



APRIL 25, 2026

3. WITH YOU, MAÏN, ON THE PATHS OF LIFE

3.5 A New Gift of Life – Valgelata Street, Borgoalto and the Houses of the Town



***“Every branch that bears fruit,
my Father prunes it so that it bears more fruit”***

Jn 15,2

(Chapel of Collegio)

Regina Caeli

Entrustment *(in preparation for World Gratitude Day)*

Guide: We entrust Mother Chiara and each one of us to Mary, our Mother and guide so that she can help us to joyfully sing of God's love for us, to live our vocation with commitment, renewed in faith, in love with Jesus, eager to communicate with passion and coherence the beauty of the Gospel to the new generations:



O Mary Help of Christians, You inspired in the hearts of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello a strong missionary impulse, giving life to an Institute all your own for the salvation of young people.

Rekindle in us the missionary boldness of our origins.

We thank you for the gift of Sister Maria Troncatti's holiness.

May we, like her, an ardent missionary, hear the voice of Jesus inviting us, «Go and do likewise».

We entrust to you Mother Chiara,

a sign of communion and unity in the Institute.

Support her with your maternal intercession, so that she may continue to be a presence of joy, an artisan of peace and reconciliation.

*Bless our educating and missionary communities.
Make us believers joyful and free,
to serve the young people you entrust to us. Amen.*

MASS



VISIT MORNESE

Valgelata Street, Borgoalto and the Houses of the Town

(Before departing the participants will find a companion. As we move to the different locations – Via Valgelata, Houses of the town – Borgoalto - there will be moments to share your thoughts with your companion.)

My Valgelata Experience

Guide 1: After moving from the Valponasca in 1858, the Mazzarello family lived at Via Valgelata. Main was 20 years old.



This house is the place that shows the complete readiness of Main to act according to God's will.

Main had accepted God's will from this house and contracted the disease by serving others. She was surprised by the weakness of her body, but she didn't get discouraged. She obeyed God's will. At the same time, she was thinking about what she could do to be helpful to herself and her family.

Guide 2: Once she recovered and gained enough strength from this house, she made her way to the parish Church where she prayed: "Lord, if in your kindness you would grant me a few more years of life, let me spend them ignored by all, forgotten by all, except by you."

Song: Mio Signor (45)

<https://youtu.be/lGs0FQNGrzQ>



Mio Signor, questa vita che
hai donato a me un dì,
ecco qui, destinata a Te,
dedicata a Te, per Te.

*My Lord, this life that
You gave me one day,
here it is, destined for You,
dedicated to You, for You.*

E se sarò dimenticata
dagli altri sì, non da Te.
Io dalla gioia illuminata
resterò nel tuo amor.

*And if I am forgotten
By others yes, not by You.
I will be enlightened by joy.
I will remain in Your love.*

Guide 2: Let's remember that Main fell ill on the feast of the Assumption and got up for the feast of the Rosary in 1860. During the long months of recovery, the presence of the Blessed Mother Mary was beside her, supporting and comforting her. She encouraged and helped her to experience the trial as an act of love for God.

Guide 1: As we continue our journey, share with your companion any experience that has been your "Via Valgelata." Who helped you to lift your gaze and discern the "signs" of God's visitation?

From Via Valgelata to Borgoalto

Guide 1: God prepared a great mission for me in moments of suffering, just like Main.



Guide 2: "One day Maria was walking in the hills of Borgoalto when she seemed to see a cluster of buildings before her which had the appearance of a girls' school. She stopped and stared in wonder saying to herself, 'What am I looking at? There has never been a building like this here! What is happening?' Then she heard what resembled a voice which said to her, '*I entrust them to you.*'" Completely confused, she presented herself to Fr.

Pestarino, but was told not to listen to the visions and dreams, just as had happened to little Giovanni Bosco after he told his dream when he was nine years old. However, God's voice cannot be suppressed, and those words, 'I entrust them to you,' began to translate into a youthful mission.

Song: I Entrust Them to You (46)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1l_VCxeWp8

Guide 1: As we move on, share with your companion the mission that emerged from the suffering you experienced.



From Borgoalto to the Houses of the Town



House Of the Tailor

Valentino Campi 1861-1862

Guide 2: On 10 September, the two friends went to the house of the tailor and remained there until Easter. On the advice of Fr. Pestarino, however, they also went to the workshop of the seamstress Antonietta Barco. After about six months, she left Mornese, and they replaced her.

Guide 1: General Chapter XXIV tells us that Mary is a woman who dares, and her presence becomes the voice of the Word. With her, we open ourselves to experience God's voice. Here we will find a plan of salvation in which we are called to collaborate by courageously planning the future.

Guide 2: Let us bring to our prayer an educating community where we took risks to audaciously plan the future like Main and Petronilla.

All: "Lord, help us to consider every hour as an opportunity to grow in love. A time where everything finds its meaning because that's where life is reborn."



Teresa Pampuro's House 1862

Guide 1: Here, Maria and Petronilla started a tiny workroom, welcoming the girls from Mornese: In 1862, the two friends began working in the house of Teresa Pampuro where Petronilla had settled after her father's death.

Guide 2: The townspeople saw the work well done and asked the two friends to teach their daughters the trade. Maria and Petronilla thus accepted some young women who attended to the workroom.

Guide 1: The Acts of the General Chapter speak to us of the presence that walks together: Do whatever He tells you (*Jn 2:5*). It is the only Word Mary addressed to humanity. In this Word, there is a sharing of life and love. She who has pronounced her Fiat now says to the servants: "Do." It is an authentic reflection of her inner life. She who believed in the Word now shares her faith with others, helping them to believe and obey.

Guide 2: Let's think about an activity with young people that was very meaningful. Let's recall the experiences and feelings that they brought.

All: Lord, help us to be like Mary: Helper and mediator, the missionary who brought us to Jesus.



Maccagno House 1863

Guide 1: There was free accommodation in a room on the ground floor at the home of Angela Maccagno (*2 months*), then a rental of a small room near the church in the Birago house. This too, was for a short time, because they quickly realized that the room did not suit their works.

Finally, Angela Maccagno's brother rented a room near the church to the two young women, accessed by climbing a step. The room was on the ground floor, large and bright, therefore suitable for the workroom and the courtyard for the oratory.

Guide 2: General Chapter XXIV urges us as members of the educating community to assume the vocational culture, allowing every young person to discover and live their life project. For this reason, building educational environments where Salesian spirituality is lived out in daily life, is essential.

Guide 1: Let us remember an educating community where we were able to encourage a vocational culture and accompany the girls and young women.

All: Lord, teach us to build educational environments where Salesian spirituality is lived in daily life, where sacramental life, listening to the Word, prayer, discernment, personal and community accompaniment, and the joy of sharing and planning together are valued. We proclaim with Pope Francis, "Only those who build bridges can move forward: The builders of walls end up imprisoned by the walls they themselves have built" (*Pope Francis, The Autobiography*, 2025, 44).



Bodrato House 1863

Guide 2: In 1863, the first orphanage was opened, using two rooms on the ground floor rented to the two girls by Antonio Bodrato. The house was opposite that of Maccagno.

Guide 1: The orphanage's opening: "In the town, the work of the two friends was well regarded and esteemed. A peddler, widowed with two little girls, one six and the other eight years old, begged them to take them in and keep them, not only during the day but also at night, because he, being almost always away from home, could not handle them. The two friends rented a small room at the

entrance to the Bodrato house and placed two beds there. Petronilla left the Pampuro house to sleep with the two girls and be their Mother.”

Guide 2: General Chapter XXIV tells us about the new wine of the charism, which has nourished the vocational fruitfulness of the FMA Institute for more than 150 years. It enhances the joy and wonder of the call to be missionary communities: ‘Mornese in outreach’; communities that proclaim Jesus with their lives, that take on the challenges of change and bear witness to evangelical values, that take on the various forms of poverty present in the existential and geographical peripheries (*Acts GC XXIV, 26*).

Guide 1: “To be a response of salvation to the profound hopes of girls and young women” (*Const. 1*) is the reason for the presence of the Institute in over 150 years and will be so in the future.

Take a moment to pause and remember that experience where you offered maternal gestures to children and young people.

Guide: As we conclude our visit to the houses of the town we close with the following prayer.

All: Mary, teach us to look at the whole and not neglect the details. Help us read the concrete situation in depth, identify the hidden challenges, and collect the groans not yet verbalized. Amen!

(Depending on the time each participant may return to the Collegio or stop to visit the places better.)

