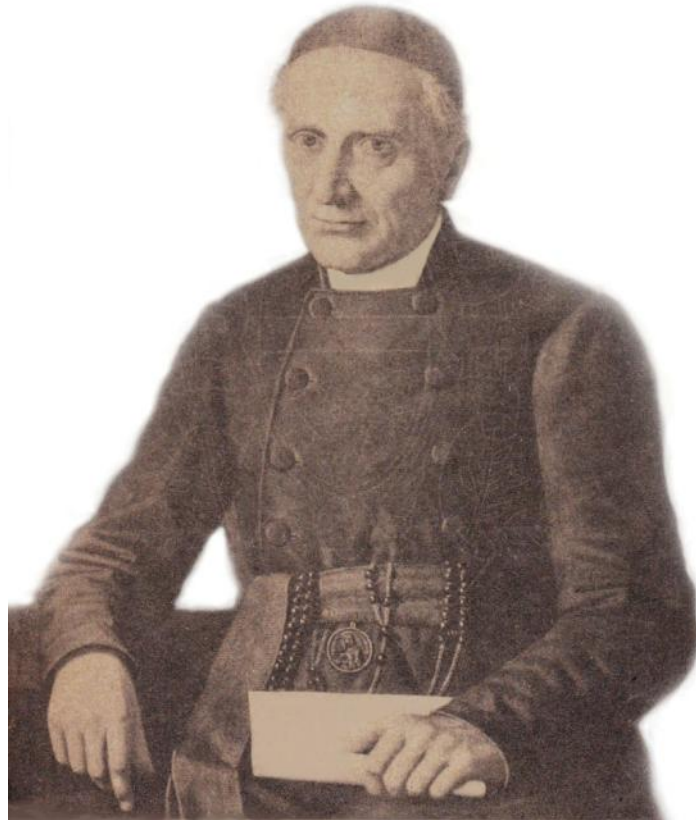
**Richard Tabarelli****1850 - † 1909 (Age 50)**

He taught Philosophy and Theology for many years to our professed students and in Roman Seminaries. He was director of our schools of Stimate, and concluded the approbation of our institute by the Holy See.

**Dominic Vicentini****1847 - † 1927 (Age 79)**

In 1900 left the Stigmatines and joined the Scalabrini congregation, where became Superior General. In 1910 he helped the Stigmatines to establish our first foundation in Brazil, in Tibagy.

Fr. John Mary Marani



The First Superior General

1855 – 1871



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Schematic Outline of His Life¹



GIOVANNI MARIA MARANI (priest)

BORN: Verona (S. Stefano) – May 5, 1790

ORDAINED: June 4, 1814

ENTERED: Stimate – Nov. 4, 1816

DIED: Verona (Casa Massalongo) – July 1, 1871

AGE: 81

While still young, Fr Marani became very close to Fr. Bertoni: he was his helper and his intimate confidant. To him, when he was still a seminary student, Fr. Bertoni revealed his secret dream of founding a Congregation of religious life.

After young Marani's entering the Stimate in 1816, he indefatigably engaged himself in teaching at the school and in the sacred ministry. Immediately after the death of St. Gaspar, he worked fervently and arduously to have the Congregation – which seemed close to its extinction - canonically recognized

He refurbished the monastery of the Holy Trinity, so that it might be a good house for Novitiate. He started renovating the Church of *S. Maria del Giglio* ("*Dereletti*").

After the expropriation of all the assets of the Congregation and the dispersion of its members in 1867, he retired to the house belonging to the Massalongo family, where he died four years later.

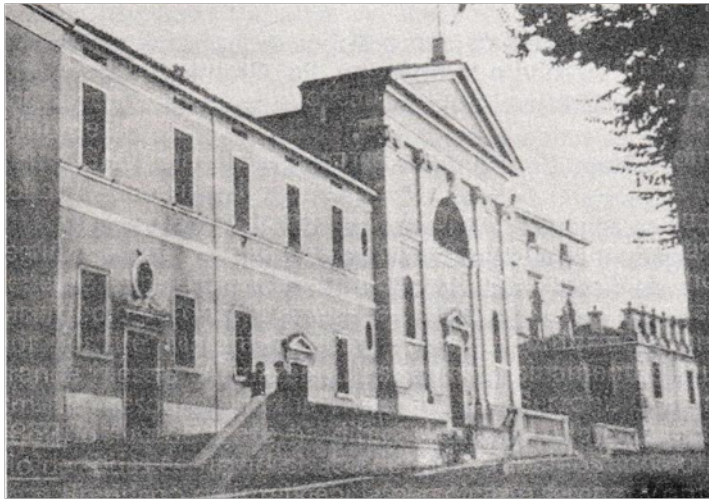
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¹ Source: Confrades.com – by Fr. Silvano Zanella, CSS.

Short Biography:

Fr. Marani was born in Verona in 1790, the son of Celestine Marani, and Ursula Robbi. Being well trained in piety, he willingly followed the Divine Voice that called him to the sanctuary. Soon after being vested, he became closely associated with Fr. Bertoni, whom he considered as a Father. Young Marani set himself to model his own life after the holy life of Fr. Bertoni. He stored up a rich treasury of instructions and examples, and it was by these that Fr. Bertoni formed him. Throughout his long life, almost at every event, he would recall those sayings and counsels and the Founder's outlook for our training.

He took part with Fr. Bertoni in the instructions and in the government of the Oratory of St. Paul's in Campo Marzo, and then in the later Oratory at St. Firmus Major. He was Fr. Bertoni's frequent companion and soon won his admiration and affection. So, after the Founder's death, Fr. Marani was elected by unanimous vote to succeed him in the government of the Congregation. Once the Community was "approved" by the Holy See, in 1855, the little group went through the formality to "elect" him to the service he was already rendering.



The Stimate: Church and Convent

If the Plan, the Foundation and the Constitutions of the Congregation were the work of Fr. Bertoni, then to Fr. Marani was reserved the task of obtaining from the Holy See the Decree of Praise. Fr. Marani was also to accomplish the work of its early development.

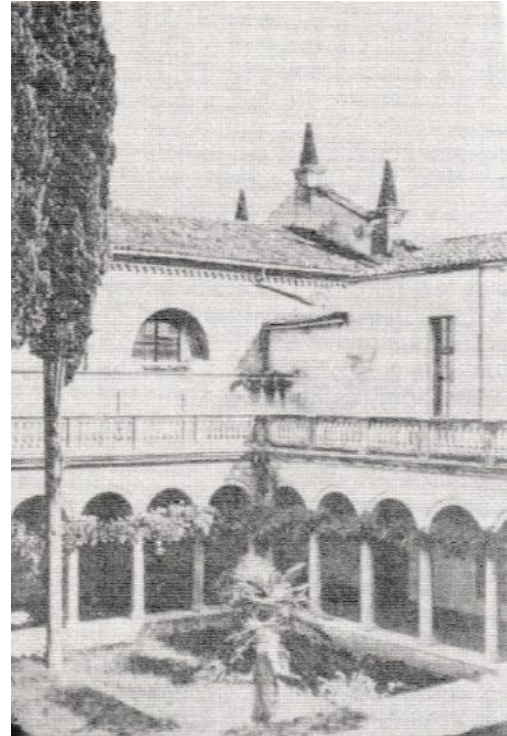
He restored and renovated the old Convent of the Santissima Trinità, and established our Novitiate there.

He provided our Church with sacred vessels and vestments, and also with a good organ. He purchased our lot in the Cemetery of Verona for our religious family. He initiated the construction of the Church of Sancta Maria del Giglio, which was interrupted in an advanced state by the events of 1866. He initiated negotiations with the most Illustrious Bishop of Trent, Benedict Riccabona, to establish in that Diocese a House of our Congregation. In many other ways, Fr. Marani furthered the well being of the Congregation, and was most intrepid in defending its rights. He was always most diligent in preserving in it the spirit of Fr. Bertoni - that is, humility, sacrifice and the hidden way. He wanted in all of his sons, but especially the young

students, a most diligent application to study, and a perfect submission to every obedience, no matter how arduous. He would often repeat to them his slogan that synthesized these ideals: "Be prepared for all!" [*Parati ad omnia!*]

He demanded of all great accuracy and great reflection in all things. He used to say: *'Analyze not only (Fr. Gaspar's) ideas and words, but also his actions'*. He would say this when he would cite the words and examples of Fr. Berton. This was the rule for his own life. He carefully fulfilled with constant solicitude, the office of Superior. He made sure that he was well informed about all things. He would take every occasion to infuse into his sons a love for the Rule and for the religious virtues.

His apostolic zeal was outstanding. He was endowed with a serene and perceptive mind. His will was so strong that he seemed to derive new strength from difficulties. His mind was fed with the substantial nourishment of sound Catholic doctrine, and his will was strengthened by the practice of Christian Perfection. He used both these faculties with good effect for the sanctification of souls and for the greater glory of God.



The Convent of the Santissima Trinità

From the elementary instruction of young boys, up to the most advanced education of the Clergy, all came under the sway of his apostolate. He reaped great results, but always at the cost of his own sweat. Enkindled by the charity of Jesus Christ that animated him, he taught the unlearned of the City and the country-side, the rudiments of religion. He reformed the habits of many souls by the many Missions that he preached. He wisely directed religious houses, called them back to strict observance from the laxity into which they had fallen. He gave the Spiritual Exercises to the Clergy who were edified and amazed by his zeal and charity. In his role as examiner of Priestly Vocations, he manifested marvelous discretion and shrewd judgment. When consulted about very serious and involved questions, even by persons in high state, they came to admire him for the wisdom of his counsel.

In the continuous succession of many travails, he riveted his entire attention and applied all his strength to what had been asked of him. He was always most forgetful of himself. From his intense work, he contracted the first germs of that fatal illness which slowly sapped all of his strength, and would one day claim his life. Even

with his illness in an advanced state, the forceful temperament and mature virtue of Fr. Marani seemed to be getting the upper hand. Although he was confined to bed, he still omitted nothing, and worked tirelessly for the good of souls. His body was deteriorating, but from his bed of pain, he maintained his spirit that just would not accept failure. He brought to a happy conclusion the efforts of his worthy and beloved colleagues.

Even during these last years of trial, the virtue of this elect soul was severely put to the test. In addition to his physical sufferings, which grew more intense with each passing day, it was the Will of God that Fr. Marani would also endure a series of privations, bitterness and the most desolating trials.

This was the year 1866, when the new Piedmontese Government considered him suspect. His religious House was searched, his Religious family became involved in a lengthy litigation with the government. All of this resulted from the general persecution directed against religious communities. He then sent some in the community away from the Stimate, and, with tears in his eyes, he directed his beloved young students to be taken into a place [Villazzano] far from him – the hills of Trent. He himself became a virtual prisoner – also due to his encroaching illness - in a private home [of his niece], exiled from the confiscated Stimate which for so long had been the center of his thoughts and life. This place had always been the fatherland of his heart.

We will only state here that he suffered much. His many tribulations were supported in his strong soul with heroic Christian resignation. They were for him the occasion of new and precious merits.

The more that these burdens weighed heavily upon him, he showed himself to rise above them. He would nonetheless melt into tears at the sad events that were occurring, the insults leveled against his rightful authority and the denial of the rights of the Roman Pontiff. All his life, Fr. Marani had been a devoted son and valiant champion of the Holy See.

Perhaps the happenings of 1870, that brought shame on that august authority, and against its sacred rights, brought a full measure to his suffering, and hastened the end of his long life. Strengthened by the comforts of religion, and amidst the grief of his sons, he fell asleep in the Lord, at the advanced age of 81, on July 1, 1971. Now, our hope is that he is blessed among those who enjoy the vision, may he intercede for our Congregation, for the Church, and for Priests, heirs of his spirit, and imitators of his virtues.

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A bit more details regarding the Bond between Fr. Marani and Fr. Bertoni²

1. The Bond with Fr. Bertoni: at “Carnival”, pre-Lenten days in Verona, in 1806 – Fr. Bertoni was conducting a retreat for the Little Sisters of St. Francis de Paola and was helped by several other priests: Fr. Matthew Farinati and Fr. Gaetano Allegri – and the seminarian, John Marani assisted. He had received Minor Orders on Jan 31, 1806. Due to the Napoleonic interruptions, his theology course was somewhat interrupted. His co-students at the time, numbered also several other familiar names: Louis Bragato, Cajetan Brugnoli. The future Fr. Marani himself tells us that his contacts with Fr. Bertoni go back to 1805. He would eventually be called “the right arm” of St. Gaspar.

2. First Successor to Fr. Bertoni as Superior General:

Follow the narrative of Fr. John Baptist Lenotti:

“After the death of our Venerable Founder, of happy memory... Frs. Marani, Gramego, Brugnoli, Benciolini, Venturini and Lenotti got together for the election of the superior of the Congregation. And, thanks God, there was elected by acclamation and later in the solemn erection of the Institute, by secret scrutiny, the Very Rev. Fr. John Mary Marani, first son of Fr. Bertoni.”

Note have to note that, in this second scrutiny, there would be only five voters. Father Gramego had died. Five priests and 4 coadjutor brothers, that is the whole Congregation.

3. The Massalongo home: on October 29, 1867, Fr. Marani and the other two priests living with him were forced to leave the Stimato after living there for 51 years. From there, Fr. Marani continued in his role assigning the few members: Frs. Bassi, Peter Vignola, John Rigoni, and Thomas Vicentini. They worshiped in a little Chapel in the home of his niece. At the age of 79, it was clearly evident that Fr. Marani was “going downhill”, health-wise. One of his great joys at this time was to visit the young Stigmatine students being housed in the summer home in Villazzano. On July 1, 1870, a Sunday, Fr. Marani passed away at 2:30 p.m. The first session of the First General Chapter would be held in this home, as will be seen in subsequent studies on the General Chapters.

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² These notes are taken from the Biography compiled by Fr. Joseph Stofella – published in CS II, fasc. 1 – and translated into Portuguese by Fr. Paulo Campo Dal’Orto –presented by the Provincial of Sacred Heart Province of that time, the late + Moacyr Vitti, May 31, 1986.

**A Compendium of Fr. Marani's Life and the Early Times of the
Stigmatine Congregation³:**

1790

- May 05: Wednesday – John Mary Marani, son of Celestine, born at 10:00 a.m., in the Parish of St. Stephen's, Verona.
- May 08: John Marani was baptized in St. Stephen's Parish, Verona, three days after his birth.

1799

- Feb. 17: Bishop Avogadro confirmed John Mary Marani.

1805

- Dec. 19: One of the last acts of the Chancery Office under Bishop Avogadro was the signing of the Decree for John Marani's Vestition on this day.

1806

- Jan. 06: John Mary Marani was vested in St. Paul Church by the Pastor, Fr. Girardi.
- Apr. 04: John Marani was tonsured this day by Bishop Molin.
- Apr. 05: Michael Angelo Gramego was ordained a Deacon by Bishop Molin, Administrator of Asola, at St. George's Church, Verona – John Marani received the four Minor Orders at the same ceremony.

1811

- Jul. 15: A Monsignor Ruzzenenti, Canon of the Cathedral, and friend of Fr. Bertoni's father, wrote this day – on this same date, a Mr. Anthony Micheletti furnished an endowment that John Marani could continue his studies for the Priesthood.
- Sep. 21: John Marani was ordained a Sub-Deacon in the Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua, by Bishop Scipione de Desendis.

1812

- Sep. 19: Ember Friday⁴ – Bishop Liruti conferred the Diaconate on John Marani, and Tonsure and the four Minor Orders on Francis Cartolari.

³ Source: A Stigmatine Calendar – cf. Bibliography.

⁴ 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

1814

- Jun. 04: Ember Saturday⁵ – 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.
- Jun. 05: 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. ...

1816

- Feb. 25: *Quinquagesima* Sunday, and the date of the Solemn Religious Erection of a Marian Oratory in the Parish of Sts. Firmus and Rusticus. The first four names of this new Oratory were: Frs. Bertoni, Nicholas Mazza, Marani, and Gramego. Fr. Marani gave much time to this Oratory until about November of 1819.
- Aug. 17: Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet and told her that Fr. Galvani had offered him the Stimmate and the other 'pious places.' Fr. Marani was urging him to accept them.
- Nov. 04: **The birthday of the Congregation. On this day, Fr. Bertoni, Fr. John Mary Marani and Brother Paul Zanoli came to the Stimmate to take up residence. The beginnings of the Congregation.**

1820

- Nov. 25: In the Church of the Stimmate, the Altar of St. Catherine was used for the first time. Over the altar, hung a painting by Voltolini, depicting the Betrothal of the Saint. Fr. Marani said the first Mass on the new Altar; Fr. Gramego, the second – and Fr. Bertoni the third.

1822

- Dec. 14: The Emperor Francis I, who had been visiting Verona, left this day. About this same time, Fr. Galvani fell seriously ill, and Fr. Bertoni sent Fr. Marani to assist the old Benefactor of the Congregation.

after September 14th (Exaltation of the Holy Cross); on Winter, after December 13th (St. Lucy); on Spring, after Ash Wednesday; and, on Summer, after Whitsunday (Pentecost Sunday).

⁵ Cf. footnote # 4.



The Old Stimate (unknown author and year)

1823

Jan. 23: **This was the first public observance of the Feast of the Espousals at the Stimate!** There were four Priests living there at this time: Frs. Bertoni, Marani, Gramego and Brugnoli – and also Brother Paul Zanolì. 42 Priests came to the Stimate this day to celebrate Mass. Over the main altar hung a painting of the Espousals of Mary and Joseph. Among the visiting Priests were Fr. Carlo Steeb [Founder of the Mercy Sisters of Verona, a convert from Lutheranism] – and Fr. Nicholas Mazza, himself also a Founder. Their Causes for Beatification and Canonization are before the Congregation of Saints in Rome now.

1828

Jan. 23: The Mass Book this day recorded 75 Masses celebrated. Fr. Marani preached. He noted that the Marriage was Virginal, and its off-spring was Divine. He contrasted Mary's strength to Joseph's fear and the Apostle Thomas' doubts.

Dec. 29: Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet and told her that Fr. Marani was still suffering – he suffered many difficult years from a stomach ailment and also from gall stones.

1829

Sep. 30: Fr. Bertoni wrote to Mother Naudet... He asked her to have the 'Holy Prince d'Hohenloe' pray for Fr. Marani, who had been suffering for about a year now.

1835

Jun. 02: Fr. Bertoni and Fr. Marani began a retreat for 20 young men about to receive Holy Orders. ...

1836

Mar. 01: The House of the *Dereletti*, next to *Santa Maria del Giglio*, was made a filia House of the Stimate. Fr. Marani came to the Stimate five days a week for school and he gave theological conferences at the *Dereletti* for 10, or 12 Priests, as Fr. Bertoni used to do years before at Sts. Firmus.



The House of the "Dereletti" and the
Santa Maria del Giglio Church

1837

Dec. 01: On this day, Fr. Bertoni wrote a letter to Fr. Bragato, who was at the Imperial Court in Vienna. Fr. Bertoni wrote in glowing terms of Fr. Marani's competent, busy and varied apostolate – a good idea of Fr. Bertoni's ideal for the ***Apostolic Missionary***. Fr. Marani was giving evening conferences to the **clergy** – hearing **confessions** – teaching **catechism** – examining vocations in the **seminary**. Fr Bertoni also sent a book to Fr. Bragato for the March devotions in honor of St. Joseph.

1838

Oct. 10: Ursula [Rabbi] Marani, the Mother of Fr. John Marani, died today.

1840

Aug. 14: Fr. Bragato wrote again from Vienna – there was a very frequent correspondence between Verona and Vienna these days: Fr. Marani would later destroy all these letters between Fr. Bertoni and Fr. Bragato for fear of the government which would one day be hostile in Verona.

1846

Dec. 02: On this date, Celestine Marani – Fr. Marani's father - died at the age of 86 in St. Paul's Parish.

1848

Jan 03: Fr. Roothan, Superior General of the Jesuits, signed a document approving Fr. Fedelini's Marian Congregation at the Seminary of Verona.

Jan. 23: Fr. Marani preached on the Espousals – he stated that virginity is not good in itself as an end, but only in so far as it is useful to attain the Supreme Good. Through the Espousals, it is easier to understand Christ as man.

Jun 25: 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.

1849

Jan. 23: Fr. Marani preached on the Espousals and stated that marriage was honored by these two Saints – it was the perfect marriage.

1853

Jun. 12: A number of Priests at the Stimmate 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].

- Jun. 13: 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.
- Aug. 04: The Provincial authorities at Venice denied Fr. Marani's request to have Fr. Bertoni's body returned to the Stimate, so Fr. Marani appealed to Vienna.
- Sep. 22: Fr. Marani made a second appeal to have Fr. Bertoni's body returned to the Stimate, after his previous petition of August 4th of this year was refused.
- Sep. 26: Fr. Marani purchased a lot in the local cemetery for the deceased of the Congregation.
- Nov. 23: All the deceased of the Congregation at this time were transferred to the lot in the city cemetery purchased by Fr. Marani. The deceased re-interred on this day were: Bro. Casella, Fr. Biadego, Cleric Louis Ferrari, Fr. Bertoni, Fr. Gramego and Bro. Bandora. Fr. Cainer and Fr. Cartolari had been buried in their family lots.
- Dec. 07: Bishop Peter Aurelius Mutti, OSB, Patriarch of Venice and former Bishop of Verona, wrote a letter of recommendation to the Holy See in behalf of the Congregation, at Fr. Marani's request.
- Dec. 12: The '**Report**' said that the presentation Fr. Marani had drawn up for the Holy See to obtain the Decree of Praise bore this date.
- Dec. 23: In seeking approval from the government for the Congregation, Fr. Marani sent his array of documents to Fr. Bragato to be reviewed before presentation to Francis Joseph I.

1854

- Feb. 02: Monsignor Prela, Apostolic Nuncio, forwarded to Rome Fr. Marani's request for Approbation from the Holy See. It seems to have become lost in the files there.
- Feb. 23: Fr. Marani, Superior General, had sent Fr. Bertoni's **Original Constitutions** to a friend, Fr. J. Fusari, SJ – who said that he had read them and that he had admired the spirit with which they had been written. Fr. Fusari suggested that they be sent to a Fr. Mignardi who could offer a better critical view of them.
- Mar. 19: Fr. Marani, Superior General, responded to the questionnaire sent to him by the authorities in Venice. He stated that the Schools at the Stimate would conform exactly to the state requirements.

- May 31: Fr. Marani went to Bolzano to see Bishop-Elect Benedict Riccabona before his departure for Rome. He left with the Bishop-Elect a copy of Fr. Bertoni's **Original Constitutions**.⁶
- Jun. 12: A letter arrived at the Stimate from Fr. Bragato urging Fr. Marani to hasten to Rome and visit Bishop Riccabona there.
- Jun. 23: Friday – at 12:35 p.m. – Fr. Marani, Superior General, and Bro. Louis Ferrari left for Rome from Bologna – ‘350 miles in 54 hours!’
- Jun. 28: Fr. Marani and Bro. Louis Ferrari arrived in Rome on the Vigil of St. Peter: they took up lodging with a Canon Bertinelli.
- Jun. 29: 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.
- Jul. 30: Fr. Bertoni's body was returned to the Stimate and laid to rest in the center aisle of the Church. Fr. Giacobbe gave a moving sermon on this occasion. Fr. Marani, Superior General, was away in Rome.
- Aug. 10: Fr. Marani visited with the Under-Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in Rome, and was assured that the documents he had brought from Verona were being scrutinized by Fr. John Perrone, SJ, a Consultor, who would give his opinion in due time. The Under-Secretary was very concerned about Fr. Marani's appearance. He seemed very uncomfortable.
- Aug. 22: Fr. Marani in Rome obtained from the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences a favor for the Main Altar of the Church of *Santa Maria del Giglio*, making of it a ‘privileged altar.’
- Oct. 24: Fr. Marani, Superior General, and Bro. Louis Ferrari, had a Private Audience with Pope Pius IX. Fr. Marani spoke candidly to the Holy Father about the Congregation. The Pope asked Fr. Marani if Bro. Ferrari also went out on the Missions with the Priests. Fr. Marani answered that he did not; so the Pope said that the Brothers of the Congregation should be the Masters of every trade. It was during this Audience that Pius IX stated that the little Congregation of the Stimate was ‘his’ Congregation, and he expressed the often quoted wish: ***Crescat Pusillus Grex!*** [**May the Little Flock grow!**].
- Oct. 25: Fr. Marani, Superior General, and in Rome, wrote to Fr. Brugnoli back at the Stimate – as Fr. Brugnoli was the oldest – to tell the Community of

⁶ The *Breve Cronaca*, I, p. 88 places this as ‘the last day of March 1854.’ However, the *CS* II, p. 30, lists May 31st, 1854 the date of this important meeting.

the happiness that he and Bro. Ferrari experienced the day before in their Audience with the Pope.

- Oct. 31: Fr. Marani and Bro. Ferrari left Rome after their successful visit there to obtain the **Decree of Praise** for the Congregation. It would be granted on **April 16, 1855**.
- Nov. 01: Fr. Marani and Bro. Louis Ferrari arrived back in Verona after their stay of almost 4 months in Rome, where they had a Private Audience with Pope Pius IX [on October 24, 1854]. Their visit achieved the conferral on the Congregation of the much coveted **Decree of Praise**, granted on **April 16, 1855**.
- Nov. 07: Fr. Marani wrote to Bishop Riccabona informing him that Fr. DaPrato and another Diocesan Priest wanted to enter the Congregation.
- Nov. 19: Bishop Riccabona wrote to Fr. Marani and expressed some pride that two of his Priests were about to enter the Congregation. He said that he was especially sorry to lose Fr. Richard DaPrato, but that he gave his permission for both to enter.

1855

- Jan. 17: Fr. Anthony Bresciani, SJ, in Rome, wrote to Fr. Marani, Superior General, with words of high praise for Fr. Bertoni. And the Constitutions he wrote.
- Apr. 23: Monday – it was learned at the Stimate that Bishop Riccabona had mailed the **Decree of Praise**, recently granted, from Rome to the Stimate. Fr. Marani wrote to his friend in Rome, Canon Bertinelli, to tell him of the happiness at the Stimate at the reception of this news.
- Sep. 23: Sunday – at 3:00 p.m., 5 Priests [Frs. Marani, Benciolini, Brugnoli, Venturini and Lenotti] **elected Fr. Marani Superior *Prepositus*, or General**. After the election, the entire Community was assembled and told of the proceedings.
- Sep. 30: **This was one of the more important dates in Stigmatine History. It was the 18th Sunday after Pentecost – at 8:00 a.m., Bishop Riccabona came to the Stimate for the special ceremony called the Canonical Erection of the Congregation. He was accompanied by his Vicar, Monsignor Marchi, and his Master of Ceremonies, a Fr. Valbusa. The *Veni Creator* was sung - the Bishop then celebrated Mass – at its conclusion, he incensed the exposed Blessed Sacrament, went to the Chair that was prepared in the Sanctuary. Fr. Marani then knelt before the Blessed sacrament, and recited his Religious Profession - then sat at a chair placed before the**

Altar for him, and received the Religious Profession of the 5 Priests and 3 Brothers.

1856

- Apr. 01: Fr. Marani was ill; so, Fr. Lenotti went to Cremona to preach the Retreat to the Camillians.
- Jul. 09: Fr. Marani met Bishop Riccabona in Reichstadt – the Bishop told that the Bishop of Mantua had expressed the desire to have the Congregation in his Diocese.

1857

- Jan. 24: Fr. Marani preached a Mission in Vignasio, a ‘town of about 19,000 souls’ – that exceeded all expectations. The old people of the town said that they had never seen anything like it there.
- Jun. 17: Fr. Marani went to Strà 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, and 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.
- Jun. 30: Pius IX, in his own hand, signed Fr. Marani’s request presented to him at Bologna on the 17th of June 1857.
- Aug. 09: Fr. Marani was staying at the *Dereletti* to make room at the Stimmate for the **Priests on Retreat**. Fr. Daniel Comboni, one of the retreatants, came to consult Fr. Marani. He seemed somewhat afraid of him, but was encouraged by Fr. Benciolini. Fr. Marani put him at ease and was a great help to him – long years later, as Prefect Apostolic to Central Africa, Monsignor Comboni remembered this day.

1858

- Mar. 16: Having completed the Mission yesterday at Vicenza, Fr. Marani, Superior General, left this day for Caravaggio to look into the offer of the Shrine there to the Congregation.
- Apr. 07: Fr. Marani, Superior General, went to Rovereto to see about accepting a House in Sacco, just outside of Rovereto. After some deliberation, Fr. Marani refused both Sacco and Caravaggio, that had been offered.

- May 04: On this date, Fr. Marani, Superior General, wrote to Pope Pius IX, and he sent to the Holy Father a copy of the “Life of Fr. Bertoni”, written by Fr. Cajetan Giaccobbe.
- Jun. 14: 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.
- Jun. 28: Pius IX wrote to Fr. Marani – he thanked him for the receipt of the Biography of Fr. Bertoni [written by Fr. Giaccobbe]. 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.
- Jul. 26: Fr. Marani was anointed a second time as he was seriously ill with a fever.
- Nov. 07: Fr. Lenotti, Novice Master, gave a Domestic Exhortation to the Novices, telling them to pray often for the Congregation, that was suffering so much at that time. Fr. Marani, the Superior General, had been seriously ill; Fr. Brugnoli was dying and Brother Marini had just died, at the age of 19.

1859

- Jan. 23: Fr. Marani, Superior General, was sick in bed – an offer had come to him to open a House for the Congregation in Lussengrande, near Trieste – Fr. Marani, however, had to refuse this one, too.
- Mar. 18: Holy Thursday – Fr. Marani celebrated Mass in the Church of the Stimate; his first Mass in many months. He was no longer able to keep his busy preaching schedule that he did his first years as Superior General.

1860

- Feb. 08: Fr. Anthony Sperti wrote to Fr. Marani, Superior General, and told him he hoped the Congregation would accept the offered Parish of St. Rocco and also the Orphanage. Fr. Sperti thanked Fr. Marani for his advice and that he would try in the future never to anticipate the Will of God, but would accept it when it was made known - as Fr. Bertoni consistently taught in his lifetime.

1861

- Jun. 14: 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*.

1862

- Nov. 04: The Novitiate was transferred from the Stimate to the *Trinità* for the second time. Fr. Marani, Superior General, blessed the House that had been renovated. Fr. Vincent Vignola celebrated the Mass. The *Trinità* had been vacant for the past three years, due to the work going on there. There were three Professed Students: Charles Zara, Francis Sogaro and Louis Morando [these last two would pass away as Consecrated Bishops]. There were four Novice Students: Andrew Sterza, Joseph DeVai, Joseph Sembianti and one other. There were also several Brothers there: Bro. Zanolì, Infirmarian and laundry; Bro. Nicora, Porter and tailor; Bro. Reali, Cook. Among the Aspirants were Anthony Caucigh, Pio Gurisatti and James Marini.

1863

- May 13: The second centenary of the 'Madonna of the Novitiate' at the *Trinità* – Fr. Vincent Vignola preached; the Fathers came up for dinner from the Stimate, but Fr. Marani did not attend, as he was ill.
- Jun. 21: Fr. Bragato, again, 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.

1864

- Jan. 23: Bishop di Canossa came to the Stimate to celebrate the Espousals with the Community. Fr. Peter Vignola noted that there were many rumors in clerical circles concerning the poor relations existing between the Bishop and Fr. Marani, Superior General.
- Jun. 04: This date marked the 50th anniversary of Fr. Marani's ordination. A painting was made of him, that is still retained.
- Jun. 12: 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.

1865

- Feb. 17: Frs. Benciolini, Lenotti and DaPrato made a promise to St. Joseph that they would celebrate 100 Masses each annually in the Saint's honor, that someday the Congregation would receive papal approval. Fr. Marani had procured the **Decree of Praise** ten years earlier, but nothing seemed to happen since.
- Feb. 27: Frs. Lenotti, Benciolini and DaPrato made a petition to Fr. Marani, Superior General, to renew negotiations with the Holy See to obtain Papal Approbation from the Holy See.
- Jun. 16: 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.
- Sep. 30: Fr. Marani, Superior General, wrote to the Provincial of the Camillian Fathers, Fr. Louis Artini, and dated his letter: 'The 10th Anniversary of our Canonical Erection' – he asked for Fr Artini's prayers that he might rule the congregation according to the ideals of Fr. Bertoni.

1866

- Sep. 19: Fr. Marani visited Villazzano again, but returned within the week to Verona on pressing business – there was a revolt going on in Palermo.
- Oct. 19: Fr. Marani, Superior General, made a quick visit to Villazzano to be with the Students who had recently gone there from Verona 'in exile' from the menacing government.
- Oct. 25: At 9:45 a.m., three Carabinieri came to the Stimate with a search warrant seeking to obtain incriminating evidence against the Jesuits, as the government considered them to be an international spy organization. With the prospect of sudden searches at the Stimate, Fr. Marani about this time burned a number of papers that had been kept for many years in the Archives at the Stimate.
- Dec. 15: Fr. Marani had ordered Fr. Vincent Vignola to prepare a newsletter containing information on the events of interest within the Congregation, that was divided for the first time. The newsletter was a forerunner of the modern **IL BERTONIANO** and was entitled: ***Il Nuovo Messaggero Tirolese***.

1867

- Apr. 04: Fr. Marani left the Student House for troubled Verona.

- Apr. 22: This was the 33rd anniversary of Fr. Lenotti's entrance. In accord with the customs of those times, Fr. Lenotti wrote a letter to the Superior General, who was then Fr. Marani. Fr. Lenotti candidly admitted to his Superior that he was having great difficulty in obeying him. Almost every year, for ten years, one of Fr. Lenotti's resolutions at the Annual Retreat was 'to obey', 'not to contradict'. And the like.
- Sep. 10: Fr. Marani dictated a letter to Fr. Rigoni, that was written by Fr. Benciolini. He told of the search of the Stimate by the Agent Vanzetti – this Agent told them that the head of his department, a man by the name of Canton, was proceeding with great caution until the papers of confiscation were ready. Fr. Marani told Fr. Rigoni to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis' Stigmata with the Community in Florence just as it was always celebrated at the Stimate.
- Sep. 16: Fr. Marani argued at some length with a Finance Official, by the name of Canton, concerning the imminent confiscation of the Stimate.
- Oct. 04: Fr. Marani, Superior General, received the first eviction notice at the Stimate. It was to be effective within 15 days – however, a 'stay' of another ten days was granted.
- Oct. 05: Fr. Marani, the day after he received the eviction notice at the Stimate, went up to the Student House 'in exile' in Villazzano, Trent to tell the Students about it. Despite all the difficulties for the Congregation, it proved to be a happy day for all.
- Oct. 09: Fr. Marani wrote to Fr. Rigoni, Procurator General, who was in Florence trying to save the property that would soon be taken away from the Congregation by the government. Fr. Marani dated his letter: **"The 90th Birthday of Fr. Gaspar"**.
- Oct. 11: Fr. Marani, Superior General, painfully ill once again – at this time, there were only 6 more days until the eviction notice from the Stimate was to be effective.
- Oct. 13: 2nd Sunday of October, Feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Fr. Benciolini wrote to Fr. Rigoni at Florence to tell him of Fr. Marani's relapse.
- Oct. 19: The eviction order that Fr. Marani had received at the Stimate 15 days earlier was due to be effective this date, but it was postponed 10 more days, perhaps because of Fr. Marani's poor health.

- Oct. 25: Fr. Marani wrote to Fr. Rigoni in Florence telling him that their eviction from the Stimate was imminent. Fr. Marani as yet had not found a place to live.
- Oct. 28: Fr. Marani wrote to Fr. Rigoni in Florence and told him that on the morrow all the members of the Congregation would be evicted from the Stimate.
- Oct. 29: **The 'Darkest Hour' for the Congregation** – the men were evicted from the House of the Stimate. It was almost 51 years to the day that Fr. Marani first came there with Fr. Bertoni and Bro. Paul Zanoli. They were allowed to have the Church, and a few rooms upstairs and a kitchen. Fr. Marani went to live with a widowed niece, a Mrs. Massalongo – and he never came back to the Stimate, dying 'in exile' on July 1, 1871.

1868

- Jan. 20: Fr. Benciolini wrote from the Stimate to Fr. Rigoni to encourage him. He told him the news from the Stimate, which at this time was not good. Fr. Marani, the Superior General was still in bed – Bro. Caresia had been 'bled' three times by the doctor but his fever persisted.
- Jan. 23: This was a rather subdued celebration at the Stimate this year, as the Congregation had been expelled from their property at the Stimate. They were allowed a few rooms and a kitchen there, but most of the Community was 'in exile.' Fr. Marani, Superior General, was living in the home of his niece, Mrs. Massalongo, and could not attend due to illness. Fr. Bassi, Superior of the Stimate, gave an exhortation to the assembled group and told them that the hard days the Congregation was then experiencing was no excuse for them not to live their vocations 'to the hilt.'
- Mar. 22: Fr. Marani, Superior General, came to Villazzano with the intention of staying only a few days. However, he became ill and stayed almost an entire month in bed.
- Apr. 05: Palm Sunday – Holy week services began at Villazzano. Frs. Lenotti and Vincent Vignola preached a retreat to the community there; Fr. Marani was sick in bed.
- Apr. 12: Easter Sunday – Fr. Marani spent the whole week in bed at Villazzano. Frs. Lenotti and Vincent Vignola concluded the Retreat to the Community.
- Apr. 19: Low Sunday⁷ - Fr. Marani was still sick at Villazzano.

⁷ Editor's note: the 2nd Sunday of Easter – presently the Divine Mercy Sunday.

- Apr. 22: The Count and the Countess Fietta, old friends, came to Villazzano, to visit the ailing Fr. Marani.
- May 01: Fr. Marani, Superior General, wrote to the Holy See explaining that the Congregation could no longer ordain its members with the title *Mensa Communis*, since the confiscation of the property – but, asked if he could still ordain them, if he would make sure that they could be provided for in some decency.
- Jul. 26: Fr. Marani was anointed a second time, as he was seriously ill, with a fever.
- Sep. 05: Fr. Marani visited Villazzano for the first time since the previous April. A Passport was issued to Fr. Marani that bore this date – it was good for travel in France, Austria, Germany and the Papal States, with one ‘Louis Ferrari, age 44’. It described Fr. Marani as ‘tall, dark brown hair sprinkled with grey, dark brown eyes, and a grey beard.’
- Sep. 17: Fr. Marani returned from Villazzano after 12 days there.
- Sep. 29: Fr. Marani, Superior General, wrote from Verona to Villazzano to the Novice Master, Fr. DaPrato. He said that he had noted during his recent visit in Villazzano a lack of respect among the students for one another. He said that, if a student does not have respect for a fellow student, then he can neither be charitable, nor humble. In correcting students, Fr. Marani suggested that the first correction be slight – the second, or third failure, should be met with a little strong penance – if a fault is public, so should the penance be public.
- Dec. 30: Fr. Marani, Superior General, visited the Student House at Villazzano – he brought with him an ordained Deacon from Pergine, Trent – Stephen Oss Bals – who had already begun his Novitiate in Verona, and who would continue it at Villazzano.

1869

- Apr. 01: Frs. Marani, Benciolini and Bassi sent a letter to Pius IX and gave a description of their life at the time. They were getting along financially by means of their ministry, and everything was held in common.
- Apr. 05: Fr. Marani, Superior General, came to Villazzano to stay with the students for a while.
- Apr. 20: Fr. Marani, Superior General, had been preaching a Triduum to the Students at Villazzano, and urgent business called him away to Verona. He told Andrew Sterza, soon to be ordained, to finish the Retreat for him.

- Jun. 16: 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.
- Jul. 06: Fr. Marani, Superior General, visited Villazzano – it was noted that he was in fairly good health.
- Jul. 10: Fr. Marani returned to Verona from Villazzano.
- Aug. 09: Fr. Marani, a tired, old man of 79, wrote for permission to have the Blessed Sacrament reserved in his house of exile, the home of his widowed niece, a Mrs. Massalongo.
- Aug. 13: Fr. Marani made another trip from Verona to Villazzano – these trips were becoming increasingly more difficult for him to make. Fr. DaPrato, on this same day, had to make a trip to Verona on business.

1870

- Mar. 05: Fr. Lenotti left Villazzano for Verona – he intended to bring the ailing Fr. Marani, Superior General, back with him, as the Superior always found happiness being among the young Students, who represented for him the hopes of the future.
- Mar. 16: Fr. Lenotti left Verona to return to Villazzano, without Fr. Marani, who was too ill, and the weather too cold for him to make the trip. Fr. Lenotti had come down to Verona for the express purpose of bringing Fr. Marani back up with him.
- May 02: Fr. Marani, seriously ill in Verona, set to Villazzano for Fr. DaPrato, Novice Master, to come to see him.
- May 07: Fr. DaPrato, after spending several days with Fr. Marani in Verona, left to return to the Novices at Villazzano.
- Aug. 13: Fr. Marani, Superior General, was anointed this day.
- Aug. 16: Word was received at Villazzano that Fr. Marani had been anointed. Frs. Lenotti and DaPrato left immediately for Verona. Fr. DaPrato stayed with Fr. Marani until his death, nearly 11 months later – Fr. Lenotti filled in at Villazzano as Novice Master, a post he had held from September 1855-July 1865.
- Sep. 06: Fr. Lenotti returned to Villazzano with the news that the Superior General, Fr. Marani, was out of danger, but that the doctor was concerned with his loss of weight and, of course, his age.

1871

- Jan. 04: Fr. Bragato wrote to Fr. Lenotti and assured him he would send money for the student house in exile at Villazzano. Fr. Bragato is most apologetic in the letter for not having as much money as previously. Fr. Marani. Sup. Gen. was ill at this time - they were about the same age but, from the tone of Fr. Bragato's letter, it is very clear that he considers Fr. Marani a "Father".
- May 04: Fr. Bragato wrote to Fr. Lenotti, as Fr. Marani was near death.
- May 15: Fr. Lenotti left Villazzano to visit Fr. Marani in Verona to speak about a young Novice who seemed to have nerve troubles. Fr. Marani, although dying is still governing the Congregation. The Bishop of Parma offered the Congregation St. Mary's Church for their Marian Oratories.
- May 16: Fr. Lenotti returned to Villazzano, after speaking with Fr. Marani about one of the Novices.
- May 20: Fr. DaPrato at Fr. Marani's bed-side wrote to the Community at Villazzano, asking for prayers to the Holy Spouses that Fr. Marani might be spared from so much suffering.
- Jul. 01: Sunday - **Fr. John Mary Marani, Superior General, died this day in the home of his niece, Mrs. Massalongo.** It was about 2:30 p.m. – he was 81 years old a month and 27 days. He died 'in exile', as the government had confiscated the property in October 1867.
- Jul. 03: Fr. Marani's funeral was held at 7:00 a.m. this Tuesday morning. The revered body was carried out of the Massalongo home for services and then laid to rest in the cemetery. His slogan as General had been ***Parati ad omnia!*** [Be prepared for all!]
- Jul. 18: A moving eulogy on Fr. Marani appeared in this day's edition of the *Veneto Cattolico*.

1881

- Jul. 16: Monsignor Daniel Comboni wrote from El-Obeid, in African, reminiscing much about Fr. Marani, already deceased about 10 years. He said that Fr. Marani had not studied much, and was a bit stingy and gruff, but withal, he was a Saint. He said that Fr. Marani derived much from Fr. Bertoni.

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The Central Ecclesial Service in the Founder's Plan

[A Long Discussion with the Community, started on Fr. Marani's term as Superior General]

To tap into this much discussed theme, there are several documents that need reflection:

- [1] The Founder's Ideal Concerning the Grade of the 'Professed'
- [2] Fr. Marani's surprising addition in his official report to the Holy See

[Note: This matter will continue chronologically throughout this Part I.]

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[1] Part IX: The Founder's Ideal Concerning the Grade of the 'Professed' CF cc. 1-7, ## 158-186]

Chapter 1 [## 158-160] Concerning the *Professed* [*ad intra*]

158. Only Priests are admitted to the 'Profession', because the principal government of the Congregation, as well as its more important ministries, require the Priesthood.

159. For this promotion, there are required an outstanding basic intellectual formation, as well as each one having given proof of a life-style and good example, providing every indication of moderation of human affectivity.

160. The decision as to who will be promoted, and when this 'Profession' will be made, is solely up to the Superior of the Congregation.

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Chapter 2 [## 161-164] The Means by which this Institute promotes the Salvation of Others [*ad extra*]

161. There are required the assumption of the clerical state, and the manifestation of every disposition to living this with perfection.

162. The 'Professed' are to be assigned to the administration of the Sacraments, especially of Penance and the Eucharist. They are to be committed to begging from God, even through the offering of the sacrifices of the Mass, in order to obtain from God the fruits of the Missions, and the preaching, and the Confessions.

163. The 'Professed' are to be dedicated to any ministry of the Word of God whatsoever [*quodcumque*], such as:

1. Public preaching, or instructing God's people with catechetical teaching, either through public classes, or by private tutoring;
2. Through a pious sharing of views and conversations on sacred matters, sometimes offering fraternal correction, and at other times offering encouragement for virtuous living and a greater frequency of the reception of the Sacraments.
3. This fraternal exchange will at times involve teaching others the path of perfection, and then offering the exhortation to live it.
4. The 'Professed' are to be engaged in giving Retreats.
5. They shall also promote Church organizations.
6. They will exercise a devoted dedication to the Sick, and especially to the dying.

164. The 'Professed' will be dedicated to contributing to the formation and discipline of Seminarians, whether these are living in Seminaries, or are extern students, assigned to parishes or living at home. The 'Professed' will accomplish this either through public courses, or private conversations, by promoting the Seminarians' life of study and spirituality.

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Chapter 3 [## 165-167]

Concerning the Instruction of Children and the Youth

165. Our confreres will promote in every possible manner the Christian formation of children and the youth, and also of those who are uneducated in the faith. Our men will accomplish this either through the Oratories, Catechism Lessons, even through private instructions.

166. Wherever it is possible, it is fitting that our men also assist in the education of the youth. In this ministry, there is to be observed that principle taken from the Shorter Rules of St. Basil: 'Since the Apostle has said: *And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but rear them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord [Ep 6:4]* - then, any of our men who teach the young, may they lead them with this mentality. May those who do instruct the youth be fully confident that they indeed can form these students, educating them in the discipline and the correction of the Lord. May our men observe the Lord's own precept: *Let the little children be, and do not hinder them from coming to me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven [Mt 19:14]*. If any such ideal and hope are not present, then I think that this endeavor would not be pleasing to God, nor would it be proper, or advantageous for us.

167. Even though children might be accepted in our ministry for the purpose of educating them, nevertheless the main goal to be sought and intended in any such instruction is their being directed toward their moral life.

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Chapter 4 [## 168-174]
Concerning the Means to be employed in preserving and developing
Morality in the Life of the Young

168. Since a pure conscience is the seat of wisdom, the students should avail themselves of the sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a month.

169. They should participate in the celebration of the Eucharist every day.

170. The greatest care should be taken so that the students might be well instructed in all that pertains to Christian Doctrine. At least once a week, they should receive instructions in Christian Doctrine, which they are to learn and be able to express what they have learned.

171. Furthermore, each week an exhortation should be given, through which all would be inspired to an increase in virtue.

172. Even during their classes, should the occasion present itself, the teachers should strive to inspire their students to the service and love of God and of virtue.

173. The beginning of school and the individual classes should be introduced by a public prayer. The young people are to be taught that this brief prayer has two purposes: one is that they offer up to God all their school-work, and in particular their time and activity. The second goal is that the students accustom themselves to beg from God the grace to profit by these studies. This practice can prove to be very useful for the other activities of life.

174. All the books for the students use should bespeak piety and chastity, or be carefully edited. The students are not to be permitted to have or read other books.

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Chapter 5 [## 175-181]
Those Means to be employed for the Academic
Progress of the Youth

175. Competence and diligence are first to be sought in the teachers. It is important that they not only be learned, but that they should also be assiduous and studious to assist in the progress of the youth in all their school-work.

176. Good order, or methodology, are to be carefully observed, both in all the scholastic exercises, as well as in reviewing the work done. Every effort needs to be brought to bear so that the students might study privately, either in assignments of composition, or reviewing what has been learned, as well as their being able to refer back to what has already been covered.

177. Text books are to be carefully chosen, so that not only will they not present any danger to faith or morals, but also so that they might be the more suited for the benefit of the students.

178. Sufficient discipline should not be lacking, in accord with the quality and the capacity of the students. If, however, corporal punishment is to be meted out, due to the respect to be given to the religious state, this should not be administered by the teachers themselves. This should be the responsibility of the parents of the boy, or the student should be sent to a disciplinarian assigned for this task.

179. If correction does not help, and there is some danger that this student would be harmful to others, since he does not make much progress, should he prove to be incorrigible, he is to be expelled from study.

180. It is very useful to propose and to bestow rewards or honors to the extern students for the sake of encouraging fervor in their studies. In all these matters, propriety and a religious sense are to be observed.

181. Since 'honor promotes the arts', and material rewards may not always be at hand, the teachers should also make use of the type of rewards that are commensurate to the accomplishments and the individuals achieving them. This may be realized by assigning certain places or signs of honor, through which the emulation and greater diligence among the other students might be stimulated.

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Chapter 6 [## 182-184] **Concerning the Duties of the 'Professed' Fathers**

182. Their duty is to teach not only in sermons, retreats, lectures, which are both necessary and useful for eternal life - but also to explain the rudiments of faith and morals to the uneducated and to children, in the Oratories, in public catechism lessons, as well as by private instructions. For this is of great use to the Church, and therefore this ministry is highly recommended to them.

183. They will hear the confessions of all who approach them, especially those of the poor and children, and encourage all to a frequent reception of the Sacraments.

184. When the 'Professed' are sent anywhere, or assigned to reside in some place, no one will expect any provision for the journey, or for their residence, from the Bishop, or from the Pastors, but they will freely offer themselves and totally commit themselves to the task.

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Chapter 7 [## 185-186]

The Principal Purpose of the 'Professed' Fathers

185. Although the purpose of this Congregation is to offer assistance to the Church under the direction of the Bishops, through the various and proper duties of its vocation; and since this seems at times to be an arduous and difficult undertaking, and, if it be measured against human weakness, one that is exposed to dangers - nonetheless, this proposal of our vocation, therefore, is not one that is imprudent and rash. This is so, firstly, because it is not based on human resources, but is to be carried out with the grace of the Holy Spirit, for He Who has begun a good work in you will bring it to perfection... [Ph 1:6], if He is not hindered in this by us. For this is the special grace of this vocation, which is more powerful than all dangers and difficulties.

Furthermore, through this plan, we do not propose to expose ourselves to dangers, nor to go to this, or that place, or to undertake one activity over another, but to follow the direction of the orthodox Bishop whom the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God [cf. Ac 20:28]. This means is sufficiently safe in not erring in the way of the Lord. Finally, the concern of the Congregation is to be both in disciplining and in forming its men, as well as in selecting them, and in sustaining and strengthening them.

186. Furthermore, no one will contrive to be sent in one place rather than in another, but each will allow himself to be transferred, although it is not wrong to show oneself prepared for some undertaking. For, Isaiah [6:6, ff.] offered himself and Jeremiah [1: 6] excused himself. However, Jeremiah did not resist God sending him, nor did Isaiah presume to go before being purified by the coal of the altar. As Gregory has said, no one should dare to undertake the sacred ministries without first being purified, nor should anyone chosen by a superior grace, proudly refuse to go, under the pretext of humility.

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[2] Fr. Marani's Surprising Addition to the Holy See

to his GRADUATED LIST OF APOSTOLATES FOR THE APOSTOLIC MISSION

This document, dated of September 30, 1855, was entitled: “Cenni intorno alla Congregazione delle Stimate” (Outline of the Congregation of the Stigmata). There was added here a special emphasis on Parish Missions, rendered in Latin by: praeter missiones... – followed in other documents by scuole (schools) and also by missiones (missions).

The surprising phraseology⁸ may be translated as follow:

In this spontaneous union of Priests and Masters, the aforesaid Fr. Gaspare Bertoni took care, from the beginning, that the companions, without professing any particular institute, had to live as Religious, that is at home in the exercise of a praiseworthy obedience and in the observance of a perfectly common life; and beyond, in using oneself for the purpose of ministries proper to the degree and vocation of them to the health of the next, and chiefly to meet the needs. From here came the design of an Institute, which the Founder wished to name Apostolic Missionaries in obsequium Episcoporum'.

Nor was it limited to this or that kind of occupations, or to certain cases or subjects, but in all cases, for every good work and in the help of those embraced this way of living. Souls wished them to be ready to prepare those who had embraced this way of life.

⁸ In original Italian:

... In questa spontanea unione di Sacerdotti e Maestri, il suddetti d. Gaspare Bertoni ebbe cura, fin da principio, che i compagni, senza professare alcun Istituto particolare, avessero a vivere come Religiosi, cioe' in casa nell'esercizio di una pronta obbedienza e nella osservanza di una vita perfettamente comune; e fuori, oltre, nell'impiegarsi all'uopo ne'santi ministri propri del grado e vocazion loro a salute dei prossimi, e precipuamente nel sopperire ai bisogni. Dal qui nacque il disegno di un Istituto, che il Fondatore volle intitolare de 'Missionarii Apostolici in obsequium Episcoporum'.

Nè si limitò a questa o a quella specie di occupazioni, o ad alcuni determinati casi o materie, ma in tutti i casi per ogni buon opera e in ajuto delle abbracciato questa maniere di vivere. Anime volle che fossero pronti ad apparecchiati coloro, i quali avessero abbracciato questa maniera di vivere.

E pero é proprio di questa novella Congregazione, oltre l'occuparsi nelle sante Missioni, l'insegnare in ogni ramo di letteratura e di scienze, udire le confessioni, dare gli Esercizi Spirituali ad ogni classe e condizion di persone, e specalmente ai Chierici e Sacerdoti, spiegare il catechismo fare le Congregazioni Marilane nelle Chiese del proprorio Istituto e pruomovere dovunque, assistere agl'infermi e moribondi, instruire ed ajutare nello spirito i carcerati e i condannati alla pena capitale, supplire ed anche stabilmente accettare cattedre di Filosofia o di Teologia ne'Seminari, e prestare qualunque altra Opera di che il Vescovo avesse anche improvviso bisogno; come gia' di e'procurato di fare secondo le nostre forze dalla prima institutione, cioè dall'anno 1816, fino al presente

But it is precisely this new Congregation, besides being involved in the Holy Missions, teaching in every branch of literature and science, hearing confessions, giving the Spiritual Exercises to every class and condition of persons, and especially to Clerics and Priests, explaining the catechism, making the Marian Congregations in the Churches of the Institute and promote everywhere, assisting the sick and dying, instructing and assisting in the spirit the prisoners and condemned to capital punishment, substitute and even permanently accept professorships of Philosophy or of Theology in the Seminaries, and also to lend another work of any kind that the Bishop might have improvised; as already 'prearranged to do according to our strength from the first institution', i.e., from the year 1816, until the present

In close adherence to St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Gaspar allowed providence itself in the discernment of what actual apostolates to which the community would dedicate itself: there was for both a long list of “palliatives” to be employed in case one or other of the suggested apostolates could not be conducted.

The Jesuit insistence on Education devolves from the early pressing appeals made to the Society of Jesus to open a University in Sicily. In Fr. Marani's document, he notes *oltre le scuole... oltre le missioni* – without much clear distinctions as to why.

It does seem historically the basic need was for schools – in times of continuing governmental troubles following the Founder's death, the historical need was the burgeoning apostolate for Parish Missions.

Thirty-five years later, the General Chapter of 1890 would clearly come to state that these two apostolates were equal – or, in accord with the influential Chapter Proposals from the House of the *Stimate* to the 5th General Chapter, refers to education as: one of the principal ends of the congregation.

[Note: This matter will continue chronologically along the terms of Frs. Lenotti and Vignola as Superior General, in this Part I]

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Synthesis:

Roster of the General Chapters and Important Dates of the Founder and of the Institute during the four first Superior General Terms [1855 – 1911]:

Date	Event	Complementation	Elect. Sup. Gen.
April 16, 1855	Decree of Praise		
Sep. 16, 1855			Fr. J. M. Marani
Sep. 30, 1855	Canonical Erection		
July 3-5, 1871	1 st Gen. Chapter		Fr. J. B. Lenotti
Sep. 11-13, 1871	2 nd Gen. Chapter		
Oct. 4-6, 1871	3 rd Gen. Chapter		
Sep. 9-10, 1872	4 th Gen. Chapter		
Feb. 25 – Mar. 2, 1874	5 th Gen. Chapter		
Aug. 5, 1874	6 th Gen. Chapter		
Oct. 26-30, 1875	7 th Gen. Chapter		Fr. P. Vignola
Sep. 26 – Oct. 4, 1876	8 th Gen. Chapter		
Feb. 17-24, 1880	9 th Gen. Chapter		
Feb. 18-28, 1881	10 th Gen. Chapter		Fr. P. Vignola
Sep. 12-25, 1889	11 th Gen. Chapter	Change Const.	
Sep. 15, 1890	Pontifical Approbation		
Sep. 24 – Oct. 3, 1890	12 th Gen. Chapter	Change Const.	
Apr. 23-24, 1891	13 th Gen. Chapter		
Sep. 24-28, 1891	14 th [I] Gen. Chapter		Fr. P. Gurisatti
Sep. 21-23, 1896	15 th [II] Gen. Chapter		
1897	Beginning of the Cause of Beatification of Fr. Gaspar Bertoni		
Sep. 23-25, 1901	16 th [III] Gen. Chapter		Fr. P. Gurisatti
Oct. 13, 1905	Foundation in USA	Frs. Anthony Dalla Porta and Louis Luchi	
Sep. 18-20, 1906	17 th [IV] Gen. Chapter		
Dec. 2, 1910	Foundation in Brazil	Frs. Henry Adami and Alexander Grigolli, and Bro. Dominic Valzacchi	
Sep. 20-23, 1911	18 th [V] Gen. Chapter		Fr. J. B. Tomasi

Date of St. Gaspar Bertoni
 Dates of the Institute
 Election of Sup. Gen.

Important Decisions of the General Chapters on the Interpretation of the Original Constitutions:

- The discussions on the Central Ecclesial Service on Founder's Plan culminate on the 12th General Chapter [1890] declaration that 'The "Schools" are equal to the "Parish Missions" in the Founder's Original Plan.

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