

The Servant of God Giulio Castelli

1846-1926

Father Castelli was born of a rich family in Turin on June 27, 1846. Educated in the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, he soon felt attracted to it and, at the age of 19, entered the Congregation, where he finished his theological studies and was ordained a priest on March 13, 1869.

He was an incomparable educator and, from the time he was still a cleric, became “master” of the young men of the Congregation and of many others who later on occupied important posts in Church and society.

A halo of holiness surrounded him wherever he went to do ministry. While still alive, he performed many miracles. He died on July 21, 1926, at Cava de’ Tireni.

Among the numerous mystical experiences he was gifted with were his encounters with the Angels. One night in 1905, Angelo Spagnuolo, a pupil in the minor seminary at Carpino, heard the sound of a marvelous song coming from the chapel. He got up, dressed and went to look through the keyhole: Father Giulio Castelli was in ecstasy before the altar of the Virgin Mary, elevated from the earth and surrounded by light and a multitude of Angels who were singing melodiously. Angelo Spagnuolo himself was miraculously healed by the Servant of God.

The seminarians and his confreres were convinced that Father Giulio Castelli often saw the Angels and that he had many visits from them, obtaining whatever he wanted for the good of souls. For this reason they did not hesitate to spy on him through the keyhole to surprise him while he was in ecstasy and, who knows, to also see the Angels, the way Angelo Spagnuolo did.

On July 27, 1902, around three o’clock in the afternoon, Father Castelli was seen through the keyhole in ecstasy by

the pupil Francesco Sica. Fr. Castelli was seated, with his mouth open, his head thrown back, as if he were looking up. His face was so pale that he seemed a corpse. The pupil was so frightened by this sight that he ran to find three companions, who testified to the truth of what they had been told. They thought something had



happened to him but didn’t notice any breathing in him. This state lasted around twenty minutes, and he did not change even with the sound of the organ that another pupil was playing in the nearby chapel. When Father Castelli came to himself, he rose as if nothing had happened. A pupil, who entered his room at that moment, found him reading his breviary.

The curious young students had surprised their teacher in ecstasy but hadn’t seen any Angel! Their fright was such that they no longer dared to look through the keyhole again. Giulio Castelli died in 1926 at the age of 80, with a reputation for holiness. His cause of beatification is ongoing.