

Congregazione dei Rogazionisti

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Rome, 19 March 2014
Solemnity of St. Joseph

Prot. N. 84/14

Re. : Transfer of the remains of the Servant of God, Fr Giuseppe Marrazzo

To the Most Rev. Superiors
of the Rogationist Circumscriptions
To the Rogationist Communities
To the Family of the Rogate
THEIR HOUSES

Dearest,

On November 30, 1992, Fr. Giuseppe Marrazzo peacefully fell asleep in the Lord, under the shadow of the Shrine of St. Anthony of Messina, where he had served the Lord and the faithful for almost fifty years, leaving an edifying testimony of his extraordinary priestly and religious virtues.

During his funeral, in the afternoon of the following day, the sanctuary was filled by an unexpected crowd, which has overflowed to the adjacent streets. Afterwards, his body was accompanied, almost in a procession, by a large number of devotees to the Grand Cemetery of Messina.

Father Marrazzo, who was tireless in his apostolate and intimately united to the Lord, had always lived in humility and simplicity. In the years that followed his death, many who had known him and had enjoyed his friendship and spiritual guidance, have been seen staying in prayer in a corner of the shrine where he had regularly administered the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In 2002, on the 10th anniversary of his death, there was a widespread reputation of holiness around the figure of Father Marrazzo. A need was felt to organize his commemoration and a spontaneous initiative came from among the faithful, who gathered 8,000 signatures to request the opening of the process of canonization and the transfer of his remains in the Shrine of St. Anthony.

On July 25, 2006, the Archbishop of Messina, Msgr. Giovanni Marra, signed the decree for the opening of the process of the Cause of Canonization. Consecutively, his successor, Archbishop Calogero La Piana, ordered the opening of the process on May 5, 2008.

Since that date, while the testimonies are successively heard during the sessions of the diocesan process, the General Postulation has initiated the gathering of the writings of the Servant of God and promoted the knowledge about this extraordinary figure of a holy priest, apostle of the sacrament of reconciliation.

In March 2009, the Superior General, Fr. Giorgio Nalin, granting the request of the Provincial Superior of the Central-Southern Italian Province, Fr. Francesco Bruno, has authorized to start the procedure to request the transfer of Father Joseph Marrazzo's remains to the Basilica Shrine of St. Anthony of Messina. Later, under my mandate, the General Postulator, Fr. Agostino Zamperini submitted a formal request to the Archbishop of Messina on November 30, 2012, the 20th anniversary of the pious passing

away of the Servant of God. Archbishop Calogero La Piana authorized the transfer in a letter dated July 12, 2013.

We have come now to this important event, while the diocesan process of Canonization is heading towards its conclusion. It is a gift that we receive from the Lord which also coincides with the 10th anniversary of the canonization of our Founder.

Hence, I want to communicate to you some important appointments regarding the exhumation and transfer of the remains of the Servant of God, Father Giuseppe Marrazzo.

On **April 7, 2014**, there will be the exhumation of his remains in the Grand Cemetery of Messina, in the presence of the Archbishop of Messina, Msgr. Calogero La Piana, of the ecclesiastical tribunal, and myself.

From **April 8 to May 9**, we will proceed with the recognition of his remains in the Anthonian Institute of Messina.

On **May 10, 2014**, at 6 o'clock p.m., a solemn Mass will be celebrated in the Basilica Shrine of St. Anthony, with the presence of the Archbishop, Msgr. Calogero La Piana, of the ecclesiastical tribunal, and with myself. The interment will follow in the same Basilica, in the place where the remains of the Father Founder was previously laid down.

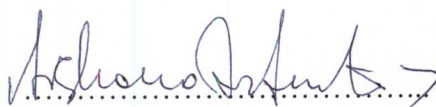
In that particular moment, all of us, especially those who have had the good fortune to know the extraordinary figure of Father Joseph Marrazzo, will witness a sort of a handing over of the ideal witness from Saint Hannibal to his spiritual son, the servant of God, who has endeavored throughout his life to imitate his priestly virtues and apostolic zeal.

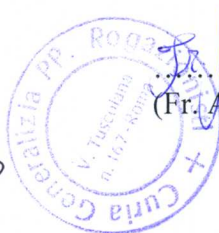
I would to take note about the proximity of this date, May 10, to the other significant moments in the life of Father Marrazzo, which seemed to have a special Marian stamp. He was born May 5, 1917, and was ordained priest on May 19, 1943. In fact, he was a singer of Mary. May the Most Holy Virgin, if it is according to the will of the Lord, accompany this journey of the cause of canonization of Father Joseph, so that the witness of his virtues would turn out into a blessing for those who will recourse to him for his patronage and intercession.

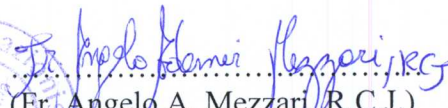
From our part, we want to praise and bless the Lord for what he has done in Father Joseph Marrazzo, and strive to imitate his virtues, to make him known to our young people in the formation and to the faithful whom we encounter in our apostolate.

If it is His will, may the Lord glorify his faithful servant here on earth, by granting the expected graces to all those who seek his intercession, and may his memory be a blessing for the journey of our Congregation.

With these wishes, I greet you with affection in the Lord.


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(Fr. Fortunato Siciliano, R.C.J.)
Secretary General




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(Fr. Angelo A. Mezzari, R.C.J.)
Superior General