



POOR·SERVANTS
OF·DIVINE
PROVIDENCE

«After God, the sick are our real masters»

*Calabrian Health Care Model
based on St. John Calabria's life
and work with the sick*



*Calabrian Health
System Sector*



POOR SERVANTS OF THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE

- Calabrian Health System Sector -

**Calabrian Health Care Model based on
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with the sick**

SISTER MARIA JOSÉ MARINHO, PSDP

Calabrian Management

- For an Opera of disciples-brothers-missionaries -

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based on St. John Calabria's life
and work with the sick

Elaborazione:
Settore Sistema Calabriano di Sanità
SOR. MARIA JOSÉ MARINHO

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PRESENTATION

Assistance to the sick has always been a very important field of apostolate for St. John Calabria, throughout his life. As a child he remained close to his sick father, as a young man he served in military hospital, as a cleric he founded the Pious Union together with Count Francesco Perez to help the sick poor. As a young priest in his first pastoral experience as assistant in Santo Stefano he frequently visited the sick and had a great pastoral sensitivity for this ministry. And even after, when he started the Opera welcoming the Good Children, he always maintained a particular attention for the sick and for the health workers who take care of them.

Fr. Calabria has undertaken many initiatives in this field, for example by giving support to the Italian Medical Missionary Union (UMMI) and disseminating the booklet 'Apostolate of the Sick'. His commitment to the health sector became even more profound in 1933 when, after careful discernment, he accepted to take charge of the shelter for poor elderly people in Negrar, the first nucleus of the current Citadel of Charity.

How to explain this real "passion" of Fr. Calabria for the sick? Surely it was part of his character sensitive to the sufferings or to the different experiences in this field, which providentially he faced, but not only for this. In reality, being close to those who suffer was for him a privileged way of putting into practice the charism that God had entrusted to him. A charism based on trust in God the Father who always takes care of his children and in particular of the poorest and most suffering.

After the death of Fr. Calabria, the Opera carried on its mission in the field of health and today in the world there are some hospitals and clinics that are inspired by the Calabrian charism and many other initiatives in favor of the sick that take place in the pastoral field in the parishes, which are entrusted to the Opera. We can say that the founder's example gave birth to a model of assistance and closeness to the sick that is still very meaningful today and represents a precious heritage for all Calabrian health activities.

This model of assistance born from the example of Fr. Calabria is the subject of the study presented in this handout by Sister Maria José Marinho. I think it is a very interesting work because, starting from the testimony of the Founder, it comes to define some very concrete guidelines on how to take care of the sick according to the Calabrian charism. This is an important step that will undoubtedly make a good contribution to the path of synergy and communion between the various realities of the Opera in the world.

I thank Sister Maria José for the work she gives us as a contribution out of her research centered on the life and mission and the writings of Fr. Calabria, where we find the fundamental pillars that give meaning to our care for the sick today, to witness the charism of Fatherhood of God who takes care of all his children, particularly the neediest in this special time marked by so much suffering due to the pandemic.

I hope that this tool that we have in our hands can motivate all of us, especially those who work directly in the assistance to the sick and the health structures of the Opera, to keep Fr. Calabria's ideal high in order to fulfil his dream of a care to the person consistent to his thought that "*the sick after God is our true master*". If this is the certainty that motivated his entire mission, it must also be an ideal source of inspiration for us.

Wishing everyone a fruitful reading of this material offered to us, I hope that a deep desire to love and serve the Lord Jesus who is present in the little ones, in the poor, in the sick, will arise in our hearts more and more, because as he himself has promised it in the Gospel: "Whenever you did these things to one of these least of my brothers, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40).

Fr. Miguel Tofful
Casante Opera Don Calabria

PREFACE

The Calabrian Health Care Model was created in order to unify our Calabrian Assistance to the sick. I will explain how it was done: the objectives, the origin, the process and to whom it is addressed. First of all, it was the fruit of my studies with a Master's Degree in Arts in Nursing and a Major in Clinical Management. Since I'm a Poor Servant of the Divine Providence Sister and a member of the Calabrian Health Care Sector I made this study not only as an academic requirement but also as a most important motivation for a deeper reflection on how it could assist today's sick according to Fr. John Calabria.

A study was done and the aim was to explore the life and works of Fr. John Calabria, the founder of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Divine Providence. It was done to understand and to define from Calabria's life and his relationship and experiences with the sick in today's Health Care Model

The methodology is a qualitative study and the specific design is a Documentary Analysis, in which the statements reflected were: 1) How Saint John Calabria can inform Health Care in term of Person, Health, Environment and Nursing; 2) What Calabrian Health Care Model can be proposed. The instruments of the study were documents regarding Saint John Calabria and the sick. The research locale was Italy and the Philippines; the data analysis was done by Constant Comparative Analysis with readings, reflections in order to encode, to categorize and make intuitive or inductive conclusions.

Findings with the study of Saint John Calabria's life and works with the sick demonstrates that for him the sick person is unique and worthy of respect; the health is a condition of harmony among mind, body, soul, and social dimensions; the environment should be a warm and open place, especially, for the poorest among the poor, and the health worker is considered a noble vocation and especial mission urged to provide a Holistic Care. The Calabrian model can be proposed as Calabrian Holistic Care.

In conclusion the Calabrian Health Care Model inherited from Saint John Calabria is Holistic; the patients must be treated as a son or daughter of God, having the dignity, the respect to find answers for all needs. The environmental characteristic is Christian Charity. The contribution of Saint John Calabria for Health Care was to reinforce that only holistic care can really promote the complete wellbeing of the person.

Thus, the study was done with the objective to formulate the Calabrian Health Care model, which can be a common guide line for all our Calabrian Hospitals in order to keep alive the Charism and the Spirituality of S. J. C.; having a common model, that is our father, Saint John Calabria's life and work with the sick.

INTRODUCTION

“Since my early youth, the sick have always been the apple of my eyes, and the beautiful and providential work of the Apostolate of the Sick has always occupied a privileged place in my heart”.¹

We can see clearly in St. John Calabria’s life and work how great and special was his love for the sick since his youth. It reaches the culmination during his military service, and extended during his entire life: as a theology student and as a priest, even at the end of his life he tirelessly dedicated his time to them. If St. John Calabria had such love for the suffering person why didn’t he find a Congregation for the sick as did the Camillian Congregation? S.J.C wanted to be a Camillian and spend his life for the sick but according to some witnesses he was very obedient to God’s will and founded the “Casa Buoni Fanciuli” “Children’s House” on November 26, 1907 in Verona, Italy. He understood that was God’s call and plan in his life. By obedience to God and to his spiritual guide he founded it. However, he never lost or forgot his love and especial attention for the suffering brothers and sisters affected by sickness.

Today the Poor Servants of the Divine Providence Congregation is present in diverse and different countries, doing many different activities in the education field, pastoral life, health and social areas. The Congregation started its mission with the street children but today the activities are expanded to the poorest among the poor, prioritizing the children, the sick or any other segment of the society less privileged. Among the activities developed by the Congregation there is the Calabrian Health Sector working to take care of the sick in the underdeveloped countries.

After this previous explanation the important question is: “Why do we have a Calabrian Health Care Model? What is it for? We can say that there exist countless Health Care Models, even with specific objectives according to the problems. In our case, we will not focus only on clinical problems and create our own model; it already exists and it easily can be

¹ Saint John Calabria, 1948.

made by professionals. In this paper we will speak about a specific Calabrian Health Care Model based on the life and works of Saint John Calabria. It is something specific and permanent since it regards the life, history and example of Calabria; the base can't be change because it is the saint's testimony but what can chance are the actions and means, but not the Calabrian proposal.

Why make a Calabrian Health Care Model? As we know a scientific health care model looks toward the quality and efficiency of the medical services in order to save and protect life. In this case, a Calabrian Health Care Model has the same objective, but its according to the Saint's life and works. So, in our Model the objective also is to provide a Health Care based on Calabrian values according to his testimony from his personal contacts with the sick. This is done to keep alive today his Charism, Spirituality and Mission letting the patients in our hospitals experience God's love and His motherly Providence. The Calabrian Hospital must be "The Citadel of Charity" where each person encounter or re-encounter Jesus while being with us under our Calabrian assistance.

Therefore, a Calabrian Health Care Model is important in order to unify our Congregation, our assistance to the poor in all the Calabrian Hospitals based on the life of our founder and keeping the flame burning for his love for the sick. That is why the objectives in our Calabrian Hospitals are not just to address the health concerns but also to live our mission and charism announcing that God is Father and Provident Mother.

I.

HISTORICAL

The Calabrian Health Care Model is based on St. John Calabria's life and experiences with the sick

1.1 Saint John Calabria's life

Oreste Giovanni Calabria was born at 8.30 am on Wednesday October 8th 1873, in Verona on the top flat under the ceiling of an old house at *Vicolo Disciplina*, Lane No.8. His baptismal register of St. Stefano records his name as Giovanni Oreste Maria.

His father Luigi was born in Verona on July 13th 1820 and was a cobbler. He worked for a long period at a company making shoes for soldiers, and at one time, he established his own shop in a small corner near the stairs of his residence. He was a simple and gentle man who loved his work and family.

His mother Angela Foschio, was a woman of singular Christian virtues formed by the institute of Fr. Mazza. Angela was born in Verona on August 7th 1831. She met Luigi and after some months, they were married in the Holy Apostles church on April 6th 1856. At that time, Angela was 25 and Luigi 36 years old. They established their residence on the 4th floor at *Vicolo Disciplina* lane, no 8. Angela worked in a restaurant as helper, as a laundrywoman, ironing and mending, to earn the needs of the family (Gadili,1999, pg 27).

The Calabria couple had 7 children. The first four died in their early age and then Teresa, Gaetano, and finally our John. Little is known about his family and childhood; Fr. Calabria spoke little about it. Definitely, from his mother, a good and virtuous woman, he received a deeply religious

education. From the earliest years, he showed a shy character, inclined to distrust himself, but very much inclined to a serious and meaningful demeanor.

When he was four years old he was builder of improvised altars: a common game among the children, especially at that time. However, if the game was common, certainly it was not the seriousness that he put into the role. During these 'Mass celebrations' there abounded the words "Dominus vobiscum", and "Amen" (the words which he probably grasped from the church celebrations), and woe to those who allowed themselves to speak or hold a behavior less than respectful. Gaetano and Teresa, the elder siblings, enjoyed themselves with his makeshift vestments, and a shabby old shawl, but he didn't mind it.

At the age of eight, he began attending primary school at the Istituto dei Padri Stimmatini. Orphaned by his father at the age of twelve, he spent his childhood and adolescence in extreme poverty. He was forced to interrupt elementary school twice with precarious jobs to help earn a living for himself and his family. The humiliations and difficulties contributed, with the grace of God, to make him develop a spirit of faith and of abandonment in Divine Providence.

Even among hardships, his mother's love, faith and industriousness made him grow healthy and selfless. Father Pietro Scapini, rector of the church of St. Lorenzo, helped Calabria fulfill his vocation to the priesthood and for three years, he prepared himself for the entrance examination for the high school at the Verona Seminary. He succeeded and was admitted as a day student. The obligatory military service, although he regarded "the most beautiful period of his life," caused him to miss another two years of studies (Gatto, 1999).

He, however, had the great fortune of meeting Fr. Natale of Jesus, a Carmelite, whom he chose as his confessor and spiritual director. It was this priest who discovered in the young boy "the one chosen by the Lord with special predilection" to found "an institute fit for the present times": The Congregation of Priests and Brothers, animated with the Spirit of the Gospel, with juridical equality among the members, with equal rights and obligations as a true family.

During his military service, he implemented an intense vocational and charitable apostolate, distinguishing himself above all in caring for the sick and in the heroic act of offering oneself spontaneously assisting soldiers suffering from typhus, to the extent of becoming seriously ill himself.

After resuming his studies, he did not wait for priestly ordination to lead a holy life and work at the service of the poor. He founded, indeed, being still a cleric, the "Pious Union for the assistance to the poor-sick". Having found a gypsy runaway, on the front steps of his house, he welcomed him, sharing his food and giving him his bed. It was the seed of the "Casa Buoni Fanciulli", which officially began on November 26, 1907, in alley Case Rotte.

On August 11th 1901 he was ordained a priest and assigned, as assistant, to the parish of St. Stefano in Verona and was appointed confessor of the Seminary. After seven years he was transferred, as assistant, to S. Benedetto al Monte. Meanwhile, the number of abandoned children he welcomed in his house kept on increasing.

It was therefore necessary to look for a bigger environment and God's Providence gave it to him. The new headquarters that Providence reserved for him was in San Zeno in Monte St, #23, Verona. It became the "Mother House" of the Opera. The boys were officially transferred to the new facility on the November 6th 1908 and the person in charge of the activities of the House was Fr. Diodato Desenzani, the priest who later on, in accordance with Fr. Calabria, started the UMMI.

Along with the boys the collaborators also increased, they were Priests and Brothers. In 1932 the "Casa Buoni Fanciulli" was approved as the "Congregation Poor Servants of the Divine Providence" and spread to various parts of Italy.

At the same time the female branch, the "Sisters", was also born, which was then established as Congregation with the same name: "Poor Servants of Divine Providence". Fr. Calabria wanted the Brothers and Sisters like two branches of the same tree, one family, with the same spirituality: to live the spirit of faith and trust in God the Father, totally abandoned in the Divine Providence, without asking for anything, not leaning on human

protection, living the Gospel values radically: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all the rest will be given to you "(see Mt 6, 25-33).

Fr. Calabria's apostolate was vast: boys, elderly, sick, poor young people willing to discern their vocation whom he formed in his houses. With those on the threshold of theology, he left them free to choose the Diocese or other Congregations or Orders Those priests in difficulty, prisoners, "Separated brothers" and an anonymous crowd of souls in search of light, comfort and advice which he received and even keep a very large correspondence, in spite of his continuous suffering and disease.

He felt that the time of the laity had matured and he cooperated, with his insights to form Christians truly grounded on the Gospel principals. It led him to constitute the "Family of the external Brothers", ordinary laypeople who, in the heart of their family and in the context of their profession, committed themselves to live the spirit of the Congregation.

The soul of everything and Fr. Calabria's true greatness was the daily commitment of knowing more and more the will of God, his passionate love for this will, letting go of all else in order to embrace purely the will of God. 'Either holy or dead', was his motto, written in every page of his "Journal".

He closed his earthly days in Verona on December 4, 1954. John Paul II beatified him in Verona on April 17, 1988 and canonized him in Rome on April 18, 1999. His Congregations extended, nourished by the same spirit is also in Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Colombia, Angola, Kenya, Romania, Russia, India, Papua New Guinea and in the Philippines.

SUMMARIZING

Calabrian insights for our Health Care Model-Part 1

The personal life and history of John Calabria can enlighten our Health Care Model in all its aspects. But in this part, we will only enhance some of them such as his natural inclination to take care of life, which is the priority of our model. Since his childhood in extreme poverty he was sensitive to his family conditions, not indifferent at the point to renounce his study in order to work to help his family. He had a deep religious

education and was inclined to serious and meaningful demeanor; it helps as to understand his great and special care for the sick. And, still being a little boy, he took care of his father while affected by bronchitis; our founder took care with courage and dedication in a tireless way. It teaches us persistence and love in taking care of the sick.

The whole life of St. John Calabria is a model for us Calabrian Health Workers. Since his childhood, teenage age, youth age and adult life, in his experience with his family, in the seminar, in the military hospital, and as a priest he always put the other person in the center of his attention, which we say today “patient centered” or “life centered”. The central point of our Calabrian Model, and in our case are the poorest and needed patient both in material and spiritual needs. St. Calabria is our health care model and we are invited to take care of life in its complexity and all its dimensions: social, psychologic, spiritual and physical as he took care of the street children, the abandoned, the elderly, the sick and all those who searched for his help.

1.2 Saint John Calabria’s virtues

“S.J.C wasn’t an ordinary person and his life was a sequence of unforeseen events that would leave others surprised and puzzled. He was ordained a priest by considering his virtues; he showed himself as a priest with zeal and initiatives, docile and obedient, with a profound piety and an upright modesty, simple and smart, according to the Gospel; with a charity that needs to be spread in an atmosphere of greater freedom, according to God’s spirit” (Foffano, 1966, pp 99).

The sick had always a special place in the heart of S.J.C. Having a great love *how was his total dedication to the sick? Which kind of virtues helped him to live such mission?* Calabria was a person with many virtues, such as faith, mercy, sensitivity, love, courage, hope, generosity, humility, obedience and so on, but we will expose some virtues that made him a saint, and marked his way of approaching the sick and suffering:

1.2.1 Charity to the sick

Mr. Antonio Fabbro, who knew him from his childhood, stated that "*from childhood, John Calabria demonstrated this special inclination for the sick; especially for the salvation of their souls. When he could not visit them, he used to pray and ask prayers for them so that they would be ready to receive the holy sacraments*".

As it was mentioned previously S.J.C when studying theology founded with others companions the "Pious Union for the assistance of the poor-sick" and even when he became a priest his dedication and service to the sick did not know limits. Every day he dedicated some hours visiting them in the hospital or in their houses.

Even after being a priest his passion for the sick was not over, on the contrary, he had always a special place for them. During his first mission as an assistant Vicar of St. Stefano parish (1901-1907) he chose to take care of the sick instead of taking care of the youth, showing clearly his preference. Therefore, he helped during these early years in a particular way, the sick. The parish was not enough for him, he extends his assistance to the sick in both military and civil hospitals, and to homes in many cases (Foffano, 1966, p. 77). In the parish, he was always welcome because of his great generosity and dedication, in attending the sick and hastening to solve their spiritual and material problems (Foffano, 1966 p.76).

His charity towards the sick was complete with courage and creativity, especially when the patients were resistant in receiving the priest. As in the following example:

"The creative love"

His was called to visit a very seriously sick person who refused the visit of a priest. But the family really trusted Fr. Calabria, and believed that he was the only one able to do something. Then an inspiration came. With an agreement made with the attending doctor, Calabria put on the medical uniform and introduced himself as a consultant. His many experiences gave him the ability to use the technical terms and diagnose of the sickness, according to the doctor's findings, without losing his identity. In that manner, he returned two or three times; but

then, one day, with a charitable courage he revealed himself and he exhorted the sick to think of his soul. These were dramatic moments, because the sick person strongly resisted and sent him away; but then, being overcome by grace, he asked for confession and to die at peace with the Lord (Foffano, 1966, pg 86).

Fr. Calabria lived concretely the charity and left it to his religious the practice as a commandment: In a letter of good wishes for Christmas 1909 to the brothers of S. Zeno in Monte he wrote, «... *“my Brothers we are united with the sweet bond of charity, charity, therefore, may always reign in the House of the God of Charity. I recommend it very much to everyone; charity is the only means for this House to succeed and yes spread ... Charity therefore, among you, between us, let us be compassionate to each other, we should always be kind, charity, charity with our boys*” (Calabria, 1909).

He himself was an example of genuine charity and his desire was that his religious have as a distinctive and identity, the charity itself. And much more in the hospital and health field, he wanted it to be a place of charity in order to help the needed, providing all their spiritual and physical needs and at the same time to let them know Jesus and God's Loving Providence.

1.2.2 Simplicity

*“The simplicity of his life style, his speaking, his praying, his person, reflects the fresh clarity of his inner world, of his soul, though rich and filled with supernatural light. Few but essential inspiring ideas of his work, lived to the point of heroism, both, in his heart and outside, with remarkable fruitfulness.”*²

According to Fr. Mondrone, *the spirituality of Fr. John Calabria is of the most simple but solid and linear; few principles, rich and fruitful applications, attaining the heights to which a soul can reach, when it is resolute and generous in deeds. Opening his diary one happens to read*

² Stefano Marina, *Sotto qualunque corteccia*”, ODC, Verona 1999, p.75.

*nothing simpler, but from that simplicity shines through a strength that in part allows one to guess the magnanimity of that man of God.*³

In the following short story, we can see how S.J. Calabria was a humble, simple and sincere person even during his military service:

Broken thermometers

Too frequent in the case of serving the sick, the delicate and fragile thermometers are broken. Among some there was the practice to "blame" the damage thermometer on the already dead patients. Fr. John, having broken a thermometer, instead informed the officer accusing himself, because he wanted the truth and not fiction. He was expecting an admonishment and a punishment; instead he heard, 'Well, we'll make a voucher replacement'.

1.2.3 Faith in the Divine Providence

"But from where, my dear and loved brothers, shall be drawn this vivid faith, if not from the pure springs of the holy Gospel? For this reason, I have told you and repeat to you so many times, that we have to be so many Christs and living gospels in order to become lighthouses for the poor mankind groping in the darkness of so many errors, in the mud of so many vices.

This seems to echo the command of Jesus: "So let your light shine in front of men so that they can see your good works and glorify your Father who is in the heaven". Note how Jesus, recalling the thought of God, calls him 'Father', or rather 'our Father'.

I want to tell you, my dear brothers, that the true and genuine faith considers God not only like a creator and Lord, but above all like a Father.

So, let us have faith in God's fatherhood and, for this reason, let us have unlimited confidence and filial abandonment to the divine Providence. This is a specific characteristic of our Congregation, one of the teachings the Lord wants give to the world through it.

³ Domenico Mondrone, *Una gemma del clero italiano: Don Giovanni Calabria*, in "Civiltà Cattolica", Roma 1955, p.14.

Let us remember that the divine Providence is a tender mother who puts in order everything for our benefit, or rather for our greater progress. We have to feel ourselves sustained by its maternal hands. It is true, many times we must suffer and our nature can sometimes feel almost consternation: do not be surprised. Jesus himself felt sadness, boredom and dread and arrived at the point of calling the Father to take away the bitter cup. Then he added that he deferred to his Father's will.

Now we can only see the reverse of the work and the reverse side of the embroidery. It may seem that all is confused, but when we are able to see the finished work and the front side of the embroidery, then it will appear in all their magnificent and astonishing production.”⁴

S.J. Calabria used to call and to consider God as a Father and Mother who take care of his children with his loving Providence. Having this unshaking faith S.J. Calabria founded the Congregation receiving and welcoming the street children in 1907, never closing the door or the possibility to receive them in his house, he was never worried about money or any financial concern, on the contrary he used to say that for him an abandoned boy is more than a million, a billion. His soul is worth the blood of Jesus.

The same faith he lived regarding the sick and suffering people as we can see during the launch of the first Hospital in Negrar, Italy. Calabria himself said:

"For you who are in Negrar, I think we can say, with due proportions: "Sanctify yourself, because the House you inhabit is holy". For my part, every time I come to Negrar, I feel a particular spiritual joy, to think about the good works that the Providence accomplishes, through you, lucky residents. I remember the words of Jesus: 'Whoever believes in me will do what I do', woe to us if this faith in the Providence is missing, it would be our and others ruin.

How I thank the divine goodness, who chose our humble Congregation of the Poor Servants, to do such good works: doctors, nurses, sisters and all, animated by faith, are committed to a noble mission, to make known

⁴ S.G. Calabria, *Lettera LXIII*, Festa del Preziosissimo Sangue 1949.

beyond the miseries of the body, and even of the final destruction of it, that there is a spiritual richness, a future life, in which everything we have sacrificed here for the Lord, is repaid copiously (Calabria, 1950).⁵

We report just two simple experiences about how God's providence was a real manifestation and guidance in his life also in financial matters:

The first episode Fr. Cogo dates June 24, 1926. Here is his narrative: *"At the end of June we are running short of means. At S. Zeno there was half a day of Eucharist Adoration and the Bishop sends a message to Fr. John that he would give him £.30,000 (thirty thousand), for the House from a certain Mr. Forte, a former Jew, who also gave through the Bishop £. 100,000 to the Catholic Missions »* (Fr. Cogo, 1926).⁶

The second episode, Fr. Cogo, dated 16/17 November 1928: *"For two months, again we were running short of means, and Br. Antonio [bursar] was a bit worried, he was almost at the point of mortgage something. The new priests (Fr. Bellarini and Fr. Isaia) asked for some books to study, and Fr. John said: "If by tomorrow we may receive 5,000 £, you may buy the books". It seemed to the priests too high the amount, and then Fr. Calabria said: "Well, let's say 4.000£". The next day about three o'clock, a person delivers to Fr. John £. 3,000. In the same evening he received a letter (from Fr. Natale) asking him to send a priest to celebrate a Holy Mass on the 19th of June, and he would have given him £ 1000»* (Fr. Cogo, 1928).⁷

In this way, with so much love and dedication and such great faith in the Divine Providence, S.J. Calabria accomplished his charitable activities for the benefit of those suffering.

⁵ S.G. Calabria, *Lettera a fratel Consolaro*, APSDP, fondo d. Calabria, lettere a confr., fl. 3, c. 38, b. 8410/a, 3-8-1950; oppure: Consolaro Fr. Antonio, * 6089 Verona, 31-8-1953.

⁶ Augusto Cogo, *Cronaca – Diario di S. Benedetto*, PSDP, f. Casa di S. benedetto, fld. 1, c. 7.

⁷ Augusto Cogo, *Cronaca - Diario di S. Benedetto*, APSDP, f. Casa di S. Benedetto, fld. 1, c. 7.

1.2.4 Living Gospel

The first inspiration of S.J. Calabria's life was to live integrally the Gospel, all the other things were just rooted in it. The Gospel was the first source and the heart of his Spirituality. *"Let us be living gospels and before we preach, we must practice. The Gospel must be lived literally."* It was what our founder continuously told to his religious, and added that Christ is the Gospel. Christ is the Gospel personified: *"Christ does not preach the truth as a philosopher, he himself is the truth; Christ does not enact the law as a legislator or moralist, he himself is the law; Christ not only arouses the life of the spirit, but he himself is the life". This is why it is necessary "to establish all things in Christ"* (Calabria, 1953).

"The fundamental rule of the Congregation of Poor Servants of the Divine Providence is the person of Jesus Christ as it is revealed by the entire Gospel" (Constitutions n. 1, pg. 15). Therefore, the Congregation finds its meaning in being a living Gospel and in being another Christ today, in the way our Founder lived.

S.J. Calabria's spirituality was totally Christocentric and based on the Gospel which helped him to live a holy life and to donate himself to others specially the poorest and needed. Fr. Calabria certainly lived for the Gospel and by the Gospel. There is well known episode called the "Discovery of the Gospel" told by Mons. Chiot from Verona: We take it from the same speech of the thirtieth day of his death pronounced in St. Anastasia Church.

"A radiant episode like Saint Francis' anecdotes come from the first years of apostleship of Fr. Calabria" Fr. Calabria sent me a note: *"Wait for me at ten tomorrow, I really need to speak to you"* He arrived punctually and I asked: *"Is there any problem? Your note worried me"*.

"Trouble? Not at all! I have to tell you a great thing"

"A great thing?!..."

"I have read the entire Gospel"

"It is not so much. Is there any priest who did not read it?"

"I'll give you an explanation. I have read it and preached, many times, but the previous day, after a bitter day, I couldn't sleep so I took the

Gospel and I read it all. I did the same with the Acts of the Apostles, all in one night. From this I got a strange feeling. What a great thing is the Gospel! ... I was astonished, dazed, hear...hear..."

And he turned the marked pages that were marginally written with a pencil.

"Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feed them...And why take your thoughts for clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Salomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

He had marked the Beatitudes in another page, how men go beyond their natural state to reach the kingdom of Heaven. He also showed me the phrase. *"If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain: remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove."*

He had signed the paradoxes of the Gospel, which are so called because they are as much in antithesis with the maxims of the world to seem unrealistic, but the saints conquered the world because of them. Fr. Calabria had discovered the Gospel. During that night waking, from the analytic meditation on the Gospel, he arrived at the contemplation that can disclose and heal any intimate deep pain inherent to the human condition (CHIOT G., 1984).⁸

On this experience reported by Mons Chiot, it is clear how S.J. Calabria's life was very coherent and connected totally with the Gospel. From it we can understand his special attention to the suffering, because if God is our Father, we are all brothers and sister invited to take care of each other and especially the needed.

1.2.5 Empathy

The capacity to put oneself in the shoes of others, to understand their thoughts and feelings was something real and frequent in Calabria's life, in his daily life, with any person he met; he was always able to approach

⁸ Mons. G. Chiot, *Commemorazione nel trigesimo della morte di D.G. Calabria*, APSDP, 1955.

with so great empathy. We will report especially some experience regarding his approach to the sick.

Durante the military period of his life (1894-1896), S.J.Calabria developed a big sensitivity toward the sick, his capacity to feel and understand their suffering did not know hindrances such as fears or indifference. A nice testimony that can prove it is one episode during his military experience when in the spring of 1895, a typhus epidemic broke out among the soldiers. To face the situation, the superiors were forced to request from the soldiers extra service: *"A typhoid epidemic broke out among the Soldiers. The medical officer announced the raffle draw in order to assign those who should attend the infected ones. Calabria did not wait for the draw, he volunteered. His work was precious: without break, without rest, without fear. To the humanitarian aid, he used to add some encouraging words, the exhortation to forbearance, and the thought of God and of Our Lady 'Health of the sick' (Pesenti, p.25, 1967)."*⁹

After about a year of generous care given to those sick with typhus, John Calabria himself became sick. He could feel it spreading on his limbs; he tried to resist, but one night, easy prophecy, he told to his patients: *"Tomorrow, I will be with you"*. There was a chorus of protest: *"No! No!"* But in the following day, after having assisted many, he himself needed the help of others (Foffano, 1966, p.46).

SUMMARIZING

Calabrian enlightenments for our Health Care Model- part II

St. Calabria was an extraordinary person with many virtues: faith, mercy, sensitivity, love, courage, hope, generosity, humility, obedience and so on. In this part we will talk about some specific virtues that can enlighten our Calabrian model, that is virtues correlated especially with his experience with the sick that today can help us in our personal or collective mission with our patients. Some virtues connected with his experiences with the

⁹ Graziano Pesenti, *Don Giovanni Calabria - Profilo ascetico-biografico*, Verona 1967, p. 25.

sick or health field according to his story are charity, simplicity, faith in the divine providence, living gospel and empathy.

The virtue most enhanced and present in our model is the Charity, and Calabria used to say “Christian Charity” that is the one based on the gospel, based on Jesus example, based on the first disciples. You will see how in our model the charity is the principal characteristic of the Calabrian environment, that means everywhere and in each part of our hospitals the patient must to feel and experience a Christian environment based first of all on love, on respect, on listening, on understanding, on welcoming, on mercy and much more. Our Founder has lived it in a genuine and creative way as we could see in his history. Today we are invited to do the same and to make each Calabrian Hospital “The Citadel of Charity” where all those who have no other resource can find answers for their needs and experience God’s love and his providence.

Other important point from the Calabrian spirituality included in our model is “Living Gospel” that is, as our founder we must be living gospel and be another Christ in the world. The gospel was the center and the inspiration of S.J.Calabria’s life, and according to him it must be lived literally. In our model, the Gospel, especially, the passage of Mt 6, 25-34 in which St. Calabria could experience God’s love and his providence is the base of our caring, it means that through our medical services and activities we are invited to announce that God is Father, in his loving providence, he knows and tirelessly provides for the needs of his sons and daughters. In our hospital environment each patient is invited to make this experience and to feel this reality while being treated. In simple words the Calabrian Health Care Model is based on the gospel that inspired St. Calabria and we can say the sense of our mission and works is to announce the paternity and maternity of God.

1.3 St. John Calabria contact with health care field

1.3.1 Papà Luigi's sickness

When Calabria was 12 years old, he had some first-hand contact with the health care field; his father Luigi was affected with bronchitis. His dad got sick in December of 1885, and passed away on February 28th 1886. During this period, young Calabria, with love and dedication helped his mother take care of his father. During the first two (2) months he helped taking care of his dad in their home, but because papa Luigi's situation got worse and was admitted to the hospital for a month, young Calabria visited his father daily. His mother had to work hard in order to provide the food for the family; her work was the only source of income. The expenses of the family expanded due to the hospitalization and medication for his dad.

One morning, after serving Holy Mass, John went to visit his father as usually. As he climbed the main stairs of the hospital, he met the head nurse, a religious sister, who stopped him and gently sent him back home: *"Your dad is sleeping, don't disturb him. Please go home and tell your mother to come here"*. When Ms. Angela came to the hospital, her husband was already dead (Gadili, 1999, pg. 35).

In this experience we can see how the young Calabria, was not afraid of sickness, suffering and death. With great courage he faced not only his father's sickness but also the death of his father. Young Calabria always supported his mother and his father, showing them an inclination to take care of those suffering; he did it with love and courage.

1.3.2 In the military hospital

Calabria had to enrol in the military service at the age of 21. On December 10th 1894 he went to the district office and five days later was sent to work in the 5th Company of Health Department in the military hospital of Verona. Daily he attended Mass in the military chapel, and became an esteemed companion of the group. His simplicity and humbleness attained credibility among his peers. Calabria was very agile in nursing as if he had

been practicing it for years. *‘Those were the most wonderful days of my life, refers Calabria. I was loved by all’.*

In the military exercise he was clumsy whereas in the hospital service, he excelled. Calabria remembers that the soldiers, because of his innocence, tricked him many times by their absence from the dormitory at nights and by not taking orders from him during the distribution of duties. This experience was considered by St. Calabria as: *“The best time of my life.”* To the surprise of all who defined the call up in military as a waste of time, and the superiors who thought John’s dream to be a priest will be tested or even vanish, he learned to attend the sick with joy in the two years of service. He experienced how often there is a change in a hard attitude of people who, when in their physical pain lowered their masks, they became closer to God and to others.

His companions, soldiers and superiors were pleased to be in John’s company, and they could count on him for their every need. His stunning charity was laudable. With his affection, he conquered all and no one dared to utter a cruel word or indecent speech in his presence. Even the soldiers were surprised and exclaimed how one could remain innocent like Calabria. Major Darra replied, *“you all count on your personal strength while Calabria counts on God’s blessings through his daily Communion and weekly confession”* (Gadili,1999, pg. 58).

St. Calabria called the Military Hospital where he had served so well, *“my hospital”*. He always defined those years in the hospital as *“the best three years of my life, those passed in my hospital”*. In the Hospital there were some patient with serious health conditions and frequently Calabria would call them to return to God.

1.3.3 The first calabrian hospital: “The Citadel of Charity”

II

The first Calabrian Hospital named today “Don Calabria- Sacro Cuore di Negrar”, in Italy, begun with Fr. Calabria himself, when on December 21st 1933, he officially received the property of the hospital from of the Episcopal Curia of Verona. Actually, at the time it was not properly a hospital, but just a small house for assistance to elder persons. This activity

was started with the local parish priest Angelo Sempreboni, who before dying at the age of 53 was visited by St. Calabria. With a pleading look and squeezing tightly his hands, he seemed to ask Fr. Calabria not to let go of this work. (M. Bonora, 2013).

After the death of Fr. Sempreboni the new parish priest Fr. Beltrame, also begged John Calabria to take care of the house with the 25 elder persons living there. Surely, Calabria accepted because this charitable activity deserved to go on continuing to help the suffering and needy people.

About the small house he inherited, Calabria used to say: *«The dear House of the Sacred Heart of Negrar, destined by God himself, to become great, to welcome into its doors so many sick brothers, who otherwise would languish, lacking the means to be admitted in other hospitals. Through our sisters, nurses and doctors witnessing Christian charity to many as possible; the troubled and upset were brought back to our Lord Jesus Christ.* (Calabria, 1942).¹⁰

For him, it was just a small divine cell where he could envision God in his providence; but God had bigger ideas for the hospital. Calabria did predict that one day it would become “The **Citadel of Charity**”, where Lord would do well for those in need. What did St. Calabria mean to say with the expression “The **Citadel of Charity**”? It is not so difficult to interpret what these words mean, however in his thoughts, it had a specific meaning:

- the purpose was to welcome through its doors many sick brothers, who otherwise would languish without means
- the desire to highly appreciate and feel a special belonging with "our" nuns, nurses and doctors;
- the enhancement of "Christian charity" in assisting the sick
- the aim to “bring back Jesus into the society”

¹⁰ Cfr. S.G. Calabria, *Lettera XXVIII*, 6 febbraio 1942, APSDP, fondo d, Calabria/lettere circolari a confratelli, fl. 1, c. 9, b. n. 1703; vedi anche M. Gadili, *San Giovanni Calabria*, cit., p. 194; Lettera di Calabria ai religiosi, 6 febbraio 1942, oggetto di riflessione al II Capitolo generale, 28 febbraio-9 marzo 1961.

“*The Citadel of Charity*” was always in the heart of Calabria even when he was far from the hospital; his heart was always in touch with this place and its mission. He wrote to Fr. Raimondo Bettini in 1952: “*The Hospital of Negrar must have especial splendor, very specific, such as the star that guided the three Kings during the Holy Night. The Hospital has called and to led souls to Jesus. All those involved will accomplish this mission by their actions, prayers and virtues. Therefore, God’s grace will bless the knowledge of the doctors, the difficult jobs, the nurses and everything done for the good of the hospital. By caring for the body, we may gain also spiritual health* (Calabria, 1952).¹¹ In fact, the mission with the sick has expanded to Brazil (Hospital Divine Providencia), Africa (Hospital Divina Providencia) and Philippines (Brother Francisco Perez Clinic).

SUMMARIZING

Calabrian insights for our Health Care Model part III

Part III of the history is important to show from Calabria’s experience that with his father sickness and death his found courage; he is teaching us how we must to take care of the person with love and dedication as well as persistence and perseverance. Still being a young boy of 12 he took care of his father at home and in the hospital as if he was an adult, always supporting his father and his mother till the end. It is a very enlightened element for our holistic model of care; it reminds us that, when taking care of people, we are invited to have the same attitudes, and take care of each person as if they were our own family. These points of St. Calabria’s actions will be found in our health workers as they enhance the same virtues of courage e dedication.

St. Calabria’s experience in the Military Hospital also has many things to tell; in a short time he became an expert in nursing, living a deep experience with the sick and considering this time the “best time of his life”. Looking back to his experience in the hospital we can identify some

¹¹ Bettini Don Raimondo *3007 Festa dei Sette Dolori della Madonna, [15-9]-1952; riferimenti anche nella *LETTERA XXVIII*, 6 febbraio 1942 di Don Calabria.

points that enlighten our model such as the interests for the patients, sacrifice (he used to renounce his resting time), clinical capabilities (in short time he learned to be a nurse), courage to face contagious diseases...etc. Other important teaching from this time that was included in our model is his spiritual assistance to the sick; with St. Calabria no one was allowed to die without reconciling oneself, with God and others; how he used to say “*we have to save his soul*”. In order to provide spiritual healing and peace Calabria worked hard with love and creativity according to the need of each single patient. That is why; today our hospitals cannot be called “Calabrian Hospital” if it is missing this aspect of the assistance. For this strong reason our model insists to include the spiritual aspect of the holistic care, taking care of the person in her complexity.

The last point of this part is also a big light for our model; it is Calabria’s experience in the first Calabrian Hospital named “Sacro Cuore-Don Calabria” (Sacred Heart- Don Calabria) in Negrar, Italy. All of his writings refer to this hospital because logically it was the only one that he lived close to; but we can be assured that if he could be present in other Calabrian Hospitals today he would desire and determine the same line of assistance. This part of his life enlightens our model; it especially teaches us the principal characteristic and objective of our Calabrian Hospitals which must be “*the citadel of charity*”. Its adjective was included in our model in the environmental dimension. Is very clear that his desire in which he said that our hospital must be a space of charity where the poorest find solutions for their problems, where the health personnel are appreciated and feel special belonging, where patients can find Christian charity and the presence of Jesus. It is a big challenge for us to think and to work in order to accomplish in our hospitals this kind of environment according to the example and desire of our founder.

1.4 St. John Calabria relationship with health workers

Our Founder was always praying and invoking heavenly blessings and graces for those who are Jesus' collaborators, namely, the doctors and all the others health workers, in order to provide physical and spiritual benefits to those who come to our hospital. According to him "*blessed are those who came to work in his hospital, they will be blessed in the present and in the future, they will be the continuators of this mission. It is a great pleasure to work and to expend life and time in order to accomplish God's plan, and how beautiful a reward will wait for as in paradise*" (John Calabria, 1950).¹² In the following lines, we will see how his relationship was with the health workers, specifically, the doctors and nurses in the hospitals. Other points will reflect how the Calabrian Health Sector considers the health workers present in our hospitals.

1.4.1 St. John Calabria and the doctors

The first thing is his great admiration for the doctors because according to him the doctors have one divine work which is *the 'Mission' to deal with the health of the body, like the priest who cares for the health of the soul: both contribute for the salvation of the person according to the plan of Divine Providence. Christ - he stated - "has in the doctor the 'powerful hand' that draws life," the divine finger "that restores the Health. Both, doctor and priest are ministers of Christ: one for the life of the spirit, the other for that of the body, they complete each other'* (Calabria, 1950).¹³

¹² S.G. Calabria, *Lettera a fratel Consolaro*, 3 agosto 1950, APSDP, fondo d. Calabria, lettere a confr., fl. 3, c. 38, b. 8410/a.

¹³ S.G. Calabria, *Medico sublime missione*, in *Il medico, l'ammalato, il dolore nella mente e nel cuore di Don Giovanni Calabria*, APSDP, Fondo Congr. / apost. inf. fl. 2, c. 3, settembre 1950; APSDP, ummi, fl.2, pp. 1-4.

Therefore, the doctors have not only a simple profession, but it is a vocation, a mission and something divine.¹⁴ They are the first of God's collaborator to protect, to take care of life. For our Founder the doctors are the ministry for life. He had really a great steam and love for them, to the point to affirm: *"I have no doubt that after the Divine mission of the priest; the doctor is the noblest profession that the creator can entrust to a man on earth"* (Calabria, 1949).¹⁵

1.4.2 St. John Calabria and the nurses

There are few letters or references regarding the nurses directly, but we know that in the many writings addressed to health workers, all the nurses were included. In a specific way, these statements report his thoughts and desires regarding the nurses and their relationship with the patients: For Calabria the nurses have a noble mission, a special vocation such as the doctors and the priests, so is it also a divine work, caring for the soul and body. He said: *"Oh, even if those who assist the sick consider the nobility of their mission, of their special vocation, similar to that of the Physician, to that of the priest! How much comfort they would feel, especially in the most difficult moments they may face! Unfortunately, it is easy to let yourself be overcome by the routine and be distracted by endless other worries, but blessed are they who try not to lose sight of the suffering Jesus in every Brother whom they assist; will be certain and sure to participate in great promises of Him who said: "I was sick and you came to visit me ... Whatever you did with the smallest of my brothers, you did it to me"* (Calabria, 1953).¹⁶

The nursing profession is something wonderful and divine in Calabria's thoughts, for him it goes beyond the understanding of themselves. He also used to ask trust, goodness and gratitude for the nurses, and look to them as those who love the sick and not only as a simple employee. John

¹⁴ APSDP, *G. Calabria il dolore* op. cit., 7 marzo 1953, fondo Congr. ummi, fl. 4, , p. 2-14.

¹⁵ S.G. Calabria, *Lettera ai medici*, 28-7-1949.

¹⁶ S.G. Calabria, *Il dolore alla luce della fede*, * 6025Verona, 7-3-1953.

Calabria (1953) instructed the sick about how-to behavior with the nurses: *"During the illness we try to be patient, not selfish, we do not pretend that everyone should be always available to us. We think that others need the same care and the same attention that we wish for us"* in the same letter he continues to ask: *"Let's be kind, patient and generous. Let us not think that nurses are unaware of our pain, they suffer with us, close to us, day and night, along with our family members, the people dearer to our hearts."*

Through these writings, we can understand how Fr. Calabria had clearly in his mind the profile and mission of the nursing profession; that's why he was very grateful to the nurses for their services. Here is another testimony from one of his letters: *«Let us always raise our prayer to the Lord as an expression of gratitude and thankfulness towards them; let us keep a perennial and grateful memory of their services.*

In conclusion, we can say that the relationship between nurse and patient should be based above all on love, trust, respect, gratitude, recognition and so on. By means of faith, the nurse is able to see the patient as the same Jesus suffering on the cross, and then he/she is invited to integrate the care for the body with particular attention also for the spiritual need of the patient, drawing strength from faith.

1.4.3 How the Calabrian Health Care Sector considers the health workers today?

In the past as well as in the time of Calabria the figure of the doctors and nurses were in evidence in the health sector, but with the evolution of the science and the health care itself in our days this is no more the same. Actually, we use the word team-work, that is, a group of professionals that work together with collegiality, in which each one gives an important contribution according the profession and specialty, each one is indispensable, all working toward the patient wellbeing. In this team-work we can include: administration, managers sectors, doctors, nurses, technician radiologist, technician of laboratory, pharmacist, engineer...etc.

In our Calabrian Health Sector, the team-work is considered as “Calabrian Collaborators” that is the ones who collaborate with us in the accomplishment of our mission with the sick; they are part of our mission, without them the mission loses important elements in its nature and activities. But they are not considered only instruments; they are also protagonists of the Calabrian mission in itself. That is why they have important and especial participation in our activities as administrators, directors, managers, coordinators...etc.

To be a “Calabria collaborator” does not mean only be a coordinator or director, but this is addressed to all those present and working in such way in our Calabrian activities; it included the cooks, the watchman, the cleaning personal, the drivers, the secretary, the volunteers or any other kind of service. In synthesis, Calabrian collaborators are all those present in our houses, in our activities that are instruments in the accomplishment of our mission and we are invited to work together with them; they are our most important “human resource”, with which we are invited to work together and united be witnesses to God’s love and providence.

SUMMARIZING

Calabrian insights for our Health Care Model part IV

We can conclude this part by saying that St. Calabria had in mind a complete profile of the Calabrian health workers and their mission. It is a great insight for our model, and we include it in point about the health workers. According Calabria their profession is not a simple work, but a vocation and mission received from God. It gives an especial meaning to our model, that is, the Calabrian health workers must live and see their work as a divine mission and to take care of the person in a holistic way. This is another reason why we include in our model the spiritual dimension, which must be part of our assistance. For Calabria the health worker takes care of the body as the priest takes care of the soul, but both are necessary for the wellbeing of the person.

An important point for our model is that we learned from Our Founder the appreciation of our health workers. He was very grateful for their service and assistance to the suffering, to the point to recommend prayers of

thanksgiving for their presence. Even though, according to him it will never be enough to repay their service: *“We can never fairly repay their assistance in the most critical moments of our suffering: we must not forget their words of faith, confidence, understanding, their serene smile, which descended into the most intimate of our heart to give us that inexplicable happiness, of paradise, given only by the pain accepted with Jesus and out of love.”*

In this part of the history Calabria helped us to understand that the relationship between our Calabrian health workers and the sick should be based first on love, trust, respect, gratitude, recognition, and in a simple word; a holistic care. By faith, we must see the patient as Jesus himself suffering on the cross of sickness, and we are invited to go beyond the care of the body and to look also for the healing of the soul.

1.5 St. John Calabria experiences and contact with the sick

1.5.1 The “Pious Union for the assistance of the poor sick people

St. Calabria was really in love with the apostolate for the sick especially to the very poor. His experience in the military service made more and more a deep fascination for them. He did not want it to stop. So, how to continue this benevolent work for the welfare of the body and the soul of sick people? The first answer to this question was the foundation of the **“Pious Union for the assistance of the poor sick people”**.

As a theology student, with two of his theology friends, Pio Tinazzi and Pio Visentini, and two lay people, Alessandro Marchese Da Lisca and Francesco Conte Perez, Calabria was moved by love to the poorest and expressed it with the following Statute:

- I. By a private initiative, a charitable Institution arose in Verona under the direction of the priest to give comfort to the sick that are poor.*

- II. *Its goals are to visit and to give alms to the sick especially those who are poor and abandoned in the Hospital and at the Nursing Homes.*
- III. *The visit is made every week, on Thursday, during the visiting hours of the said institutions. During the visiting hours they will try to console the sick, stir up in them the Christian resignation and the desire for heaven.*
- IV. *The founders and the benefactors compose the Institution.*
- V. *The founders, with the people known to them, will propagate the Institution looking for benefactors; they will collect the offerings which are properly registered for the annual report, and every Thursday they will visit the sick at the Nursing Homes or in the Hospital; and if possible, according to the future development of the Institution, they will visit also those at home and who are in need.*
- VI. *The benefactors will hand over the offerings to the founders.*
- VII. *The spiritual favors enjoyed by the benefactors together with the founders are:

 - a. *The daily prayers for the beneficiaries.*
 - b. *A Mass of the Resurrection, which is not intended only for the deceased benefactors, but also for the deceased beneficiaries. This Mass will be celebrated in a time and place to be established and the offerings for the Mass will be taken from the collection fund.**
- VIII. *Each benefactor can have access, if he wishes, to the yearly report of Accomplishments of the Pious Institution during the same year (Foffano, 1966, p.71-73).*

St. Calabria and his companions were not rich; thus, they needed to raise funds to support this activity. They agreed among themselves to ask for offerings from the well-to-do families known to them and whatever they were be able to gather would be use for that purpose.

They started with the Civil Hospital and the homes and then extended to the Military Hospital and the Psychiatric Hospital. They worked with great

charity and attention to the poorest giving them a complete assistance based on their physical and spiritual needs, also financially helping especially to the most abandoned. That is, they were giving a complete holistic care, showing to the health workers what was defined by the Nurse-Theorist, Patricia Benner: *“nurses deal not only with normality and pathophysiology but also living with social and body skills in promoting health, growth, and development and in caring for the sick and dying”* (Benner, 2006, p. 17).

The founders wanted to continue the Institution but unfortunately when the theology students reached the priesthood, due to obedience and ministry, they could not continue and the Institution did not go beyond the four years of theological studies.

1.5.2 Apostolate of the sick

St. Calabria with so much love and dedication served the suffering people through the Apostolate of the sick. He was inspired when one day reading a newspaper, ‘Osservatore Romano’ (first months of 1930) a short story, which concerned the ‘Apostolate of the Sick’. The movement was born in the Netherlands from the initiative of the parish priests of Bloemendaal, in the Diocese of Haarlem. *“This was Providence’s way of leading the foundation of the Italian branch of the same movement. After an exchange of letters with the Netherlands, the section was entrusted to Calabria who put it in the hands of this poor writer (Albano Bussinello), and wanted its Italian headquarters at the monumental Sanctuary of the Madonna di Campagna (Verona), directed, by its Priests”* (Albano Bussinello, 1935). It was founded in Italy precisely on May 24, 1930, and in a very short time it spread over Italy. In August of that year the first message was sent and the number of members numbered 2000. Calabria dedicated 10 years of his life to it with great love, compassion and service to the suffering (1930-1940).

Concretely what was the Apostolate of the sick?

Let us start with the conditions to be a member: to belong the Apostolate of the Sick one does not need money, or titles, but only three things worth

more than all the gold of the world, namely: 1) To accept the suffering brought by the sickness, from the hand of God; 2) To bear it with Christian spirit in union with Jesus' sufferings on the cross; 3) Offer it to God for the coming of his Kingdom ... this is a truly Christian work. In this way the sick brothers feel that they are not hopeless, they understand that they may do more, although bedridden, than others in their active and feverish life and that their pains suffered in union with the pains of Jesus Christ on the Croce, are those that ultimately save the world (Albano Bussinello,1935).

What was the objective?

In this apostolate the apostles are the sick people, who follow Jesus as a suffering person offering to him all their pains and difficulties. So, the patient is invited to accept and live the suffering as an offering for his good and for the salvation of the world. The means are the free acceptance of the suffering, the prayers, and the offering of it for the Church, for the Pope and for the souls.

The patient also obtains important advantages: 1) good disposition; 2) deep consolation; 3) Peace of mind. All of these together, can have a good influence on patient's physical conditions...even the healing.

Who is the member?

The sick person is the one to make a request with name, address, time of sickness and there is no need to pay anything. With great trust in the providence the founder was supporting the activities by free donations from the patients, from their relatives or good friends and benefactors.

After registering the patient receives a small certificate with a prayer to pray every day in order to meditate and internalize the spirit and identity of their Apostolate. They receive also a blessed inscription that reminds them of their commitments and the invitation to sanctify their suffering. Each member received monthly message, taken from the contemporary liturgy and feasts, which will strengthen the spirit of the Apostolate and will make the infirm grow in the sentiments of faith, of resignation, zeal,

etc. As a friend that will never abandon them, giving consolation, peace and comfort knowing that someone is looking for them.

Which kind of activities did they do?

The common activities with the sick was: 1) Monthly message; 2) Special Mass for the sick; 3) Communion; 4) Home visits, reflection (words of consolation), dialog and comfort.

The apostolate of the sick is a strong spiritual and moral support for the sick but it never prevents them to continue their health treatment, on the contrary, they are encouraged to follow all that is recommended by the health professionals.

Testimonies of patients regarding the monthly message of the Apostolate

1. Urago Mella (Brescia) 10.10.30: *"I'm deeply moved by the concern and the loving kindness they have towards us, the unfortunate sick people Thanks for the wonderful letters that are of such great comfort."*

2. From Vicenza- 1.6.31: *"We are very enthusiastic about the letters and I thank the Lord for have given us a beautiful way for the conversion of sinners. When I suffer, I like to reread those letters that impart strength in suffering."*

3. From Limonta (Como)- 16.6.31: *"It has been a year now that I joined the Apostolate of the Sick and I enjoy knowing that with suffering we can bring souls to Jesus. I always wait with great expectation to receive the friendly letters: it's a consolation to know I'm remembered!"*

1.5.3 U.M.M.I.: Italian Medical Missionary Union

The Italian Medical Missionary Union (U.M.M.I) is an ONG recognized at the European level and at International level adhered to the Focsiv

(Federazione Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale Volontario), located in Negrar, Italy. The objective of the Organization is *"to work for the complete and total health of the most deprived, particularly in the countries less advanced, in a spirit of collaboration, to contribute to their integral development in full respect of their dignity and freedom"* (M. Gecchele, 2013, p 221).¹⁷

The U.M.M.I was founded in 1933, in accordance with Fr. John Calabria, by Fr. Diodato Desenzani, who was an Italian missionary doctor inspired by the nursing sisters of Saint Anna of Lucerna and wanted to found the "Società di Ausiliare Sanitarie". Talking about it among some of his friend-doctors, they themselves became the first ones to serve and work for the sick that were most deprived.

Fr. Diodato Desenzani had been collaborating with Fr. Calabria for many years; he had begun to follow the activities promoted in favor of poor and orphan children by Fr. Calabria since 1905, and to orient himself some years later towards the missionary call.

In 1933, Fr. Diodato presented a draft of statute to a group of friend-doctors from Verona: the purpose was to help the missions with the technical, material and personal contribution for the benefit of the sick, sending medicines, medical supplies, instructions and advice and besides to prepare health personnel (M. Gecchele, 2013, p 223).¹⁸

U.M.M.I. and St. Calabria life and mission

U.M.M.I was and is until now an autonomous union, but at its foundation the group needed a support for assistance and spiritual guidance as mentioned by its founder Fr. Desenzani, 1947 *"As far as intend to preserve its autonomy, its features and its specific character, UMMI cannot exist in isolation but wants and must rely on a missionary institute, it is a question of life and death... the organization just asks for assistance*

¹⁷ M. Gecchele, 2013; *Statuto*, 1991, art. 2; libro, p. 221.

¹⁸ M. Gecchele, 2013; AUN, 2, estratto dalla *Rivista Medica per il Clero*, Voce Ummi, 31 luglio 1938, libro p. 223.

and spiritual support” (Desenzani , 1947).¹⁹ So, U.M.M.I searched in Verona for a religious Institution, and having a meeting among the coordinators, they decided to ask support to the Congregation of the Poor Servants of Divina Province, precisely Calabria’s Institution. In this way there was born a bond between UMMI and Calabrian Institution, which persists until today.

Already in 1938, Fr. Calabria made an appeal to all those willing and wanting to consecrate themselves to the Opera as Religious and vote now, as consecrated persons, all their activity to the UMMI, and to others who wished to commit themselves to serving in the missions for a certain period of time.

On January 07, 1941 the PSDP Congregation (counselors’ decisions) accepted UMMI as a branch of the Institution and on June 01, 1941 the UMMI officially became part of Calabrian Institution. St. Calabria has always looked to UMMI as a great gift of the Divine Providence, and has followed it with great interest and love. He, himself expresses: *“Is indispensable, however, for its progress and for future developments, a solid foundation and a sure support. From his part he would gladly see UMMI inserted on the trunk of our Congregation”* (Calabria, 1940).²⁰

Currently, UMMI is located in Negrar, Italy, in the same compound where the Calabrian’s Hospital named Don Calabria-Sacro Cuore di Negrar is located. From here they are connected with the Congregation Worldwide helping and supporting all the Calabrian’s Health care activities, such as, the Hospitals and any activity related with health care according their goals and objectives previously mentioned. Moreover, the UMMI carries out an independent activity in some mission countries which targets projects in the field of prevention, health care and socio-health development.

It was a great intuition of St. Calabria to accept UMMI as part of the Institution and make it a fit instrument of God’s love and providence

¹⁹ D. Desenzani, *Lettera a Pittoni*, 31-7-1947, APSDP, Fondo Corrispondenti, Desenzani, fl. 147, c. 533/17.

²⁰ S.G. Calabria, *Lettera all’Ummi*, Verona, 23-11-1940, APSDP, ummi, fl. 3.

towards the most needed sick and suffering people, once more he showed his big sensitivity toward them.

SUMMARIZING

Calabrian enlightenments for our Health Care Model -Part V

From Calabria's experience in the "Pious Union for the assistance of the poor who are sick" we extracted many and important points for our holistic model, in which we can really understand our founder's true desires and intentions regarding health care. First of all, he is teaching us how we have to work with love and a special attention to the poorest sick; it was what himself did, always looking for those most in need materially and spiritually. So, once more he called our attention on the holistic care that we must accomplish in our Calabrian Hospitals. He and his companions used to ask our benefactors to help materially those needed as well as providing spiritual assistance such as the sacraments and Christian initiation, not allowing someone to die without reconciliation. In our holistic model, the center of our assistance is the poorest and most abandoned as our founder showed us with his example and actions.

It is good to enhanced some of this experience with the relationship between Calabria, the benefactors and the sick. They were connected in a dynamic way, that is, the sick dedicates daily prayer for the benefactors as a sign of recognition and thanksgiving, and Fr. Calabria offered daily Mass for the benefactors and for the sick. Another interesting point was the desire of Fr. Calabria to be transparent in the financial reports to the benefactors; all of them could have access to the yearly report about the Institution activities and accomplishments.

"The Apostolate of the sick" founded and lived in Italy by Fr. Calabria has important keys for our holistic model centered above all on the spiritual aspect, that is as he did, we must have elements like the pastoral activities that helps the patients to transform their suffering and sickness experiences into one instrument of salvation for the church and for the world, in which each patient is called to offer himself / herself as a free offering to God for the good of the entire humanity. Practically, we should have a pastoral accompaniment for the patients, supporting them in giving

them meaning to their suffering and to let them become an apostle of Christ whom offer His pain and suffering for the salvation of the world. This apostolate is very important also because it can provide to the patient a good disposition to face sickness, deep consolation, peace of mind and which all of this together can promote physical healing. Once more we call attention on our model about the spiritual aspect, which commits us to provide an effective and organized pastoral works in our Calabrian Hospitals; it is an indispensable part of Calabrian Assistance inspired by Calabria himself.

“The UMMI (Italian Medical Missionary Union) was received and incorporated in Calabria’s Institution as a great gift from Divine Providence. He used to consider and according to him it was a great instrument of God’s love because it helped the poorest and needed people around the World. It enlightens our model, clarifying the kind of attention we must give for the institutions that we have incorporate in our Calabrian Hospitals such as UMMI or others. Let us remember that according to our founder and the history, our first mission is to give spiritual support to them; that is to support them with our Calabrian-Christian spirituality, it is his command for us; several times he mentioned the word support and to help them to have a solid foundation. As a Calabrian Hospital we cannot forget, first to manifest our recognition and gratitude for what they do for us and for the poorest; and second to support them constantly with our prayers, spirituality and building a good relationship based on transparency, respect and responsibility.

1.6 Some special personal experiences

Fr. Calabria used to go on Thursday and Sunday to console the infirm and not just by words (perhaps he had in his mind already fixed on hospital work).

We want to report just some special experiences that will help us to understand how Fr. Calabria approached the sick:

1.6.1 “I have to take care of the patients”

A Major in the Military hospital returning from an inspection in the dormitory, met Calabria along the stairs: “*Soldier Calabria, you are detained!*” “*Why?*” replied the unaware and surprised soldier. “*Because your place is in the dormitory and you are out of your place*”. “*But I have no time: I have to take care of the patients! I will accept the detention...but we are going to see each other in God’s tribunal because this detention is unfair!*” (Foffano,1966, p. 44).

1.6.2 “We have to have his soul”

In the Military Hospital Fr. Calabria was taking care of one soldier who was condemned unjustly and put in the prison for three years, where he contacted tuberculosis. That is why inmate nurtured a deep animosity towards those who had condemned him and he refused to receive the sacraments. Then the young Calabria said: “*we have to save his soul before it is too late!*” he went to talk to the soldier and said: “*So, you really have no intention to forgive? You’re a Christian! You cannot risk dying as a sinner!*” The soldier answered: “*You see, maybe I would have gotten sick at home too, in Sicily, but at least I would have my mother near, I would not have died here, alone, far from my loved ones.*” Calabria replied: “*You might not have your mother here but you’re not alone: you have us, your colleagues! We all care about you...*” The soldier replied: “*You’re right; you have always been my friend, almost like a brother. For the love of Christ, I forgive him, but you must promise me that after death, you’ll come to my grave and pray for me instead of my mother.*” The young Calabria promised: “*I promise you. Now you can die in peace.*” (Ferreira, R.A. et al, 2003). There after he did according to his promise.

1.6.3 He left him with much comfort

On 15th August 1951, Calabria was visiting the military hospital, when a nun gently whispered to him: “*Father, can you climb to the upper floor and give your blessing to the captain who is very sick and so depressed?*”

Then charity prevailed and supported by the brothers who accompanied him, he faced the new hard climb.

The sick man was in isolation room, because affected by advanced tuberculosis and have a little hope of being cured. He was depressed and suffering because some family problems and difficulties. Fr. Calabria said, *"I'll pray much for you; and you pray hard for me"*. *"But I don't know how to pray"* replied the man, *"Oh, I'm sorry. Prayer is needed indeed,"* added Calabria, the man had to confess! *I don't remember the prayers any longer!"* Now with your permission, *I'll send a brother here who will help you pray...and you Calabria said to the brother who was accompanying him- you'll come here in my name, you'll talk to him, you'll bring him comfort. In this way I'll be near you"*. *"Have faith, he said turning to the sick man, Jesus loves you very much. I bless you; I bless your loved ones. Pray hard for me. Yes. Yes, the Lord loves you!"* He left him with much comfort (Foffano,1966, p.52-53).

The patient came to know that priest was Fr. Calabria and then make his confession and the day after he received the communion. He recalled the prayers with the help from the brother assigned to him by Calabria and little by little he recovered. He was transferred to another place where he could get well and eventually returned to his loved ones. In this experience we can see how religion can play an important help to the patient 'healing process. According to Ehrlich (2011) additional faith and spirituality are believed to reduce stress and anxiety, improve coping, and increase optimism.

SUMMARIZING

Calabrian insights for our Health Care Model - Part VI

In this part we will focus on some experiences of Fr. Calabria that can be an example of holistic care in our Calabrian model, showing explicitly what it means and how our founder himself has demonstrated to us. He is a complete model of holistic care, in many and diverse personal experiences and taught us and left us as a valuable heritage on how to take care of our patients in a holistic way:

'I have to take care of the patient'

In this incident we can see the enormous importance he gave to the health of the patient, putting himself in risk; sacrificing and renouncing his time for rest, in order to be ready to help the people in need and to restore them to normal and healthy life.

'We have to save his soul'

We can see here, how the principal interest of Fr. Calabria in approaching the person was the well-being, not only physical but also spiritual. He had special sensitivity to perceive and understand it; it was a care that looked toward eternal life too. Through dialogue, listening and understanding he used to do it well, with simple words. His care for the person was based on the Person-Centered and firmly went to talk to the sick person questioning if he really had no intention to forgive, since he was a Christian, and so could not die as a sinner. Fr. Calabria was extremely worried about the patient soul, a worry that goes beyond mere physical matters. It is because he always wanted to offer the person the best thing that he can receive: "Eternal life".

In this part of his life Calabria made a commitment with the patient even after his death; the patient begged him to promise: "*you must to promise me that after death you'll come to my grave and pray for me instead my mother.*" And so, he did: "*I do promise ... you can die in peace.* So, we can see his capacity to offer comfort during the end of life.

Calabria had an astounding sensibility that helped him understand and respect the person with his/her feelings even the angry and troubled, offering kindness and attention. His attitude was also of expressing friendship and fraternity, at the point to be considered as brother by the patient. He had a special ability to convince the patients to reflect, thus to change ideas and to take new decision for their good, assuring them understanding. In this way he was living a therapeutic relationship with the patient, in which he was treating the person as an individual.

'He left him with much comfort'

First of all, he approached the patient who was in the isolation room because he was affected with tuberculosis. Fr. Calabria was not afraid of contamination...How did he approach this patient? He understood that the patient was in need of something such as prayer and confession. But the patient did not know how to pray, so Fr. Calabria sent to him a brother to pray and stay with him, giving comfort and companionship. But our founder had a great respect and kindness and before sending the brother he said: "*with your permission I will send the brother*" he respected the feeling of the sick. When he could not visit the sick he sent the brother and, in this way, he was near to the patient.

In this experience we can see also as Father encouraged the patient to have faith because Jesus loves him, so it is important to trust in Jesus. He also used to bless the patient and his family asking always for prayers for himself. The patient came to know about Father because he did not know that the priest was Calabria and after he recovered also through the prayers of the brother assigned by him, the man made his confession, received communion and finally went back to his home.

From these experiences we can highlight for our model the following values Father taught: 1) Courage to approach a contaminated patient; 2) He did not force the patient to accept the brother's help but asked his permission with respect and kindness; 3) The ability to interpret even spiritual needs, 4) The ability and creativity to solve the patient's problems; 5) The capacity to give hope and trust in Jesus; 6) The capacity to sacrifice and renounce himself for the good of the patients; 7) The deep interest and attention for the patient's health; 8) The readiness for the patient's needs; 9) The therapeutic relationship with the patient; 10) To treat the person with individuality and singularity...etc.

II. CALABRIAN HEALTH CARE MODEL

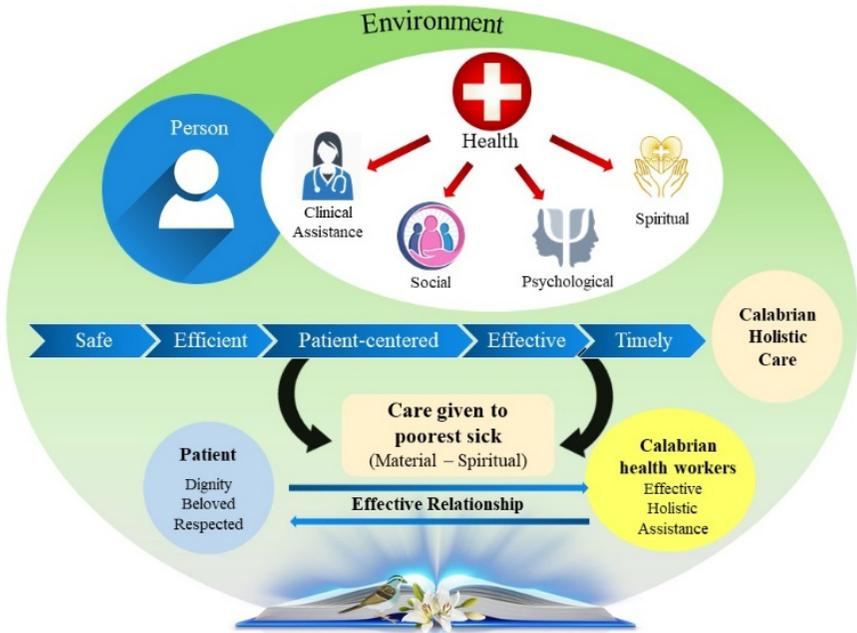
2.1 General objective

To promote a Calabrian Health Care based on St. John Calabria's life and works, in order to keep alive his mission and spirituality with the sick through a holistic health care, with quality, efficiency, safety, effectiveness and patient centered in which they can experience God's love and His providential care.

2.2 Specific objectives

- a. **Person:** safeguard the dignity of the person worthy of respect and love as a son and daughter of God.
- b. **Health:** To promote health through a complete harmony and attention to all the person's dimensions: physical, psychological, social and spiritual
- c. **Environment:** to keep a Calabrian environment with Christian charity where the patients are welcome and can be conducted to Jesus.
- d. **Health workers:** to promote a holistic Calabrian health care in their services and works.

2.3 Calabrian Health Care Model



The Calabrian Health Care Model proposed by the data in reflection and analysis is the model previously presented, in which the domains are: environment, health and person. The base of the domains is the safety, efficiency, patient-centered, effectiveness and timely movement towards a holistic care, but a holistic care based on the professionalism and on the Calabrian spirituality. We have two evidence-based strategies: one is the patient and the other is the health workers care, all going towards the center of the Calabrian Assistance, that is, the poorest of the sick, who must be cared for in their material and spiritual needs. What does it mean? Starting from the domains the Calabrian health care model can be based on the environment, health and person.

Environment: In terms of Environment the data follows minor themes: Charity and love for the hospital, hospital oriented to God, welcoming hospital, hospital to admit the neediest patients, hospitals to witness Christian charity, hospitals that bring Jesus to the patients and to the society, the Calabrian Hospital should be a place with special splendor, the Calabrian Hospital is a conductor of souls to Jesus, the Calabrian Hospital appreciates its personnel, the Calabrian Hospital enhances Christian charity.

So, practically in the Calabrian Hospital the specific environment should be a welcoming, charitable and Christian place, where people can experience Jesus and turn back to him and to renew their faith. The Calabrian Hospital must appreciate the personnel and to receive all those who have no another possibility to be treated.

Health: In terms of health the Calabrian Health System should be based on the four (4) pillars: 1) Clinical assistance; 2) Spiritual assistance; 3) Social Assistance; and 4) Psychological Assistance. Fr. Calabria in his entire life took care of the person in her or his complete needs. Because in his understanding a healthy person is the one who is respected in all her or his dimensions: body, mind, soul and social environment; having the right to access health, food, house, family, study and job. From the data about health domains we found the following minor themes: the health must be taken care of with dedication; preference for the health of the poorest sick; the healthy must be take care of with charity, simplicity, competency, clinical ability to assist the most needed and abandoned; to give spiritual consolation and to answer the spiritual needs. It is clear how the Calabrian Health System must be based on the complexity and dignity of the person, considering all the aspects; in simple words we must give spiritual, social, psychological and clinical assistance rooted on the love, competency, clinical abilities, and attention to the patient's needs.

Person: The third domain according to the data the Calabrian Health Care is to assist each person with the followings minor themes: Comfort, capacity to encourage, spiritual comfort, presence, close relationship, the

spirit of fraternity(family), respect, kindness, support, capacity in solving problems, interest for patient needs (including spiritual needs), loyalty and comfort at the end of life. Therefore, many values and attitudes that give a specific characteristic to the Calabrian caring, especially, to promote the person's comfort (physic and spiritual), be present in the patient life while in the hospital, dealing with respect and kindness. It is important to promote a family environment and to provide comfort at the end of life.

Holistic care based on professionalism and Calabrian Spirituality:

Previously we said that in the base of the domains we have the safety, efficiency, patient-centered, effectiveness and timely necessary to promote a holistic care as Calabria used to do. For the Calabrian Hospital it is important to have competence with high quality of medical and diagnostic services, but at the same time we can't forget to have high quality of human and spiritual services if we really want to follow the founder example. The Calabrian holistic Care is completely based on Calabria's spirituality and example.

Patient and health workers:

Under this we have two points: Evidence based strategies - the patient and the health workers: These two Evidence-based strategies under each domain combined an effective relationship, that is, with love and respecting the dignity of the patients. With an assistance based on an effective holistic care, it can be the key to the success of the Calabrian health care model. The Calabrian care according to the data must be based on the following minor themes: agility in caring health; love for the hospital and health worker vocation and mission; sensitivity and understanding; availability, courage, efficiency, constancy and service; health worker is noble mission and special vocation; to see Jesus in the suffering brother/sister and genuine recognition of the health workers.

The poorest sick: And finally, the center of the Calabrian Health Care and the focus is the poorest sick people, on material and spiritual level. Fr.

Calabria used to pay attention to the person in her or his complete needs; he did not allow anyone to die as a person without God but to renew the faith and to go back to Jesus Christ and Christian life. Father also had such attention for the physical and material needs giving and providing whatever was necessary for the good of the patient.

The Bible with the bird and the lilies (Calabrian Symbols):

The Fundamental Rule of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Divine Providence is the person of Jesus Christ as revealed to us from the whole Gospel. Therefore, the practical rule for us is to follow Jesus as the Gospel show us (Constitutions N.1). It was determined by our Founder that he was the first one to experience and discovered in the Gospel the meaning and the center of the Calabrian Spirituality. One night when he couldn't sleep, he took the Bible and read the following evangelical passage:

“Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6: 25-34).

In this evangelical passage our Founder could experience deeply God's Paternity. He visualized a Father that knows his sons and daughters with their needs, a Father that takes care of his children in an especial way and provides everything for their good. Fr. Calabria really incarnated in his life this passage, above all, the fact that God is Father and knows all the needs of his children. It inspired him to conclude that having the same Father we are all brothers and sisters called to live the fraternity. In this way *"The specific mission of the Poor Servants is in search of the Kingdom of God. For us it comes true in our commitment in reawakening the faith all over the world together with the confidence in God-Father by all men. This can be obtained with a total abandonment to his Divine Providence, strenuously lived and clearly testified, in all the personal and communal vicissitudes and in the historical events in the world"* (Constitutions, n. 5) in other letter he said: *"I want to tell you, my dear brothers, that the true and genuine faith considers God not only like a creator and Lord, but above all like a Father. So, let us have faith in God's fatherhood and, for this reason, let us have unlimited confidence and filial abandonment to the Divine Providence. This is a specific characteristic of our Congregation, one of the teachings the Lord wants given to the world.* (Calabria, 1949).

Therefore, the Bible with the bird and the lilies means that we need to have faith and trust in God the Father of all and His loving providence, because if He cares for the birds and the lilies, much more will He take care of His loving daughters and sons. It must be the foundation and at the same time the objective of the mission in the Calabrian Health Care. That is, the Health Care field, as well as, the educational and others activities of our founders Congregation. It must announce it and let the clients experience in their lives God's paternity and His loving Providence.

2.4 Calabrian Health Care resources

1. Calabrian Health Workers (collaborators): The health workers are our first collaborators who help us in the accomplishment of our mission

with the sick by their presence, talents, professionalism and spirituality; without them our mission can't go on. They are "the Calabrian Collaborators" that is all the laity involved in our activities, and Calabrian Health Workers are all those working in our Calabrian Hospitals, that is the watchman, the pharmacist, the nurses, the doctors, the administrator, the cleaners, the cooks, the drivers, the radiologist, the managers...etc. All those who are doing any kind of work in our Calabrian Hospital environment and all of those who have the special mission to take care of the suffering brothers and sisters as taking care of Jesus himself.

2. Health Care Services:

In our Calabrian Health Model the care services are important instruments that will offer answers to our patient's needs. Health Care services means all the medical services available in our Calabrian Hospital, such as medical checkup with the different specialty as pediatric consultation, internal medicine, gynecologist, dental services, tropical disease, maternity, emergency services...etc. It is necessary to keep it updated with effectiveness, timely, efficiency, safety and patient centered and to realize it with a strong humanity and spirituality.

3.Diagnostic Services:

The diagnostic services mean all the technical medical services that we can offer to our patients, such as laboratory services, radiographies, electrocardiograms, magnetic resonance, gastro endoscopy ...etc. In our Calabrian health model, it is very important not only for the efficiency of our health services, but also because we can offer more possibilities to our patients to be treated in a complete way in our hospital, when most of the time they have difficulties to access other services in other hospital, so the possibility of diagnostic services mean to offer a service more complete and qualified to the poor.

4. Calabrian Spirituality:

The Calabrian spirituality means the way of Fr Calabria lived and believed; his life, his actions and his spirituality as a

Christian and priest. It means to live by faith and abandonment in the hands of God our Father and Mother's providence who knows his daughters and his sons with their needs and difficulties. Just as Fr Calabria was in our Calabrian Hospitals we are invited to revive this faith in our patients, helping them to experience God's love and his providence, help them to experience the joy to be his loving daughters and sons. In the end, our presence, our talents, our professionalism, our diagnostic services, everything in our hospitals must announce this, that is why the Calabrian spirituality is an indispensable instrument in our Calabrian Health Care Model. Without it everything lacks meaning.

5. Human, professional, and spiritual formation:

The formation is giving form, to our health workers in order to help them to live in such way to keep equilibrium between the human, professional and spiritual dimensions; because the human being is a complex system with different dimensions and to develop its complexity means to give attention to each one of them in order that our health workers can offer their services and talents with more capacity, efficiency, humanity and spirituality. In this way they can find a certain internal and external equilibrium that will permit us to qualify for the services and to create an environment where they can find joy and satisfaction; an environment based on human, professional and spiritual values and above all Calabrian spiritual values.

6. Calabrian Human and Spiritual Resource Sector:

This is the creation of a multidisciplinary team composed by a coordinator, a doctor, a nurse, a social worker, a priest or brother or other laity people that will be in charge to put into practice the Calabrian Health Care Model with its objectives. It must be connected and work with the four dimensions of the assistance: physical, psychological, spiritual and social in order to promote the Calabrian Holistic Care for the complete wellbeing of the patients.

2.5 Calabrian Health Care actions

2.5.1 *Person dimension*

To act with a concrete holistic health care, in which the patients have a complete assistance based on all dimensions: physical, spiritual, psychological and social.

Management with Persons: In our Calabrian health care model is indispensable the presence of the laity or as we use to say our “Calabrian collaborators”. They are the ones to continue and to concretize in their lives and work our Calabrian Philosophy and Spirituality. Looking in this way is not difficult to understand the importance to work closely with them, above all those who are included in the management sector, that is, all the managers and leadership that organize and follow the hospital activities. To work and include the management with people is the way to reinforce the accomplishment of our Calabrian Mission, for this it is necessary to have a formal Formation Plan about St. Calabria’s life, spirituality, mission...etc. At least a Calabria manager should know St. Calabria and his spirituality; exactly because they are a big “Human Resource” they must be the first to know it, in order to be protagonist in the accomplishment of our Calabrian Mission with the sick.

Synthesis schematic of Person dimension actions



2.5.2 Health dimension

To organize the Health system in four dimensions:

2.1. Clinical Assistance: to provide a medical service with quality and effectiveness in which the patient is the center of actions and decisions.

2.2. Psychological assistance: to offer psychological assistance in case it is necessary or at least to address the case properly for the best solution.

2.3. Spiritual Assistance: to provide spiritual assistance having in the Calabrian Hospital means and activities as spiritual guidance, space for prayers, religious activities, pastoral program with visit to the sick and radio programs in order to offer the chance for prayer and moment of spirituality. In the same way it is important to have a nursing service with spiritual needs, assessments and so provide the necessary solutions for the patients.

2.4. Social Assistance: to provide a social service in which the patients are accompanied in their social issues such as negligence from family, financial difficulties, or any kind of problem in this dimension, to have a social service officer available to talk and to listen the patients in order to assist their needs.

Synthesis schematic of Health dimension actions



Clinical assistance:
medical and diagnostic services patient centered



Psychological assistance:
to provide Psychological service if necessary



Social assistance:
for social issues , family negligence..etc.



Spiritual assistance:
spiritual guidance, space for prayers, religious activities, pastoral program, radio services, spiritual needs nursing assessment...ect

2.5.3 Environment dimension

To have an environment based on Christian Charity so as to promote the values of love, respect, listening, welcoming, mercy among others, in every service provided in the hospital from the reception to the nurses station, doctor, rooms, surgical rooms, administration office...etc. Moreover, to engage all the collaborators in promoting this kind of environment from the watchman, the cleaning staff, doctors, nurses etc.

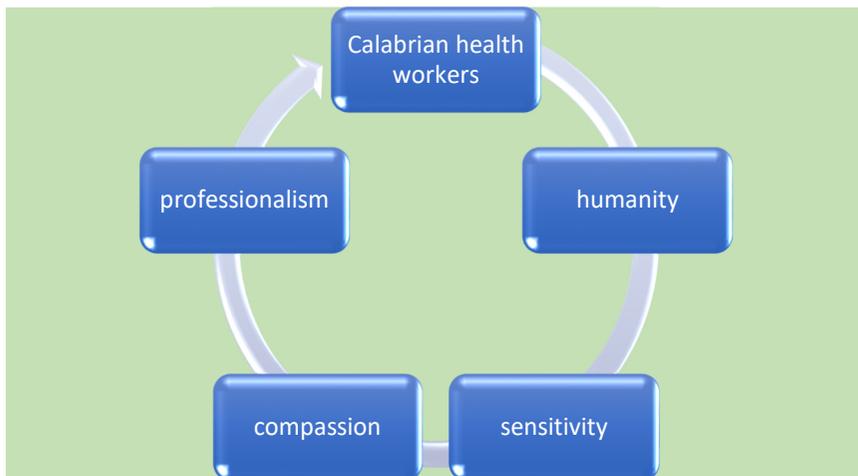
Synthesis schematic of Environment dimension actions



2.5.4 Health worker dimension

To form and promote a health work TEAM and all the collaborators with humanity, sensitivity, compassion and professionalism where everyone should love their profession as a special mission and vocation given by God based on a Calabrian holistic care.

Synthesis schematic of Health worker dimension actions



CONCLUSIONS

The Calabrian Health Care Model based on the life and works of St. John Calabria has a specific image and characteristic that we can see in his life history and from which we could identify many values and attitudes that can design a Calabrian assistance according to his desires, thoughts and actions. For his Congregation the Poor Servants of the Divine Providence brothers, sister and priests; he is the model, the light that must guide our way to take care of the sick.

The Calabrian Health Care Model is totally based on a charitable and Christian environment, where each patient would experience Jesus' love and presence through a holistic care, in which people receive clinical, social, psychological and spiritual assistance. And the person is considered like someone who has dignity and must be respected and loved, it may be possible through a concrete holistic care, in which, the effective relationship between patient and a holistic care is the key for a successful Calabrian health Care.

The Calabrian health care model can be an important instrument in our Calabrian Hospitals, through which we are invited to understand what it mean to take care of the sick according to St. John Calabria's model and example, this is the only way to keep alive his amazing spirit and charism. So, everyone in our Hospitals from the watchman to the doctors, or better, all the Calabrian collaborators are invited to be aware of and to internalize this model in order to act with professionalism and in the same time in accordance with our Calabrian style in their daily life, especially while working with our patients.

Therefore, St. John Calabria's contribution for the Health Care lets us understand that only a Holistic assistance can promote the complete well-being of the patients; although he was not familiar with nursing theories, he could live by faith, intuitions and with his personal virtues, which today science say: "The holistic practice is built on the philosophy that all elements in life are connected; self, nature, spirit and others. All aspects influence the other and can impact the overall health of a patient (Mariano,

2007). And St. John Calabria can also tell us that a complete holistic care is concerned about the souls, even if the persons who stray from God are important to try to bring them back to Jesus, helping them to face the suffering or the death in peace as a believer who trust in God.

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POOR·SERVANTS
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Congregazione Poveri Servi della Divina Provvidenza
- Amministrazione Generale -
Via San Zeno in Monte 23 - Verona
amministrazione.generale@doncalabria.org /
www.doncalabria.org