



## The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence

Programs Serving Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities  
A Division of Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

### DIVINE PROVIDENCE VILLAGE RECEIVES \$725,000 BEQUEST

Dr. John E. Hughes was a "great buddy" of longtime Divine Providence Village resident Lizzie Dukes. When Dr. Hughes passed away on July 30 at the age of 86, his will revealed the depth of their friendship, and showed his appreciation for the care Lizzie has received at Divine Providence Village.

In August, Jean Calvarese-Donovan, Administrator of Divine Providence Village, received a surprising call from Pat Crawford, a good friend of Ellen and Lizzie Dukes. Pat told Jean that she was the executrix of an estate, and DPV would be receiving a legacy gift from Lizzie's dear friend, Dr. John E. Hughes. They also said the bequest would be somewhere in the range of \$500,000 to \$750,000!

Dr. Hughes had an amazing life. The first child to be adopted by a single parent in the City of Philadelphia, his adoptive mother, Elizabeth Hughes, was an OB/GYN physician and his aunt, Alice Hughes, was a Philadelphia schoolteacher. Together, they raised John from the time he was two-years-old, and provided him with a Catholic education from elementary school through college. He later went on to receive a doctorate in education from Temple University, and then spent a long and successful career as a teacher and elementary school principal.

Dr. Hughes always felt blessed to have been adopted

into a strong, Catholic family. He also felt blessed to know Lizzie, and was touched by her infectious, joyful spirit. They came to know one another when Dr.



Hughes was the principal of the school where Pat and Ellen worked. A bus would drop Lizzie off at the school at the end of the day, and their mutual friendship blossomed. These four close friends and Dr. Hughes were on the altar at the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Paul when Lizzie was con-

firmed in 2007. Raised by kind and loving women, Dr. Hughes wanted the ladies who reside at Divine Providence Village to benefit from his generosity.

The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence are humbled and grateful to Dr. Hughes for his incredible gift. He is now enrolled in the **Saint Luigi Guanella Legacy Society** along with others who have made a planned gift to our Communities. Legacy Society members are our special patrons, who as benefactors are remembered in a special way in the prayers and Masses offered in the chapel at Divine Providence.



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

### The Foundation of Our Work Rooted in Mission and Inspired by Vision

As I have shared with you in previous newsletters, significant changes have occurred in the last several years at Don Guanella and Divine Providence, resulting in these two historically linked but distinct programs working ever more closely together. This closer relationship can be seen in combined daily operations, blended philanthropic efforts, and the publishing of this joint newsletter. Currently, steps are being taken to soon merge the two program entities into one corporation. With all this unfolding, we felt it important to revisit the foundation of *What* we do and *Why* we do it – our *raison d'être*, if you will – and to adapt our Mission and Vision statements to reflect our shared journey as the Communities of **Don Guanella and Divine Providence**. Our new **Mission** Statement states very simply that:

*Following the loving example of Jesus, we the Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence, embrace persons with intellectual disabilities with professional and compassionate care.*

A related **Vision** Statement sets forth our hopes and aspirations for those to whom our mission is directed:

*Rooted in the tradition of our Catholic faith and guided by Guanellian values, we maximize the potential of those we serve. Through the quality of our services, we promote individuality and belonging, ensure respect and dignity, and nourish spirituality and wellness, all within the supportive love of family.*

These statements reinforce our identity and infuse our work with the vocation to express God's unconditional love for all, as we give clear witness to the dignity of our vulnerable individuals. It is fitting that we first introduced these statements to our employees on October 24<sup>th</sup>, the feast day of St. Luigi Guanella, who devoted his life to ministry among those with intellectual disabilities. We proudly present them here to our larger Guanella family in this newsletter during the holy season of Advent and Christmas, a time full of light, renewal, and hope. In sharing them with you, we invite you to see yourselves as integral to our daily efforts, as together we embrace those whom we serve within the supportive love of family. We are so grateful to count you among those ranks. God bless you and your loved ones during this Christmas season and in the New Year.

Fran Swiacki  
Executive Director





## DIVERSITY IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF LUIGI GUANELLA

### Trust in Divine Providence

The concept of diversity and the issues surrounding this important aspect of life as we see it today would not have been explicitly in the mind of Don Guanella given the times in which he lived. However, in the spirituality of the man now known as St. Luigi Guanella, we can discern how he understood and honored the richness of diversity within the human family he so deeply loved.

The spirituality of Don Guanella can be described using six characteristics, and one can see in each the value he placed on diversity. **Trust in Divine Providence** is the heart of Guanellian spirituality, as this future saint saw God, first and foremost, as a loving Father who cares for each of his “*children*” and desires to provide for all of them. For Fr. Guanella, this love was unconditional – without limit – and thus showered freely upon all without distinction.

A second attribute of Guanella’s spirituality is **respect for life**. For him, all life was of inestimable value and worth because of the dignity inherent in each person created in God’s image and likeness. This led him to recognize, especially in the vulnerable, the “*face*” of Jesus, and not focus on their disability, condition or state of life. Flowing from this attribute is his visible and vocal **preference for the poor**. Fr. Guanella’s ministry and heart were wholly centered on serving as an

“*instrument*” of God’s Providence, with priority given to providing for any person in whom he recognized a need. That regard for the least among us transcended borders and ethnic backgrounds; as Fr. Guanella told his priests, brothers and sisters, “*the whole world is your homeland.*”

These first three features of Guanella’s spirituality can be summed up, as a fourth quality, in the motto he gave to the priests and brothers who followed in his footsteps, the Servants of Charity: “*in all things love.*” This could be paraphrased as “*love all persons at all times*” without distinction for differences between you and them. What also marked Guanella’s way of life was a deep sense of **family spirit**, meaning that he saw **each and all** as members of the one family of God, to be cared for and nurtured with familial love, with the Holy Family as a model. Finally, a **Eucharistic spirit** permeated the spirituality of Father Guanella, recognizing that we are “many parts, yet one body” – the Body of Christ called into communion with God and one another.

So, in a concrete way that is relevant to our current reality, the spirituality of St. Luigi Guanella grounds our self-awareness that the diversity among us is both a gift to be celebrated and an invitation to love unconditionally, just as God in his Son Jesus has loved us.

# CELEBRATING UNITY WITHIN DIVERSITY

The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence Village continue our efforts to foster a spirit of appreciating our rich diversity as a means of celebrating our unity within a common purpose and mission. In early October, Diversity Consultants Sophie Bronstein and Nelson Hewitt facilitated a series of discussions, training, and Town Hall Meetings as part of our first Diversity Week. Parents, board members and staff from Divine Providence and Don Guanella representing countries across the globe participated.

Nearly 150 people shared a meal of culturally diverse dishes, followed by an interreligious prayer service and presentation by Ed Lis, Director of Catholic Mission Integration for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Ed highlighted the importance of diversity to our Catholic identity and mission as a faith-based service provider for persons with disabilities. His comments were punctuated by the invitation to all present to repeat three lines that the group had just prayed:

“I am more ... we are beautiful together...  
and God wanted it this way!”

A summary of Ed's presentation follows.



The Old Testament book of Genesis depicts God creating the world with incredible diversity, reflected in a vast array of every imaginable kind of plant and animal. God crowned his efforts with human beings, created in God's

very image and likeness. Just look around and take in the rich diversity among us. Behold the hand of God, who shows us who He is by creating humanity with such dazzling diversity. See the hand of God in making us with so many wonderful differences in race, language,

religion and culture. We are beautiful together, aren't we? And the truth is that God wanted it this way, so that together, in all that wondrous diversity, we can more fully be the image of God in our world. So in fact, celebrating our diversity is a natural and necessary derivative of our agency's Catholic identity. Although we think of Catholic as a particular Church denomination, the word "catholic" comes from ancient Greek, and means universal or all-embracing, which the early Church used to emphasize the unity of faith communities across diverse cultures and traditions. So, to say catholic is first and foremost to emphasize what we have in common. For that reason, we welcome people of all religious traditions to serve with us, inviting each one to look to the example of Jesus in his loving care for the poor and vulnerable, as the basis for what we do, and how we do it. Our employees represent a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds, yet together we fulfill our mission as each one draws inspiration from his or her own faith tradition to serve as Jesus did. Although we are not all Catholics or Christians, we are all Guanelians, recognizing as Don Guanella did that what draws us together is our shared commitment to compassionately care for others as members of God's one human family.

*Let us confidently live together among different faiths in mutual respect and good will, with an authentic openness of heart ... as a sign of harmony and fraternity. This entails more than mere tolerance; it challenges us to reach out to others in mutual trust and understanding, and build a unity that sees diversity not as a threat, but as a potential source of enrichment and growth. It challenges us to cultivate an openness of heart that views others as an avenue, not a barrier. A spirit of openness, acceptance and cooperation between believers is the condition for a culture of encounter ... it is its beating heart. How much our world needs this heart to beat strongly today.*

— Pope Francis





(l-r) Dan, Chris, Mary, Steve Noykoff, Mary M., Lenshina Garrett. Steve and Lenshina are Volunteer Coordinators.

## "IN ALL THINGS CHARITY"

### Volunteering at Chester Food Bank

The Volunteer Program which operates out of the Day Programs at Our Lady of Fatima in Secane is a vital avenue of fulfillment for many of our individuals. Volunteering helps develop the skills needed to gain employment and contributes to each person's sense of achievement. For several years, our volunteers have been spending one day a week at the Catholic Social Services (CSS) Chester City Family Service Center, packaging and distributing food for the homeless and hungry at the center's food pantry, called Martha's Choice Market-place.

Mary M. enjoys standing at the door greeting and directing people. She also organizes the items on the table and hands them to staff to place inside a bag. The volunteers interact with many different types of people from different places with the common need for nourishment and kindness. Guanellian Values, such as respecting the dignity and worth of each person and caring for the poor with compassion and charity, are clearly

reflected in their work. Our communities are providing these volunteers with a diverse social environment and a chance to contribute to the community. They are learning job readiness, while making connections with others and gaining a sense of accomplishment. By stepping outside of their comfortable settings and spending time providing nutrition to people in need who are different from them, our individuals are fulfilling our mission and feeling the pure joy of caring for others - *"In All Things Charity."*

"Every Wednesday, the volunteers walk over to Steve (Volunteer Coordinator) to make sure that they are going out to assist people at the food bank. It brings great joy to the residents' life knowing that they can help needy people in the community."

— Mary Thomas  
Community Participation Coordinator

Peter Nimley (center)  
with individuals at  
the Day Program.



## EMBODYING OUR MISSION

Peter Nimley

"...They shall be to you as native-born children of Israel. With you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel."  
(Ezekiel 47:22)

Welcoming immigrants has deep roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition, as reflected in this passage from Ezekiel, where God commanded that those from outside Israel be given land and accepted just as if they were native-born citizens. Individuals who have emigrated from West Africa to the U.S. are the bedrock of our workforce in *The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence*, and in this long tradition they have found a welcoming home. In fact, they make up well over half of our staff of 800 employees.

Peter Nimley is one such person. Peter retired in August after twenty years of employment with us at the Day Programs at Our Lady of Fatima parish. Peter often said "*God has blessed me so much,*" but it was really Peter who blessed countless men and women through his compassionate care and loving presence.

Like the vast majority of our direct care workforce, Peter came to us from West Africa where he had faced civil war and violence. In Liberia, Peter's family was not spared. His six-year-old son Peter Jr. was shot and killed by gunmen from an adjacent rooftop just as he opened the shutters of his bedroom window. Despite this tragic

loss, Peter continued to find blessings everywhere. Losing his only son was tragic, but Peter knew that he needed to continue to care for his six daughters, one of whom still lives in Liberia. Many of our direct care staff have family members who remain in West Africa. Like Peter, most of them regularly send financial support to help them survive.

Peter credits God's assistance in finding a way for him to leave war-torn Liberia. He has fond memories of his Mom, who always encouraged him "*to help anybody who can't help themselves.*" That encouragement to support others was also reinforced by the nuns who taught him at Our Lady of Fatima School in Cape Palmas, Liberia. By coincidence, or Divine Providence, Peter worked for the last several years at our community day program now located at Our Lady of Fatima in Secane.

Peter is one of the many faces that contributes to the rich diversity of the Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence. Our immigrant workers are integral members of our family. The loving care they offer to our individuals is an expression of their genuine and heartfelt concerns for others. We truly love them all!

A Celebration of Diversity at Day Programs





## FR. DENNIS WEBER

### Inducted Into Bonner Hall Of Fame



Father Dennis Weber, SdC at his induction into the Monsignor Bonner High School Hall of Fame.

On October 27, 2018, Father Dennis Weber, SdC was inducted into the Monsignor Bonner High School Hall of Fame. Father Weber is a graduate of the Class of 1972. A record crowd of 725 people filled the Drexelbrook Grand Ballroom to capacity to honor eleven new inductees, who are now numbered among the 120 individuals to have received this honor over the last thirty years.

To be considered by the nominating committee, one should be known to have made a significant contribution to the school, community and/or society in general in areas as diverse as the arts, business, coaching, education, government, law, medicine, the military, politics, religion, science, sports or other endeavors.

In receiving his award, Father Dennis acknowledged his nervousness but quickly began to beam as he shared his award with the men to whom he has ministered at Don Guanella over many years of service. Calling out the names of those men in attendance and asking them to stand, Fr. Dennis invited a round of applause from the audience to honor them. Father spoke from the heart about the right to life of all people, and cited the tragically high number of children today diagnosed in the womb with intellectual disabilities who are aborted. A member of the Servants of Charity founded by St. Louis Guanella, Fr. Dennis was ordained in 1997.

Monsignor Bonner High School boasts nearly 20,000 graduates since 1957, so to be named one of just 120 Hall of Fame members is quite an honor. Those who have been touched by Father Dennis and his kind and loving ministry to the individuals and families of the Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence know that it is a well deserved honor.

## ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

Through prayer and song we remembered the residents, family, and staff who have passed away since November 2017.

In a special way we remember those we have served:

John "Jackie" Everly . . . December 24, 2017  
Richard Cavallaro . . . . . January 6, 2018  
Stanley "Stas" Bastkowski . . January 25, 2018  
Gail Albert . . . . . January 30, 2018  
Gerard "Gerry" DeRosa . . . . April 14, 2018  
Michael Gesualdi . . . . . May 14, 2018  
Susie Westbrook . . . . . June 17, 2018  
Vernon "Vernie" Ludwig . . . . July 7, 2018  
Leandra Zimmerman . . . . . July 16, 2018  
Thomas "Tommy" Cordisco . . . July 24, 2018  
Patti Brett . . . . . August 17, 2018





## The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence

### Don Guanella and Community Programs

Administrative Offices  
20 East Cleveland Avenue  
Norwood, PA 19074  
610-543-3380

### Divine Providence Village

686 Old Marple Road  
Springfield, PA 19064  
610-328-7730

### Day Programs at Our Lady of Fatima

10 Fatima Drive  
Secane, PA 19018  
215-578-8204

[www.dgdpcommunities.org](http://www.dgdpcommunities.org)

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Use the enclosed envelope, or go to [dgdpcommunities.org](http://dgdpcommunities.org)

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

#### Family Town Hall Meeting:

Wednesday January 16, 2018 at 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
at Divine Providence Village Multi-Purpose Room

#### Join the Family Support Group:

Sunday January 27, 2018 at 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
at Divine Providence Village Multi-Purpose Room



Volunteers from Cardinal O'Hara Community Service Corps spent time with Divine Providence Village residents for Thanksgiving.

### HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

#### The Communities of Don Guanella and Divine Providence

- Join the Don Guanella/Divine Providence Annual Giving Society by making a three-year pledge of support. See the [www.dgdpcommunities.org/annual-giving-society](http://www.dgdpcommunities.org/annual-giving-society).
- Join the St. Luigi Guanella Legacy Society by making a planned gift. This can be as simple as naming the Communities of DG/DP in your will, or naming us as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. Other ways of giving include transfers of appreciated stock, IRA rollovers, and management of other retirement assets that may result in substantial donor tax savings. Visit our website at [www.dgdpcommunities.org/legacy](http://www.dgdpcommunities.org/legacy) for more information.
- Make a one time or recurring gift to our Annual Campaign. Your cash contributions are always welcome.

Please consult with your financial advisor before making any decisions regarding a planned gift.

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LET'S BE SOCIAL: @DGDPCommunities

