

WITH FAITH, LOVE AND COMPETENCE

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PROFILE OF THE GUANELLIAN STAFF

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Servants of Charity
Pious Union of St. Joseph, Inc.
971 East Michigan Avenue
Grass Lake, Mi 49240-9210

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Translated from the Italian by
FR. JOSEPH RINALDO, S.C.

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PREFACE

The zeal for the formation of teachers and educators is certainly not an interest peculiar to our time. The Institute of Father Guanella has always been concerned with the availability of coworkers distinguished for human qualities, attitudes and professional skills. This prerequisite, in fact, is rooted in the charism itself and in the educational project of the Founder. More than a century has gone by since Father Guanella, fervent with high ideals but somewhat lacking in psychological and educational techniques, was determined to provide his collaborators with the thought and the work of qualified professionals of his time. Many of them were university teachers and were entrusted with the task of updating and training individuals for the mission of “the poor.” Those were different times from ours, one can say. This observation can be accepted only if referring to whatever was historically true and the problems in education at the time.

Father Guanella lived in difficult, complex and conflicting times. Saint Joseph Benedict Cottolengo, Don Bosco, Father Guanella, and many other “apostles of charity” were a turning point in education and approach to the problem

of the “least,” of the “poor,” of the “outcast.” They reintroduced and redeveloped ancient ideals and values to better embody them into their times. First among them, was that of faith and trust in the dignity and educability of the human person. These high ideals constantly kept alive were translated into an educational process that has lasted for decades. This is a practice that has not been worn by time or by the temptation of apathy, which often affects educators, and with them, the ethical and religious roots of the educational project.

The present educational Manual for workers of the Guanellian Centers details the recurring and permanent synopsis worked out by those responsible in the two religious Guanellian Congregations, “The Daughters of St. Mary of Providence” and “The Servants of Charity.” The intent is to confer value, as well as spiritual and scientific meaning to the profile of the Guanellian workers, and to guide them with faith, competence and love in their educational work. Even though today it is so difficult and complex, the Guanellian educational work is always marked by that anthropology and that teleology, which allows in-

teraction among people to undergo that specific transformation that we identify in education. It is an event through which all and every single human being finds meaning in the journey toward “self shaping” and toward the “vision” of the authentic reason for which we were created.

It is rewarding to know that in an education Manual for workers the anthropological dimension is considered in all its implications. The person is at the center; but it is an educational centrality, functional, academic, leading the person to the true center. It is the true core toward which the human intention is almost always, spontaneously and intelligently, directed; unless personal, social, cultural, psychological and biological conditions fall into play to misdirect, fragment or distort the consciences. This regaining of educational anthropology brings us to the “crossroad in education.” (J. Maritain). It is always the hidden conflict between the man who is fashioned in tension and called to the authentic objectives of education, and the man who instead “fails to recognize” those objectives and surrounds them with false ideas.

This is a very difficult problem even today. But perhaps it is under study and revision in a context marked by prominent scientific potential and the coming together of many people searching for integrity in themselves and in their history. Today there are new demands and compelling emergencies, especially the preferential choice for “children” and for the “poor.” They appear to be the truest voice, educationally more productive and attentive to dubious theories and false science. It is time for “realistic optimism,” of patience, humility and readiness to listen. This endeavor is finally emphasized in times of serious disorientation and with particular attention to the family, family education, and the ultimate objective of the “Institute.” “The practice of the Institution is the education in the family,” because the educational process present and active in the family constitutes “the educational environment that prevents evil.”

In conclusion, we are presented with significant pages on the field of education and that of the charism peculiar to the “Guanellian Family.” Fortunately, and providentially, the Guanellians are still attentive and optimistic about the con-

crete fact that the “solid motivations of the beginning and the effort toward reaching a goal” constitute the fundamental prerequisite in the effort of education. It is that slow struggle which consists in “unfolding,” on the part of each one, those talents of mind and heart capable of becoming guiding companions in grasping questions and relationships between freedom and authority and between freedom and truth.

This effort’s final goal is to prepare attentive and firm educators; to hold high the educational standards, to prevent sliding into educational routines or sterile, aimless methods.

JOSEPH VICO

INTRODUCTION

From the beginning of his mission Father Guanella surrounded himself with collaborators: Sisters, Priests, Religious Brothers and lay people. They were a diverse group of people in educational level and social background, but united by a firm will of partaking in projects of charity of the Founder. Moved solely by a great love of God and neighbor, together with him, they assisted those forgotten by society and outcast from the mainstream of life. Little by little the small group of humble and courageous men and women who followed Father Guanella increased to become a large family today. They are present on four continents, committed to strive with all their strength for the full promotion of all persons and social groups struck by multiple forms of poverty, of neglect and adversity. At the beginning of the third Christian Millennium the disciples of Father Guanella and the collaborators of his Institute, are aware of being a great, yet small family.

Great, because God has multiplied us beyond any hope, associating with us men and women of every culture, race and religion, and has planted the seed of the Guanellian charism in countries where we are not present yet (Hondur-

ras, Mozambique, Madagascar, Libya, Tunisia, Lebanon, Bosnia, Poland, Germany, and probably China), but where people captivated by the Guanellian spirit operate in the field of human solidarity.

Small, because before the great multitude of poor, we feel “very little,” as our Founder used to say. We are also aware that with our own strength we will be able to help only a small number of brothers and sisters, who live in dire situations and often in sub-human conditions.

This educational manual has been prepared for all the members of this family to help them pursue the path of charity traced by Father Guanella and do works of promotion modeled after his words and deeds.

This manual is proposed for all Guanellian educators and all who work in the Institutes directly, or indirectly, operated by the Guanellian Family.

It is also intended for all who work in the multiple fields of human development of individual and social groups, and who are inspired by our methods of education, as well anyone who is com-

mitted to the needy, and choose the Guanellian style in their service.

The idea of a manual that would describe the identity of the Guanellian Cooperators was launched by the XVI General Chapter of the Servants of Charity in July, 1993. The recommendation was later made also by the General Council of the Guanellian Sisters.

The two General Councils in the meeting of June 5, 1996 decided to create a committee composed of Sr. Michela Carrozzino, DSMP, Prof. Barbara De Gaetano, Dr. Mario Mozzanica, Dr. Guido Nosotti, Dr. Anthony Valentini, Dr. Gerolamo Fazzini and Fr. Giancarlo Pravettoni, SC, as president. The committee began on November, 1996 to produce a document, by June, 1997.

On July 3, 1997, the two General Councils approved the manual, suggesting to the committee changes and improvements. The lengthy revision of the text to create unity of literary style brought us to the dawn of the year 2000.

The title synthesizes and drafts the identity of the Guanellian educator: “with faith, love and competence.”

With faith: Faith in God, Father of all human beings; in the dignity of every man and woman and in the sacredness of human life.

With competence: human and professional, fruit of study and of experience, combined with the incredible qualities we all have received from God.

With love: The love that coming from God, invades the heart of each one and becomes compassion, tenderness, closeness and service to the neighbor.

The happiness and the achievement of persons who are in need, forgotten or suffering, depend also on us from the vitality of our faith; from the caliber of our skills; and with the greatness of our love.

We have also been entrusted the difficult and marvelous task of building a civilization of love, by developing the world of the Third Christian Millennium into a unique and great family where there will reign peace, justice, truth and solidarity. This is a task to be daily fulfilled together, with joy and love, in the name of God and following in the footsteps of Father Louis Guanella.

FR. GIANCARLO PRAVETTONI, S.C.

EDUCATIONAL HANDBOOK FOR STAFF OF THE GUANELLIAN INSTITUTES

Premise

THE OBJECTIVES

1

The “manual for educators” is proposed as a “manual” essentially educational in nature and purpose:

- It outlines the profile and the identity of the Guanellian educator, in the light of the Guanellian charism and spirit, and of the educational and pastoral project of the Guanellian family expressed in the “Basic Document for the Guanellian Mission.”

2

- It sets the guidelines that must direct the work in the various Institutes and Guanellian Centers for service and activity:

3

- It indicates the way for an always greater cooperation among the many educators with different roles and responsibilities in the same center.

4

- It means to be an instrument providing the basic coordinates for universal validity, thus enabling the different Institutes and Guanellian ministries in the world to harmonize each one’s work style with the Guanellian charism, adapted to each unique geographical or cultural situation.

THE RECIPIENTS

This book is directed to all the workers of the Guanellian Centers scattered throughout the world whether they be educational, rehabilitative, residential or pastoral. It intends to present the essential elements for every professional who works in the context of a Guanellian Institute, regardless of the work performed or the levels of responsibility.

- 5 It is intended also for all those (parents, counselors, psychologists, sociologists, educators, therapists, etc.), who intend to follow the Guanellian educational method, considering it an original and effective course of authentic and integral promotion of individuals and disenfranchised human groups, especially the disadvantaged or troubled.

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK

- 6 These pages are the result of the work of an interdisciplinary team, composed of lay people and religious. Hence they are written not only from theoretical knowledge, but from a personal history of service. They represent the fruit of reflection and a confirmation from the daily activity, conducted in the continual attempt to revitalize the Guanellian charism and put it into practice.

Chapter One

THE GUANELLIAN CHARISM

The Guanellian educator is aware that he is not just at a job site, but that he is operating in an Institute that: 7

- carries its own spirit and mission and makes reference to the character and charism of Father Louis Guanella.

- services not just one category of poor people, but anyone in need or troubled, according to the different circumstances as called by Providence. 8

“Make it understood that everyone is dear to you, but the poor are the dearest”: this is the tradition transmitted by the Founder (To the DSMP in the kindergartens - 1913, in SpC, p. 821).

PREREQUISITES FOR THE GUANELLIAN MISSION

There exists a basic criterion to determine if the person who applies (or who is recruited) to work at a Guanellian center is suitable to the task. This is over and beyond the technical competence, acquired through formal education, training and experience. 9

Whoever intends to work in a Guanellian facility on behalf of people in a situation of need, difficulty or social disadvantage, - regardless of 10

function and responsibility - must exhibit solid initial motivations and the constant willingness to achieve the set goals.

- 11 To explain further the essential qualities one needs to work in a Guanellian Center, we suggest the following:
- 12 **a.** a predilection for the poor based on the Gospel as a fundamental motivation of the work.
“The purpose of our ministry,” Father Guanella said, “is the salvation, the good, the sanctification of souls, the relief of physical needs, the shelter of the abandoned and the destitute. Ours is preeminently an apostolate of redemption, of social merit, and is consecrated to offset the double order of evil, to restore the double happiness of the spirit and the body” (LDP, Feb. 1913, 27);
- 13 **b.** consciousness of the original dignity of the human person in any situation of psychological limitation or moral poverty;
- 14 **c.** desire for the improvement of the other, his deliverance, his total promotion;
- 15 **d.** broad vision of the person, as an entity extremely rich and complex (intelligence, emotions, relationships, etc...);

e. cooperative attitude to establish an atmosphere that breathes a “family spirit” of acceptance, attention and joy. **16**

Of what persons in need and difficulty are we speaking? **17**

All of them. The Founder spoke of those who “are poor in possessions, and are often equally afflicted in mind and body.” Thus he ideally includes visible poverty (physical, financial) and mental poverty (lack of affection, and intellectual resources, of moral, spiritual and religious support). In fact, the Guanellian family directs its kindness and friendship to all those on the edge of society no matter what their social class.

Throughout its history, the Guanellian charism has met the challenges of the very many concrete situations of poverty, exclusion and marginalization.

REFERENCE TO A GUANELLIAN ANTHROPOLOGY AND ITS KEY POINTS

Educational projects are based on a specific vision of the human being and his life which profoundly affects the choices of objectives, contents, methods and means of education. **18**

- 19 This is the reason why we present here the main aspects, or better, the key points of Guanellian anthropology, stating at the outset that it is human Christian anthropology understood and applied with the eyes and the heart of the Guanellian charism.

1. THE INNATE VALUE OF THE HUMAN PERSON

- 20 -The human being is a reality enveloped in mystery, not fathomed to his depths. In every person there exists something more than what we can recognize or surmise.

“All people on earth,” writes the Founder, *“are the image of the Most High. Let us examine him closely, because I am certain that, recognizing him, we will put our attention on loving our neighbor with all our strength.”*

(Vieni Meco, in SM e C, 350).

- 21 - Each person, is an extraordinarily rich reality: his value excels that of any other created reality, because he has the distinction of unity and uniqueness that confers an intrinsic dignity. Thus we can say - even in very inexplicable cases of

difficulty, suffering and poverty - that there do not exist “limited persons” or “maladjusted persons” but “persons with limits” or in a “situation of maladjustment.”

- The human being is not a static entity, but bears in his depths a strong urge toward openness to others and toward constant development. Every man is on a journey and each is a traveling companion of the other. **22**

- But the person is an ambivalent reality: richness and poverty, lights and shadows live together, as a treasure in clay vessels. **23**

- Still such weakness does not have the last word. The human person, in the Christian vision, has the opportunity of liberation from evil and redemption in Christ. Ransomed by Christ, the human person has concrete possibilities for reaching the full purpose for which he was created. **24**

2. THE TREASURE OF THE PERSON IS HIS HEART

The important value of a person is not in his talents nor in his professional success, but in his emotional expression, that is, his capacity for relationships, for solidarity, for self giving. Here, **25**

and nowhere else, lies his authentic resource and driving force for his achievements and development of society.

For this reason, the Guanellian vision of education holds some specific principles:

- 26 **a.** education is a friendly relationship, willed and desired: love is the soul of the Guanellian method of education;
- 27 **b.** the first fundamental principle is “to surround with tenderness,” because the educational relationship is developed by the “ways of the heart” and the interior attitude that expresses it is affection;
- 28 **c.** consequently the working criterion is the “primacy of the heart over technology;”
- 29 **d.** education takes place in a group context;
- 30 **e.** the objective of education is the ability to love, cooperate and communicate;
- 31 **f.** in regard to society, the objectives of education are the promotion of solidarity and a culture of charity.

3. THE POOR, A FOCUS OF ATTENTION OR THE DIGNITY OF THE LOWEST CLASS

Guanellian anthropology assigns a privileged position to the outcast and those in a state of disadvantage and need. *“Great moral and spiritual resources spring forth from the poorest for the recreation of a world according to the plan of God. Even persons limited in their body or mind can offer a significant contribution of hope and love to human history.”* 32

For this reason we believe that, together with the poor, we need to build a more agreeable and fraternal world by beginning to heed their expectations and to appreciate their resources.” (Basic Document for the Guanellian Missions, 25-26).

- The poor (not just in a monetary sense, but also intellectual, cultural, emotional and relational, the physically limited, such as the handicap, the elderly or dependent) are recognized not only as the beneficiary of the intervention, but invaluable as human persons. 33

The Basic Document for the Guanellian Mission recalls: *“Our mission places us at the service of persons who, individually or as a group,* 34

live in diverse situations of physical and psychological, material and moral poverty, as well as in isolation or under oppression.

Even if a person should find himself a victim of frailty, limitations and egotism, he possesses, in our eyes, that same honorable dignity inherent in being human. Therefore, he is considered by us primarily as a person, worthy of respect, esteem and love beyond any of his needs requiring care and assistance.” (Basic Document, 27)

- 35 - The poor person reveals the *true face of the human being*, concealed to most. The person is worth what he is and not what he has or knows how to do.

“The lives of those enduring poverty, though often socially unproductive, are always precious. Their presence enlightens us to some fundamental aspects of the human condition, that is, the human heart is made to love and to share with others. Love has pre-eminence over intelligence, self-sufficiency and beauty; the need to give meaning to pain; the call to battle against evil; the aspiration to a future life no longer marked with suffering.” (Basic Document, 29).

- 36 In a society like ours, that idolizes physical beauty, filled with egotism and the desire for power and control over others, the antidote against that kind of blind-

ness that would forget the profound value of the human person is found in the presence of the poor, the daily contact with the poor, in patient service and fraternal sharing with them.

- *The poor reveal the true face of God*, as shown by Jesus crucified. That is why we can say of the poor, as the Basic Document does in no. 28, that “*their dignity acquires a particular intensity. In their condition they represent more closely Jesus Christ, humiliated and suffering. They are the most eloquent sign of Him who, being rich, became poor to enrich us.*” 37

To affirm the significance of the poor means to recognize, with humility and a sense of gratitude, that “*the poor become our evangelizers and educators; their presence elicits love and is a factor in transforming human reality into the civilization of love.*” 38

They can be considered a burden only where love is lacking. In recognizing and promoting their dignity, we recognize and promote our own dignity as persons. In so doing we actualize the love of God present among us.” (Basic Document, 30) 39

4. FAMILY SPIRIT

- 40** The central element of the Guanellian charism is family spirit, referred to as a proven model of relationships and human organization.
- “The characteristic of the Guanellian Institute is family education”* (Statute of Crocine, 1893, SpC, 103), Father Guanella said. And again: *“The Guanellian House is a unique family of brothers who love each other and help each other mutually”* (Internal Regulations of the Sons of the S. Heart, SpC, 1078).
- 41** This emphasis on family is very important. It clearly manifests the intention of the Founder. He wished that interpersonal relationships be marked by a true spirit of giving, which is demonstrated by profound respect, as well as attention and response to the other’s needs. The Guanellian House should transmit warmth and the sense of acceptance that one feels in a family setting.
- 42** If on entering a Guanellian center, a stranger would be aware of not only competent professionals, but also persons exemplifying rapport and acceptance, then he will experience the family

spirit which should shape every service inspired or modeled by Father Guanella.

The “family spirit” is the great educational intuition of the Founder. He believes that the family style is the best educational system of prevention and promotion. **43**

In his writings, Father Guanella affirms repeatedly that in the atmosphere of the Institute, the preventive system is the most proper and successful approach. It is the way that is closer to the example of the Christian life of the Holy Family. (Statute of the Crocine, 1893, SpC, 103; The Bread of Life, II, SAL, 538; Internal Regulations of the FsC, 1899, SpC, 1029). And again, “*that it is always better to use the preventive system, that is, to surround the person in every circumstance of life with the affection of a father, to protect one against every danger of falling or meeting obstacles, so as to usher him to the right path*” (Internal Regulations of the FsC, 1899, SpC. 1029-1032; Spiritual Maxims 1888-1889, SpC, 36,46). **44**

Chapter Two

BASIC EDUCATIONAL QUALITIES AND STYLE OF THE GUANELLIAN CAREGIVER

BASIC EDUCATIONAL QUALITIES

- 45** The Guanellian coworkers decided initially, and daily renew, the fundamental decision to work with persons in difficulty, distress, or in need of a special support in the path of life.
- 46** When speaking of educational qualities, we signify those attitudes that give meaning and life to the daily choices and suggestions.
They are commonly known as “virtues.”
- 47** The basic qualities are personal, in part, while others are developed as a result of relationships in the educational, rehabilitative, caring and pastoral process.

1. FAITH IN THE DIGNITY AND POTENTIAL OF THE PERSON

- 48** The Guanellian caregivers often encounter persons disfigured in body and soul. When so heavily marked by deprivation or neglect, sick-

ness or marginalization, they can suffer physical and personality impairment.

The caregivers are called (in fact often we speak of “career-mission,” or even “vocation,”) to go beyond the appearances and to relate to people mindful of the human mystery and the divine element which they have before them, even to discover beauty where it would seem impossible to find any. **49**

They should have the deep conviction that the dignity of every person is always unfathomably and infinitely greater than what human sciences and psychological findings can tell us. In fact they believe that the intrinsic values of every human exceed immeasurably all the wrongdoing that may burden their life and conscience. **50**

The caregivers must consider the mystery of the person even before they look at his problems. They should position themselves in an attitude of listening to such a mystery, no different than they set in an attitude of listening and adoration before the mystery of God. **51**

Moved by these convictions, they avoid expressing negative or cynical opinions toward the potential of the persons entrusted to their care, or **52**

even criticizing the image of parental and friendly figures. Similarly, they avoid any disrespectful or coarse language, offensive to the dignity of the person.

- 53** On the contrary, the Guanellian caregivers approach people with a sense of respect, looking with compassion and tenderness on each individual's personal history and life's harsh realities.

2. REALISTIC OPTIMISM

- 54** The Guanellian worker lives his role and carries out his tasks in an attitude of confidence and optimism.

Indeed he is called not only to take care of the problems and needs of other persons, but above all to convey and keep alive their hope, helping them to accept positively their circumstances of hardship and suffering.

- 55** He must, therefore, know how to read the profound and mysterious sense of human suffering as a precious opportunity of deliverance and growth. Consequently, he will learn to look at the lives of suffering persons not as useless, but pre-

cious and meaningful, capable of reaching full realization, despite everything.

Often peoples' limitations appear as an open sore. The Guanellian worker, however, while not ignoring or forgetting them, must seek to discover and value the extraordinary resources and worth present in every person: love, joy and the ability to relate and communicate. **56**

The Guanellian worker is called to translate this attitude of realistic optimism into a consistent behavior in his daily life and actions. **57**

- He therefore rejects gloomy psychological or social assessments, as well as terminal prognosis, selecting instead, plans of improvement open to hope. **58**

- He avoids falling into the trap of impossible dreams, but at the same time will refuse standardization by accepting only measurable results. **59**

- He does not accept, then, that the person be manipulated by setting objectives above his strength, nor does he yield to the dream of obtaining at all costs predetermined results of education, rehabilitation, treatment and faith. On the contrary, he will give credit to the real potential and resources of the person. Moreover, he will **60**

appreciate the smallest progress and will strive to keep them actively involved in a process which gives them the joy of living and a constant desire to improve.

- 61** - Faithful to his belief that everyone is capable of redemption, he refuses despair and acquiescence, to keep alive within himself and others the hope and the trust in the moral renewal of the people, even when the circumstances may point to terminal outcomes.
- 62** -This very high level of virtue is not obtained without effort. Authentic optimism which gives serenity to the heart and is contagious to others, is acquired day by day, through a personal ascent, in the secret of the heart, in deep dialog with oneself, with others and with God.
- 63** -It needs, however, to be nurtured daily by the trust in the power of love, by the conviction in the sacred dignity of the person and faith in the mysterious power of the grace of God which works even where human efforts do not reach.

3. SIMPLICITY AND SENSITIVITY

- 64** The Guanellian worker is not a “services pro-

vider,” but first of all an advocate for anyone in need.

His presence should arouse trust, because it is characterized by a genuine simplicity that guarantees authenticity of relationships and the absence of “hidden motives.” **65**

Guanellian simplicity in a worker is a behavior that reveals immediately and clearly the thoughts and the emotions of the person, and shows sincerity and authenticity. It is the opposite of fake and “staged.” It comes from the truth of the heart, which almost naturally leads him to communicate with another as himself. **66**

Sincerity and authenticity, observes Father Guanella, are also a guarantee of educational success. “Only the humble can admonish without triggering hurt and rebellion.” (The Foundation, SMEC, 924). **67**

Sensitivity, which must be refined constantly, is the capacity to perceive the needs of people, even when they are not obvious or expressed. “The needs of the unfortunate,” said Fr. Guanella, “are more to be sensed by the affection of the heart than by theoretical study of the mind.” (Internal Regulations of the DSMF, 1899, SpC, 301). **68**

- 69** This principle is applied inside and outside the centers. The worker is asked to develop the capacity to interpret and anticipate the needs of the neighborhood, before they turn into disorder, and to identify the symptoms of difficulty, the mechanics of marginalization and the related dynamics. The worker, in conclusion, shall possess a vision capable of quickly detecting the possibilities and the difficulties of development of the persons and of the neighborhood, wherever they appear.

4. CREATIVITY

- 70** The skill of a tailor involves attention to even the smallest details. The tailor must choose quality fabrics, design and fit the clothes, not mass produce them, but create a unique work of art.
- 71** The analogy between the educator's and the tailor's work is appropriate. Experience teaches us that in education there does not exist ready made solutions, pre-fabricated strategies or standardized formats of intervention, applicable always and everywhere.
- Every individual in a situation of difficulty and stress is a unique "case," worthy of special attention and requiring a tailored intervention.

The authentic Guanellian spirit affirms, beyond easy slogans, the uniqueness of the person. Consequently, it is necessary that in the execution of his tasks, the worker calls into play all his best resources, beginning with his creativity that draws from his knowledge and experience - his own and others' - the answers adequate to the needs of each person. If it were not so, the Guanellian worker would be found answering in a standardized manner to a variety of situations, difficult and unforeseeable, that call on him and require from him specific and special methods of intervention. **72**

“Being creative”, doesn’t mean devising solutions practically impossible or sensational, but “being inventive”, in the etymological sense of the term, that is, of finding answers by bringing them up from the wealth of one’s experience and appealing to one’s creativity. **73**

5. EMPATHY AND SHARING

With these two terms we mean the capacity of “educationally tuning in” with others in any situation we find them in distress, dysfunction, deviation, poor relationships, handicap, sickness, **74**

abandonment or dependence.

75 Empathy is the opposite of antipathy (others as enemy), but it is distinguished also from sympathy (solidarity of feelings). The acceptance of others is done in a special way, with an awareness to set an educational “distance”, such as to prevent mere emotional impulses or to avoid sentimentalism.

76 In our work, empathy becomes “sharing.” Sharing is more than “partaking with others.” It is, rather, being involved in the life of others and making them in some way a part of our life. Sharing is making available our skills and human resources, the treasure of our heart and intelligence, of creativity and operative competence. It means making the problems and plans of others a part of us.

Fr. Guanella said: “We need to cover the poverties of the neighbor, as Christ has covered our poverties” (Internal Regulations FsC, 1899, SpC, 993).

77 The Guanellian pedagogy on sharing makes reference to the icon of the Good Samaritan (Lk, 10, 25-37), and that of the disciples of Emmaus (Lk, 24, 13-34), as the image of a solidarity that becomes

“walking together.”

It is necessary, then, to reach where the person and his dignity are endangered, sharing the moments of darkness and fear, pursuing together the road that leads to deliverance and a worthy life.

Sharing requires “becoming a presence”. We cannot share if we do not “stay with.” Father Guanella called this mode of presence “charity of person,” which, different from the “charity of purse”, consists in knowing how to attend, willingly and with love, to the needs of others.” (LDP, July 1896, 57). **78**

Empathy then becomes communication. The quality and effectiveness of every educational, rehabilitative, assistential and pastoral intervention are determined by the quality of communication. We read in the writings of the Founder: “Man is sociable and has need of pouring his heart into the heart of his brothers to hear their voice, their affection, their conversation.” (Reg. DSMP, 1911, SpC,704). The human person is a being fundamentally in relationship with others and he cannot live without nourishing its relationship through communication. **79**

6. PATIENCE

- 80** Patience, in the Guanellian point of view, is not passive waiting for changes that do not arrive, but it is understood as the virtue of “alert waiting” for the growth of the person, doing everything possible to favor it.
- 81** Patience is respect of the times, often long ones, and the typically slow pace of those with uncommon difficulties, without expecting results immediately or at any cost.
- 82** Patience is accepting the lack of results from one’s work and therefore the risk that results may never come.
“Certainly, to succeed with the ‘good children’, an endless patience is necessary” Father Guanella observed. (Reg. DSMP 1911, SpC, 447).
- 83** To be patient in education means “to bet on the educability” of the person, whatever may be his situation. It means to know how to wait with confidence and at the same time always to trust, despite mistakes and repeated frailty. The Founder admonished: “We should always encourage, never vilify.” (Internal Reg. FsC, 1899, SpC, 1043; cf. 253).
- 84** Caregivers could consider themselves wise and

patient when they learn to accept the falls, the failures and every “unexpected,” aware that life does not go as “planned” and that the path and the growth of a person do not depend automatically on programmed strategies.

That doesn’t mean surrender to improvisation, 85
to relent the quest toward the educational goals, nor
to underestimate mistakes or ignore errors.

It means rather not to lose the emotional bal- 86
ance and always hope, after every set back, in the
heart of each one endowed by God with vast good-
ness. It means, indeed, encouraging and stimulating
persons to move on no matter what, regarding every
little progress, as an important step in the path of
human development.

7. EQUILIBRIUM AND SELF-CONTROL

Equilibrium is the scale of the maturity of a 87
person. We could define it as the correct “dos-
age” of kindness and firmness toward ourselves
and others.

It presupposes a deep knowledge of our- 88
selves, our strengths and weaknesses, and it is
manifested into the ability of adequately employ-

ing our qualities, utilizing our best energies in the service of others, without excesses of zeal.

89 Equilibrium and self-control render us capable of finding calibrated and keen solutions (dictated by mind and heart), even in unforeseeable situations or open to instinctive reactions.

90 This is a basic quality for anyone who operates with persons in distress. They are physically or emotionally frail, and therefore with their unpredictable behavior, can unsettle anyone who doesn't know how to relate to them in a correct way.

8. COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION: SPIRIT OF SERVICE IN A CLIMATE OF JOY

91 There are many who work long hours with great care. They are professional and responsible, but offer only a service, not themselves. They do not know how to transmit love through their actions.

92 Dedication is what transforms the effort of education, rehabilitation, assistance or pastoral intervention into a consistent demonstration of closeness and love. It is the attitude that spurs one to invest the best of his skills and the best of his heart. This is the

type of self-giving that is desired of the Guanellian caregivers, together with a good dose of courage to overcome the inevitable difficulties, and to seek new avenues and adequate means for the betterment of people.

Dedication is knowing how to go beyond duty, when possible, overcoming the barrier of the “it’s not my job,” when the needy person requires urgent and timely help. To promote the person in difficulty, according to the Guanellian style, it is not enough just to provide a service, but “to put oneself at their service,” and precisely at the service of over-all growth and not just for specific problems. **93**

The self-giving is nevertheless accompanied by joy, which guarantees its authenticity and turns it into an expression of sincere love. **94**

It is all about extending help to people and giving our professional help with an attitude that expresses gladness for the service we are providing. This behavior is contagious, because joy generates joy, creating a positive environment of serenity and hope.

Simplicity, dedication and gladness, according to Father Guanella, are a winning educational trinomial. **95**

“Every member should behave in everything with simplicity, self confidence and happiness, so that all may experience praise, comfort and good example.” (Spiritual Maxims, 1988-89, SpC, 29).

“We need to seek a way to console and please our neighbor in everything. Good and happy persons draw many people to themselves.” (Ibid. 43).

9. HUMILITY AND LISTENING

- 96** The recognition of one’s limits, both human as well as professional, constitutes a basic premise to correctly design any intervention.
- 97** Father Guanella addressed the theme of humility in numerous statements, convinced that the truly humble souls are the ones who mostly succeed in the greatest and more difficult undertakings. (Vieni Meco, 1913, SpC, 783).
- 98** Humility means not depending on our own gifts, but knowing that we need others. Therefore, we have the acute perception that our work makes sense and brings results only if conducted together and not in a solitary way.
- 99** It means also accepting serenely the distress that arises from a sense of impotence and frustra-

tion when faced with the difficult situations we are called to handle. The worker must know how to accept such distress as a sign of the intrinsic frailty of every human life, and at the same time, as an indicator of the complexity and richness of the human mind.

Finally, humility is the recognition that our poor have many things to teach and values to communicate. But to receive their messages, we must be ready to listen, as a preliminary and necessary condition to enter into their world and understand their desires and plans, their sufferings and fears. No one opens his heart to anyone who does not know how to listen. **100**

10. SENSE OF CO-RESPONSIBILITY

This term indicates the consciousness - always kept alive in the heart of the Guanellian worker - that the happiness and the success in the life of a person are “entrusted also to our hands and our heart” and hence depend, at least in some measure, also on us. **101**

This idea could not but gratify and sensitize the worker who discerns in all a gift and a committed, noble task. **102**

103 Consequently, he plans and acts with this knowledge, answerable for his own work, keeping alive within himself the knowledge that he is accountable to God.

104 Still he is aware that such a high and noble goal as the happiness of a person is possible only through “team work.” For this reason the workers in a Guanellian Center have to know “how to work in a group” toward the same objectives and with the same style.

The family spirit, which marks all activities and the environment, requires that we know how to work together, with one another, and not only beside others.

105 Group work means:

- understanding the viewpoint of others, grasping the positive core of their ideas and methods and accepting it by integrating it with our own convictions and methods;

106 - seeking together the best way and putting together the energies for the promotion of persons and the development of their plans;

107 - adjusting our pace to the step of the other and proceeding together;

108 - sharing the objectives and projects aimed at the common good, renouncing personal interests;

109 - being aware of our own and others’ limits, of our own and others’ resources and believing in them.

THE STYLE

Why is it important to make the style explicit? **110**

For style, we mean the ordinary attitude of being and doing, and the manner of carrying out a task.

It is worthwhile to recall that, in line with the Christian inspiration that inspires the Guanellian Institute, every worker, along with the coworkers, is the motor of the situation in which he works. **111**

There is no effectiveness, human and Christian witness or true acceptance, if the Institute, though technically updated, functional and modern, could not count on a team of workers motivated, competent and aware of their own function and mission. **112**

We could enjoy the best housing possible, study the most refined programs, have the best organization, but if the workers as individuals and as a group, do not possess a solid ‘Guanellian’ motivation and style as well as adequate professional competence, the “machine” would not move. In the end, it would not be so much the **113**

programs that suffer but the persons for whom the programs were set up.

These, then, are the reasons it becomes necessary on the part of workers, as individuals and as a group, to interiorize a Guanellian style in their daily work:

- 114** - To keep fidelity to the original inspiration. In fact, an educational style concrete in choices and in daily operation, keeps over time the authenticity of the Founder's intuition.
- 115** - To give coherence and cohesion to the work of the staff.
- If there weren't a defined framework and a set of defined and solidly accepted attitudes, it would not be possible to have that "teamwork" which assures effectiveness for the educational and pastoral activity.
- 116** - To assure that the style interiorized and expressed in the intervention is protected from risks of casual and excessive subjectivity.
- 117** - To give continuity to the plan when the worker himself assumes different roles, as well as when different workers succeed in the same role.
- 118** - If the different professionals, beyond their daily task, which obviously represents the most

visible aspect, are motivated by a personal cohesion with the Guanellian work style, the program will not undergo sudden interruptions or noticeable crises with each turnover of workers. The inevitable difficulties of turnover will, in fact, be offset by the common line of action. Thus the potency of the education, rehabilitation, assistance and pastoral care are guaranteed. The quality of service is highly maintained and so is the degree of witnessing to the outside world.

- The style permits one to live obedience as “the capacity to persevere in one’s place.” This is the basis of a genuine participation. The result of a shared style is a “family spirit” that permeates the entire work environment.

Chapter Three

PARTICIPATION IN THE GUANELLIAN MISSION

SOME PREMISES

- 120** There are different forms of participation, and different levels of involvement and responsibility in the activity of a Guanellian center.
- An attitude of collaboration and co-responsibility is expected from all the workers to create effective participation.
- 121** In a genuine Guanellian tradition, participation is not understood as an extra, an “option”, but as an essential condition and a concrete manner to build and live that family spirit that permits togetherness and constitutes one of the goals to which the educational and pastoral work aims.
- 122** Participation is not a starting point, but an objective to reach. This requires strong personal involvement, humility and openness, ability to work together and to be amenable to correction. It carries a personal and communal cost, and it includes rights and duties.
- 123** It calls for a plan with intermediate goals and precise objectives. It is necessary, then, not only to elaborate ways of participation, but also to pro-

gram moments and opportunities for assessing the work carried out for the development of real participation.

- Participation involves two subjects: the worker and the Guanellian Institute. **124**

Each must see to its task; if either one fails, participation cannot be realized.

- Participation means feeling part of an entity to which we belong (to be a part of) and consequently to do my part, means to fulfill my role with the knowledge that each one is complementary to the other. **125**

WHY WE SPEAK OF PARTICIPATION

Speaking of participation/cooperation on the part of all those who work in the Guanellian Centers makes sense in that it presupposes that they possess an awareness of taking part in a mission, that is, a work that requires a moral as well as technical/professional commitment. **126**

The workers in a Guanellian Institute must be agreeable to uphold the human and Christian values of solidarity and benevolence, characteristic of the Guanellian charism.

- 127** To participate means to fully understand this commitment in the experience of everyday work, to perform with a sense of co-responsibility one's own role in the implementation of policies and guidelines of the Center, and to feel that one is an active protagonist of a sound and shared project.
- 128** More concretely participation means:
- to take part in the educational or pastoral Guanellian project;
 - to adhere to the purpose of the house;
 - to converge on common objectives, cooperating with all those who work toward them.

WAYS OF ACHIEVING PARTICIPATION

- 129** *"Participation" as a life style.*
- The workers who personally share the values of Guanellian philosophy cannot confine them only to the place of work. It must, in some measure, always permeate their life, because it is part of one's inmost convictions. Participation, in fact, invests each and all the workers, whatever their role - not only in their professional capacity, but also in their lifestyle. It involves them in a process of progressive improvement, of individual

maturation and of gradual broadening of one's formation in daily life.

Therefore, participation must not be narrowed to activities within the Center, but it is extended, in the spirit of witness, to the surrounding communities, stimulating others to open themselves to Guanellian values. **130**

How to participate: concrete indications **131**

There are several concrete ways of implementing participation, where the workers can manifest and live their sense of belonging in the Guanellian Family.

We speak of an active participation as a dynamic presence, joyous and assured, during work and group evaluation. Participation in the meetings not mandated, but willingly accepted, is a place/time to contribute experiences and reflection. **132**

Participation presupposes a circular flow of information around everyone's work, in a constant exchange marked by dialogue which does not need formal occasions to express itself, but profits from every circumstance in everyday life. **133**

For example, the offer of suggestions or indications to improve a service without waiting for a scheduled meeting means a positive and mature attitude of participation.

- 134** Authentic participation is also free and constructive expression of personal thoughts, void of veiled criticism toward the work of others or toward possible dysfunctions and problems. Participation materializes in the responsible application of guidelines and policies.
- 135** Sharing moments of celebration, in simplicity and joy, is finally a privileged way of living participation.

THE STAGES OF THE JOURNEY TOWARD A CO-RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION

- 136** Availability for participation is not the first step, but the last. In between, there is a journey, a process that can be broken down into the following stages:
- 137** 1. *Observation*
Initially, the Guanellian worker becomes an

observer. He takes on his role and carries it out based on competence and technical knowledge acquired in the course of his education.

In this phase, he learns about the work environment, the activities performed and the organization of the Institute. The Institute will prioritize a strategy of acceptance and accompaniment in the activities to be carried out, as a means to exchange information, of practical training and reciprocal probing.

138

2. Direct Involvement

139

The worker who has been adequately welcomed and has received the necessary information about his role, at this point, looks for his place within the group, a space for interaction and exchange.

At this phase, it is important to share the work experience.

3. Integration

140

Once fully adjusted, the worker will use his human skills and apply them to the daily work. At this point, he is ready to give and receive from those around him, in such a way, that the working and human relationship may always be a cause for interior richness and reciprocity.

Reaching the level of such an exchange, therefore, becomes an index of individual maturity in relationships and assimilation of a culture of charity and solidarity.

141 The evidence that the involvement is effective and global will be given by the worker's contribution to endeavors with a spirit of inventiveness, creativity and enthusiasm.

142 *4. The verification*

To control the results, if any, of this journey in terms of quality of participation, it is necessary to verify if its performance has been such as to mirror these characteristics:

- active
- knowledgeable
- well balanced.

143 The levels of participation should also be verified. Obviously different roles imply different responsibilities and they call on the various categories of workers in a different manner.

ATTITUDES THAT THREATEN PARTICIPATION OR UNDERMINE IT

144 - Participation, when it crosses into presump-

tion, becomes an expectation that one's viewpoint is followed without question.

- Criticism if used to exploit the other, rather than to improve the service. **145**

- Inability to accept the position and recommendation of others. All participants may offer modifications, give suggestions, express opinions, but all must safeguard the competencies and the assignment of each one and the different levels of decision making responsibilities. **146**

- The attitude of all who form a clique (among different role levels) to impose a certain view, is not a positive contribution to promote the common good, but a factional expression to defend special interests. On the contrary, it is necessary to emphasize multidisciplinary action, both in planning and verification, for participation to be effective. **147**

PARTICIPATION AS INTERACTION BETWEEN INSTITUTE AND WORKER

The strength of a Guanellian Institute lies in the degree of cohesion among the workers. It lies also in the level of participation with the educa- **148**

tional or pastoral plan which aligns the common work, and where it is possible, by absorbing constantly incentives for improvement, changes and constructive criticism.

149 Factors that can slow down an effective participation may be the anxiety to undergo verification, the fear of losing “authority,” and lack of experience of working as a team.

150 In the Guanellian Family or Centers, the persons in charge can overcome these obstacles by establishing attitudes, dispositions, choices and modalities of work that help the worker to live fully a style of participation.

The most important are:

151 *1. Clarity in defining the objectives.*

It is suitable to inform the worker, right from the beginning, regarding the objectives that we intend to reach. This means all objectives: long term, relative to the educational or pastoral project, and short term, relative to the specific activity, as well as the orientation and style of the activity.

152 That requires the establishment of a constant evaluation of effective channels of internal communication.

An institution, that requires mere execution of work without a full vision, would risk receiving only a formal adherence.

2. *Professional growth and recognition of experiences of participation.* **153**

Participation is enhanced by building a sense of reciprocal respect. Hence, we need to value what develops from the proposed objectives of work in line with the Guanellian style, seeking concrete ways to generate that sense of trust which is necessary for authentic participation.

Every worker, whatever his role, brings with him his aspirations and expectations that affect positively, as well as negatively, his personal involvement in the work. Recognizing the good worker, appreciating his capacity for collaboration, making the worker responsible for tasks and management within the established programs are elements that can favor professional growth and consequently impact the quality of participation. **154**

3. *Endorsement of values that support the professional activity.* **155**

In the choice of work that deals with persons in indigent situations, the Guanellian worker must be backed by “strong motivations”: the will to ac-

compish something useful to society, the desire of giving something of himself to others in difficulty, the impulse of solidarity toward those who have less.

156 The Executive Director should focus his attention in satisfying the worker's need for self esteem and self realization, which led him to choose a profession in the field of education, rehabilitation, assistance and/or ministry.

157 A worker happy with his job, enthusiastic for the progress of others, with strong ideals, who finds his choices affirmed and supported in everyday life, regardless of the results, constitutes a precious treasure for the Center and for the entire Guanellian Family.

158 All that can be reached also by employing ways to promote enthusiasm among the workers for things they do, including the little things or those of apparently no consequence.

159 *4. Endorsement of group work and team work.*

Group and team work represents a qualified expression of participation and at the same time it is an excellent school of participation.

Working together is a good occasion to render operative the interdisciplinary team, giving every professional the opportunity to dialogue with the others and offering their own contribution in a serene and fruitful exchange of opinions. **160**

Hence, group work is encouraged and favored, in the conviction that it is an indispensable instrument and an obligatory path for reaching effective participation. **161**

5. The assessment of one's professional role. **162**

Participation means also availability of the worker to submit his own work to verification, the savvy to recognize eventual difficulties, and the docility to modify flawed ideas and behaviors. The changes are then accepted, not as frustration, but as a chance to face the reality of work in a new way.

Chapter Four

ELEMENTS OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

WORK AS A MISSION

163 If the “educational work” were a task like any other, we would simply refer to it as a trade, that is, the number of duties that the worker must carry out to guarantee the effective fulfillment of his role.

But here we are talking of ethics that embrace the most profound convictions of the person. The Guanellian worker must consider his work as a “mission,” that is a profession that, as such, is a response to a mandate, and hence requires moral commitment, besides the application of personal skills and technical expertise.

164 This moral engagement springs forth from the depths of the humanity of the individual, even before it becomes his “job.”

PROFESSIONALISM AS A “HIGH” QUALITY OF SERVICE

165 Even the concept of “professionalism” is interpreted in a broader and “higher” significance than commonly understood. This word normally points to the resources of knowledge and abilities

which should distinguish any worker in the exercise of his task. In the Guanellian setting, however, it surmises a deeper and more substantial meaning, because it presents itself as an innovative “synthesis” of technical skills (acquired through study and practical experience) and “human competence” (acquired through life experience), that is, a symbiosis between science and spirit.

Professionalism, then, is understood as a concrete modality of “becoming a neighbor” to the other person and to establish with him an “interpersonal” relationship of help. This assistance is a high and noble form of service, because it aims at giving a concrete and qualified response to the overall needs of the other person and not only to his immediate problems. **166**

TO KNOW. TO KNOW WHAT TO DO. TO KNOW HOW TO BE

Condensing all that in a sentence, we could say that professional ethics of the Guanellian worker is given by “knowing” (theoretical knowledge), “knowing what to do” (technical compe- **167**

tence), and what makes the difference, “knowing how to be.” This added element is understood as the aggregate of the human qualities required to exercise the “anthropological competence,” which is linked to the “global” Guanellian anthropology.

Such competence consists fundamentally in the effort to keep alive within oneself, at every moment, the knowledge of the identity and the dignity of the person in difficulty.

168 Furthermore, this competence asks the worker to think of himself as a person who carries out his work with a human bond that accompanies his specialized care, and never as a “technician” who mechanically exercises his talents. To regard the others as persons, it is necessary for the worker to perceive his own value as a person, and be cognizant of his own fundamental human needs in terms of esteem, protection, attention and affection. Each one, in fact, perceives and approaches others as he feels and treats himself.

169 To act as a person means to invest one’s human resources and the best of oneself in the educational, therapeutic, assistential and pastoral process. It means to act for what one is, and not only

for what one has, in terms of competency, technical expertise or experience.

The anthropological knowledge so far described is translated and expressed in a series of attitudes and manifestations, such as: **170**

- acceptance of the individual in difficulty, in his concrete situation;
- esteem him rather than judge him;
- research his potential before grading his deficiencies;
- response to his fundamental need of loving and being loved;
- belief in the educability of any person and appreciation of his abilities;
- valuation to the person in difficulty and his presence in society, because he corroborates to us the greatness and the frailty of every man and woman.

In a society where only the strong and the eminent seem predestined to win, the presence of the weak and the unimportant ones suggests to each one of us our vulnerability. The permanent need of help, understanding and conversation, typical of anyone who lives in difficulty, reminds **171**

us that no one is self sufficient , and that we all need one another.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE GUANELLIAN “MISSION”

- 172** For a Guanellian worker, professional ethics, in the end, means to draw from the inspiration of the Founder the perspective of the significance (not just the the “ethical boundaries”) of his work. To bond with the Guanellian principles and to the “mission” of the Guanellian Institutes has many practical ramifications:
- 173** Respect of the overall needs of the person (physical, psychological, affective, relational, social, ethical, spiritual and religious). Such respect should be translated into closeness and support of the person in the various moments in which his needs are attended, even in the case where the worker does not agree with the educational choices of the Institute.
- 174** Respect of the person’s aspirations and life designs, whatever they may be, including his intimate life.

Under these terms we can understand the importance of “confidentiality,” not to be interpreted just as a prohibition, but as an expression of the worker’s commitment to protect the other, and the integrity of the person.

The bond to Guanellian principle brings the worker to feel constantly on a journey to achieve an always better human and professional expertise. **175**

If the worker truly embraces the Guanellian professional ethics, he will be in a state of “permanent education,” and he will then make himself available to all the activities and initiatives aimed at increasing and refining his human gifts and technical skills.

Chapter Five
PRINCIPLES AND RULES OF
SOCIAL JUSTICE
to be observed by the Guanellian
Congregation and the Guanellian
Worker

PREMISE

176 As previously mentioned, in the Guanellian vision, work constitutes a high modality of service and of participation in the agenda of the Guanellian Family.

Work relationship is regulated by the laws of social justice which itemize the mutual obligations and responsibilities between the worker and the employer.

WORK RELATIONSHIP

177 Work relationship is complex and it can be summarized as the rapport between the performer of work, who places at the service of an institution his psychological and physical energies, and the provider of work, who utilizes those energies for his own objectives.

178 Such a relationship is based on two obligations that are intertwined and outlined in the con-

tract. On one hand, the obligation of “doing”, that is the work performed by the dependent; on the other hand, the obligation of “giving”, that is, the employer assurance of a compensation agreed upon, according to the work done.

THE WORK CONTRACT AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS

The work relationship, the result of the meeting between two interests, that of the worker and that of the institution, finds its own codification in the contract, a collection of norms which establish and define the rights and duties of the two parties. **179**

The contract thus assumes multiple functions:

- *normative*: the contract is a summary of dispositions preordained to determine the basic conditions of financial compensation and work relationship; **180**

- *mandatory*: that aspect of the contract that refers not to the individual relationships, but rather those of collective legislations; **181**

- 182** - *managerial*: relative to grievances, arbitrations and administrative policies and procedures of the work contract;
- 183** - *institutional*: relative to the agreements that foresee the constitution of bilateral associations and institutions to resolve specific tasks singled out by the contract;
- 184** - *composite*: it is typical of those norms that regulate traditions and grandfather clauses.

THE SALARY

- 185** The salary constitutes the recognition of the service performed, and therefore must guarantee, considering the local context, a dignified living standard, within the *criteria of social justice*. Obviously the salary will be commensurate, just as stated by the respective contracts, to the training of the employees, their duties and the professional degree.

WORK RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GUANELLIAN INSTITUTE AND ITS EMPLOYEES

The objective of the Guanellian Institute is the integral promotion of the persons, especially those in need and hardship. 186

The Guanellian Institute enters into a work relationship with third parties for the purpose of availing itself of staff gifted with diversified professional skills, and able to contribute to the realization of projects in line with its own goals and philosophy. 187

Therefore, every time that it becomes necessary to hire personnel, the selection will be made with a double focus: professional background, and the best personal characteristics (commitment to the Guanellian mission as a basic element of professional ethics). 188

The employee must respect the establishment and characteristics proper to the organization where he works.

Anyone who applies to work in a Guanellian Center must possess a *spirit of solidarity and pledge* to the objectives expressed by the Insti- 189

tute. The employee, therefore, aware of the rights and duties that regulate his work contract, in his endeavor (as a worker and as a person) must be motivated by the primary objectives and the mission of the Institute.

The administration of the Institute and the management of the work relationship must provide:

190 a) thorough respect of the legal contract;

191 b) equal opportunity guaranteed to each worker by the Institute.

It is indispensable to value attentively every professional and respect the discipline that the worker must carry out scrupulously. In this regard we should never confuse professional worth of the worker (performance) with his field. Incurring this error creates disharmony and violates the principles of social justice.

192 The worker, therefore, must carry out the tasks entrusted to him with the necessary effort and a positive attitude leading to personal contributions, suggestions and proposals.

For its part the Guanellian Institute must always acknowledge the characteristics of the workers' function and respect their professional credentials.

Chapter Six

FORMATION PROCESS

Identity, methods & performance criteria

OBJECTIVES

- 194** *For the worker:*
- a. to develop the identity of the Guanellian worker;
 - b. to acquire a sense of belonging.
- 195** *For the Guanellian Center:*
- a. to sustain the worker by continual reinforcement of motivations;
 - b. to accompany the worker in his daily work life.
- 196** The training periods are a valuable means through which the Guanellian style of the worker is transmitted and refined. Therefore, the orientation must offer a specifically *Guanellian framework* coherent with the total project.
- Hence it is necessary:
- 197** 1. *To develop the workers's introspection*, in order for the worker to read other's hearts in terms of gifts as well as needs. It is necessary to initiate a "psychology of the limit," to help them to see what they have within themselves to help others.

Every worker, even in the presence of the most unfortunate situation, should always ask the question: How is a dignified life possible for a chronic aging patient or, for a person with a handicap, seriously limited in his physical or intellectual potential? **198**

How can we restore a dignified life for adolescents and youth who have gone astray? How is it possible to help a youngster in a serious situation, or maladjusted, to understand and accept the true values of life?

2. *To explore the altruistic potential*, the basic elements that assure the sincerity of reaching out to others. **199**

Practically, we are talking about educating the worker and constantly monitoring his performance, and, even before it, his style, by verifying his attitude as he relates with the persons entrusted to his/her care. **200**

There are, in fact, situations to be avoided, such as:

- emotional or psychological codependence; **201**

- possessiveness (I know what to do , now I am going to change him/her my way); **202**

203 - manipulation: disregard for the freedom and personal traits of the other;

204 - exploitation of the needy or disabled person for self aggrandizement (for example, to gain fast recognition for a “measurable” success in rehabilitation).

205 3. *To know and illustrate the philosophy of the operation.*

It is fundamental, in this respect, that the trainee recognize the human person in all his dimensions: physical, emotional, existential. In view of this profound belief, then, it is necessary to interpret education (including education to faith), rehabilitation and assistance in light of all the good and the positive that is in a person. This is a concrete method of gratuitously “taking care”, that precedes and goes beyond the concern of “healing”, that is, trying to correct a situation, which, on the other hand, legitimately invokes a response.

206 4. *To clearly identify the final goals*

The final goal is not a productive module (what counts is the result, like on an assembly line, where instead of people we have parts), but rather

an expressive process, that can be examined as it operates. It is a passage from a *set pattern* (I do my work, follow the rules and that's enough) to a *reflecting pattern*, attentive to discover the outcome of one's everyday work on oneself.

TRAINING PERSPECTIVES

Training must not be theoretical, but embodied in context, space and time. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare staff with a broad view, capable of understanding the past, present and future. **207**

- Past:

It is important to research the heritage of a Center, the history of the whole Guanellian Institute as well as of the individual home. Looking back does not mean preserve or reinstate anachronistic methods or models, but rather to furnish the basis, *the soil*, to implant a technique that is courageously projected for today, ready and available to challenge the new poverties. It is necessary, therefore, to commit energies and resources to appreciate the memories but, at the same time, **208**

exercise clear discernment, capable of keeping distance from possible past errors, failings and flaws.

- *Present:*

209 A correct formation cannot ignore side issues or contemporary society's landscape:

- the needs (material and otherwise), and the aspirations;

- the current licensing regulations, not only as negative, or "legislative fence" that limits freedom of operation, but as positive, as the norms of culture and society calling upon the Institute and the individual Centers;

- the community's context in which the Center is a part.

- *Future:*

210 A prospective formation, in some measure, when confronted with the challenges of tomorrow, anticipates the tasks and horizons the worker will have to handle.

FORMATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Formation is no longer an individual question, but an integral part of a wide vision, and by its nature, systematic. **211**

It is necessary, therefore, that every Center has clear objectives to pursue and that every worker has a full knowledge where he and his work fit in the total vision as well as the operational strategies. **212**

It is also important that the different groups which give life to a Guanellian Center (boards, staff, cooperators, volunteers, community, religious community) are organized. **213**

LEVELS OF FORMATION

Formation must be planned on several aspects:

- Support/motivation:

Constant contact with deprived persons requires an ongoing verification of the motivations **214**

and the supporting factors of the same work. Formation must also touch this point.

- *Acculturation:*

215 It means placing the project within a precise cultural context, correctly interpreted, historically and socially.

Today, for example, we live in a culture where the theme of suffering and death are avoided. A staff member who works with the handicapped, or chronically ill, must receive cultural support that helps him to decipher the meaning and value of his work in this social climate.

If, for instance, the policies of a national or state health organization aim at fast and tangible results, ignoring large vulnerable sections of the population because of expensive and lengthy treatments, it will be necessary to clarify what will be the cultural repercussions in the Guanellian Centers working with such a category of people. Is there a risk that our Center may be transformed into a “last resort” for some categories of people? How does the Institute and its staff react to this?

Again, it appears indispensable to focus on the anthropological perspective.

- Updating/qualification:

The new technologies and new specialties that are emerging call our Centers to a constant work of updating, and to an ongoing and gradual improvement of the quality of service. The alternative would be a loss of respect for the dignity of people who, at any stage of their existence, deserve always the best. **216**

- Requalification:

With the fast and incessant advance of technology and ways of solving problematic situations, some traditional roles are being phased out or completely reinvented. **217**

The adjustments do not need to be traumatic, but in line with carefully applied methods and respectful to people.

- Specialization:

Some “new poverties” require a more specialized service, and therefore the need of a corresponding formation. **218**

MODULES OF FORMATIVE LEVELS

- 219** The formation can be:
- individual
 - by group
 - in group.
- Obviously, methods and strategies vary accordingly.

FORMATIVE AREAS

- 220** The principle guiding the modules for areas of formative services is the following: every initiative is complementary to others, not exclusive or absolute. Having said this, it is possible to organize the formation:
- for all the staff of each Center;
 - for departments (for example: all therapists, educators, catechists, etc.);
 - for multidisciplinary teams (for example: a mixed group whose specialty are people with a specific handicap);
 - for functional levels (for example: direct care, technicians, supervisors);
 - for new employees.

THE ELEMENTS OF A FORMATIVE JOURNEY

The topics can be listed as: **221**

1. Anthropology (philosophical, cultural...)
2. Guanellian anthropology
3. Educational relationship
4. Working together and team work
5. Project, process and product
6. Evaluation and self-evaluation
7. Efficiency and effectiveness of service
8. The elderly
9. The disabled
10. The minors and the youth at risk
11. Ministry

FORMATIVE METHODS

The methods to be adopted vary much according to the social and cultural context of the operation. In any case, there will have to be an account kept of subjects, groups, roles and functions. As the local situations may require, the most common ways may be: **222**

1. Conferences
2. Discussions

3. Common works
4. Groups of work

STAGES OF THE FORMATIVE PROCESS

223

The formative process can be modulated according to these stages:

1. *Planning*
 - 1.1. Objectives and criteria
(dimension of the PROJECT)
 - 1.2. Methods and techniques
2. *Implementation*
(dimension of the PROCESS)
3. *Evaluation and verification*
(dimension of the PRODUCT)

ITINERARIES

224

1. Times of general formation
(common areas)
2. Times of specific formation
(by roles, departments and others)

Chapter Seven

SELECTION CRITERIA

OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the selection process is to choose, carefully and wisely, the qualified personnel needed in the Guanellian Centers. **225**

The quality of the education, rehabilitation, assistance and ministry in the Centers, as well as the establishment of an environment where people can experience a family climate, depend essentially on the staff who work there. The Centers count on the commitment with which staff apply themselves to the tasks entrusted to them, and on the degree of partaking of the Guanellian spirit. **226**

For these reasons, the selection of personnel, for whatever role, is of the utmost importance. **227**

BASIC SELECTION CRITERIA

In the selection of personnel for a Guanellian Center, four factors should be considered. **228**

The first is represented by the reasons and motivations that led the applicant to work in the field of service with challenged people. **229**

The second regards one's technical competence, which goes beyond the simple possession **230**

of necessary credentials to fill a role or carry out a certain activity.

231 The third refers to the responsibility to accept, to respect and to operate, according to the role and the tasks assigned, the values of the Guanellian mission as well as the local educational or pastoral plan.

232 Finally, the evaluation cannot overlook the dispositions of the applicant, in many cases called to a role dealing with delicate issues. The educational and pastoral activity, in fact, require an emotional and psychological stability of the staff in order to create an environment of serenity, and effectively set a family atmosphere, as desired by the Founder.

USEFUL ELEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE SELECTION PHASE

233 The basic selection criteria are *prerequisites for employment*. Here we are speaking of preferential elements which, on a par with the basic motivation, technical competence, acceptance of the Guanellian mission and psychological balance, could determine the choice of one candidate over

another.

There are substantially two *preferential elements* : work experience with underprivileged people (as volunteers, trainees or employment at any Guanellian Institute); or the same experience with organizations who operate in the field of human development. **234**

METHODS OF SELECTION

It is suitable to utilize all means and the most adequate and updated methods that are normally used in the choice of personnel. Common practice is the study of the application, resumé, the interview and available evaluation tests, if appropriate. In other words, all the knowledge and available technology should be employed to establish the caliber of the person; not only the skills or the individual aptitudes. **235**

Every Guanellian Center has its own identity and its specific project. Therefore, the selection is made by the competent person designated by the administration, which has the responsibility to set the criteria and to make the final decision. **236**