



JUNE 14, 2025

3. WITH YOU, MAÌN, 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)

Angelus

Entrustment



Guide: We entrust ourselves to Mary, our Mother, and the Help of Christians.

Voice 1: O Mary, woman of hope, by showing yourself to us, free from every stain of sin, you remind us that first of all, there is the grace of God, there is the love of Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us, and there is the strength of the Holy Spirit who renews everything. May we not give in to discouragement but trust your constant help and work hard to renew ourselves.

All: Pray for us, Holy Mother, and the Help of Christians!

Voice 2: Under your mantle, everyone has room because you are the Mother of Mercy. Your heart is full of tenderness towards all your children: the compassion of God, who took flesh from you and became our brother, Jesus, Savior of every man and woman. Looking at you, our Immaculate Mother, we recognize the

victory of divine Mercy over sin and all its consequences; hope is rekindled in us for a better life, free from slavery, grudges, and fears.

All: Pray for us, Holy Mother, and the Help of Christians!

Voice 3: Today, we hear your maternal voice. You say to everyone: “Come, approach trustingly; enter and receive the gift of Mercy; do not be afraid, do not be ashamed: the Father awaits you with open arms to give you his forgiveness and welcome you into his home. Come to the source of peace and joy”.

All: Pray for us, Holy Mother, and the Help of Christians!

Voice 4: We thank you, Immaculate Mother, because, on this path of reconciliation, you don’t let us go alone but accompany us; you stay close and support us in every difficulty. May you be blessed, now and always, Mother. 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: Accepting the mediations that speak of the will of God. 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 the creature to act according to God’s will.

“Sufferings of all kinds in life are the voice of God who invites us to review more consciously the motivations that drive us to choose our lifestyle, to make our



response freer and more stable.” 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: From this house, she was ready to listen to the voice of the Lord with a new mission: “I entrust them to you,” and read His plan of salvation.

Personal reflection:

1. What afflictions have affected my life?
2. How did I experience that suffering?
3. How did I choose to hear God’s voice when making difficult choices?
4. What is the inner journey that Maria Domenica took?
5. I reread my spiritual experience in the light of the centrality of Christ’s paschal mystery.
6. In this Jubilee Year of Hope how have I gradually turned a challenging moment into an opportunity for growth?

(brief pause)

Guide 1: We contemplate this mystery in Main’s life, looking at **the “sign” of her illness**, which generated **new life**, giving her fresh eyes to look at reality with the gaze of faith and hope.

Song: Mio Signor

<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: “Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away, and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes so that it bears more fruit” (*Jn 15, 2*)

Guide 1: The dynamism of life is constant and excellent because nature is the teacher of life; all life that dies generates new life.

Guide 2: In silence reflect on those moments in which the voice of God spoke to us through new experiences, thus calling us to leave our security. With humility and trust, let us pray for Mary:

All: “Lord, if in your kindness you would grant me a few more years of life, let me spend them ignored by all and, except by you, forgotten by all.”

Guide 2: Let’s remember that, having contracted the illness, Main ~~went to bed~~ 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: Main often raised her gaze to Mary, her Mother, during her recovery. She invoked her to be her guide towards a new discernment. We, too, ask her to remain with us during life's difficult moments.

Guide 2: As we continue our journey with your companion, share 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

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

Guide 1: As we move on with your companion share 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 experiencing God's time as a *kairòs*, aware that, beyond the events, there is a plan of salvation in which we are called to collaborate by courageously planning the future.

Guide 2: Each of us reflects on some community where we have lived and which has been meaningful to us. Let us bring to our prayer the 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 of a specific community where the oratory was most meaningful. Let us remember the experiences and the meaning they left in our hearts.

All: “Lord, help us to be like Mary: Helper and mediator, the missionary who brought us to Jesus, who filled her life with joy.”

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 a 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. In this Jubilee year of Hope 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 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.)

