

# Barquilla de la Santa Maria

BULLETIN of the Catholic Record Society -  
Diocese of Columbus

Vol. XXXV, No. 8

Aug. 30: San Feliciano

August, 2010



*SFI members at their lodge, the former Community House. Seated: John Blatieri, Vince Pelino; standing: Nello DelGreco, Sam Giammarco, Pat Rosati, Eugene Pelino, John Picora, Dom Tiberi, John Picora Jr., Eno Volpe. bottom row. (Courtesy of Ray Melchiorre)*

## The Società Fratellanza Introdacquese

The Società Fratellanza Introdacquese bought the former school and former Santa Lucia Community House on St. Clair Avenue from the Diocese of Columbus in the spring of 1952. It used the building as its lodge, with Pasquale (Pat) Rosati as director. (The story of Santa Lucia was given in our December, 2009 issue, including a photo of the building.) Though it did not continue all of the programs of the Santa Lucia Community House,

the SFI Lodge remained the heart of the Italian community on St. Clair Avenue, continuing to provide a site for social activities such as weddings and other parties, for several years.

This society had been formed in 1915 by Italian immigrants from the Introdacqua region who lived in the St. Clair Avenue vicinity. By that time there were about 75 families from Introdacqua living in Columbus. Introdacqua is a town in the Abruzzi

region, in the Appenines east of Rome. In Columbus, “On Sundays the usual passtime was to visit the homes of fellow countrymen or *paesani* and their conversation ultimately resulted in recalling the days in Introdacqua.” On the last Sunday of August, August 29, 1915, Pat Rosati dropped by the home of Pietro and Rosa Tamburrini, where Rosa’s brother Pasquale and Domenico DiCesare also lived. The talk centered about the big feast day in honor of San Feliciano that was going on that very day in Introdacqua.

Feliciano or Felix lived in Rome where, together with a bystander who was impressed by his courage, he was martyred in the year 304. He was the patron of Introdacqua and his remains were taken there from the Roman catacombs in 1755. His feast day is August 30, but he and St. Anthony of Padua are traditionally honored in Introdacqua with celebrations on the last Sunday of August.

The Introdacquese chatting in the Tamburrini home in 1915 decided then and there to form a group to honor San Feliciano with a Mass the following year and to celebrate as they did in their old home town. By September 20 over forty men had indicated their desire to take part in the group. The first meeting was held on September 26 at 34 East Rich Street, “promoted by” Pasquale Rosati, Feliciano D’Angelo, and Pasquale Di Cesare. The charter members were Feliciano D’Angelo, Giulio Di Benedetto, Carlo Carifa, Bernardino Melchiorre, Pasquale Rosati, Panfilo Trombetta (the first president), and Ubaldino Trombetta. They thought at first to name themselves the San Feliciano Society. But the purpose was expanded to include service to the community and to provide benefits to members who became afflicted with illness or injury or died with a family needing support. Thus a fraternal society was formed, the Società Fratellanza Introdacquese. They were incorporated on October 12 by Panfilio Trombetta, Feliciano D’Angelo, Pasquale Rosati, Carlo Carifa, Giulio De Benedetto, Berardino Melchiorre, and Ubaldino Trombetta.<sup>1</sup>

The original intention of the group was not forgotten and each year for over 75 years the San Feliciano Mass and celebration were held. The



*A 1950s version of the Columbus Bandasima or “Dum-Dum Lady.”  
(Courtesy of Rudy Notturniano)*

parade would march from St. Clair Avenue west on Second Avenue to Fourth Street, to Lincoln, and on west to St. John the Baptist Church.<sup>2</sup> Many of the Italian Catholics belonged not to St. Peter’s, the territorial parish, but to St. John’s, the Italian national parish. The parade—sometimes two—would be followed by “two band concerts conducted by Sam Giammarco—heavy on the Verdi, Rossini and Donizetti. And when it got dark, there were fireworks, a Cacavello [or Caccivallo] fireworks display that, to the minds of the youngsters of St. Clair Avenue, has never been matched since. Caccivallo lived east of the community house. From one rocket would come the Italian flag and the band

would play the Italian national anthem and the people would sing it. From another would come the American flag and the person who found it would be given \$5, donated by Pat Rosati. The day would end with what locally was called the “dum-dum dance.” As recalled by Richard Di Paolo, “They made this woman with hoops and they decorated it with papier-mache. And then what they would do is light this paper with fire and this one fellow, his name was Tony Susi, he’d do the dum-dum dance. And that thing would burn down...and it would get so hot...”<sup>3</sup> This, too, was a memory of Introdacqua, where the dance of the “Bandasima” was held at the end of the festival. The Bandasima, made of wood and colored paper, was put over a dancer and paraded in the piazza and streets, then was set on fire as the dancer whirled. She was said to have been the remnant of an ancient ceremony of pagan sacrifice—or a way of scaring children or atheists.

The SFI also took part in many civic and patriotic events and demonstrations. Many members answered the call to the colors in both world wars. Six gave their lives in the service, namely Sgt. Jack Booth, Seaman 1st Cl. Enio Centofanti, Sgt. William Colasante, Pvt. Domenic Frissora, Sgt. Daniel J. Tiberi, and Pvt. Frank Tiberi. From 1937 to 1940 a drill team performed at various lodge activities and ceremonies, under the direction of John Blateri. Festivals were held on the empty land behind the community house. There was food, games, dancing, and fireworks. In 1939 an Auxiliary was formed, “which has been a steadying influence in the promotion and planning of various events.”

As the younger folks prospered and moved away and the numbers of their elders declined, the need for the community center in the St. Clair area diminished. The SFI Lodge sold the old community house in the early 1960s. It was used by a succession of church communities until being razed in 1980.

The SFI still exists, serving its original beneficial purposes for over one hundred members. It never owned another lodge but over the years has met in a series of rented spaces, its current home being the rooms of the Abruzzi Club on Cleveland Avenue near Westerville.

*The SFI Song*, by Pat Rosati

Of the SFI we are members  
 And very glad we are  
 It’s a Lodge we love so well  
 And makes us feel grand  
 Friends of a high type, all we are  
 And we will be, till death do us afar.

It is a nature’s gift  
 For peoples to unite  
 So to enjoy things  
 They could not do otherwise  
 But so providing, that their ideas are fine  
 And always ready to do whatever is right.

Of a gentleman’s decorum  
 Our life shall ever be  
 Don’t mater where we are  
 Or whatever we may be  
 One for all and all for one  
 We shall ever be till death do us afar.

Thanks and Notes

Rudy Notturiano and Ray Melchiorre provided most of the information in this article, for which we thank them heartily.

- 1) 1969 Constitution & By-laws of the SFI
- 2) *Columbus Monthly*, June 1988
- 3) *ibid.*



**And it was beautiful!**  
**The Life of Rev. James Edward Bernard Walker, O.P., of Somerset**

by Anthony J. Lisska  
Maria Theresa Barney Professor of Philosophy  
Denison University  
(Concluded, from Vol. XXXV No. 7)

To Sinsinawa and Studying the Life of  
Samuel Mazzuchelli

Following his thirteen year stint as Master of Dominican students for the Province, in 1956 Father Walker was given a less strenuous assignment at the Dominican Sisters' Motherhouse in Sinsinawa in southwest Wisconsin, where he undertook the duties of chaplain and taught religion at St. Clara Academy. Not far removed from his historical studies, Father Walker also taught courses in Church History and what was called "Ecclesiastical Bibliography" at the Dominican theology *studium*, Aquinas Institute, located not far from the Sinsinawa mound in Dubuque, Iowa.

While Father Walker was stationed in Sinsinawa, the Dominican Friar in Rome charged with examining Dominican cases for possible



*Ven. Samuel Mazzuchelli, O.P. (1806-1864)*

canonization, the Postulator General, asked him to study the somewhat stormy relations of the Italian Dominican Friar, Samuel Mazzuchelli (1806-1864), with the Province of St. Joseph. Mazzuchelli held the title of "Missionary Apostolic" and was instrumental in the establishment of a short-lived, third, nineteenth century Dominican province, The Province of St. Charles, in Wisconsin. He also established a secular college, The College of St. Thomas Aquinas, in Sinsinawa, which functioned until it was suppressed in 1864. Mazzuchelli was also instrumental in the founding of the Sinsinawa Dominican sisters and their St. Clara Academy.

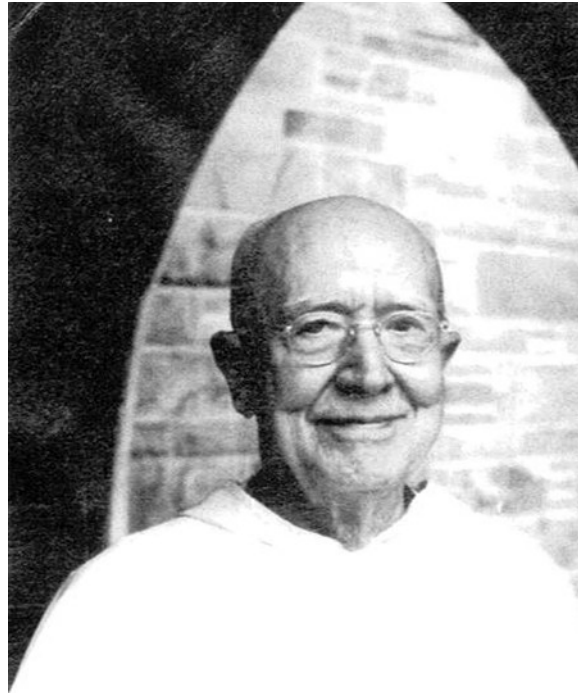
In 1964, the centenary year of Mazzuchelli's death, a diocesan commission was established for promoting the canonization of Mazzuchelli and Father Walker was appointed to chair it. Throughout major parts of the next two decades, Walker continued his painstaking research into the life and work of Mazzuchelli. The documents gathered during the first five year period were sent to Rome "under seal" in 1969. John Gerlach provided the following observations about this aspect of Father Walker's work:

In over ten years at Sinsinawa Fr. Walker became involved in the research required for the beginnings of Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli's subjection to the processes of beatification. He spent long afternoons with microfilmed documents clearing Mazzuchelli from his enemies and their jealousy and slandering stories. Of course Bernard was exacting in his readings and downright probative in his decisions. He passed these years in the wonderful rooms of "the priests' house," facing into the woods and the grand cemetery that lie to the west of Sinsinawa Mound. I can see him there in the late afternoon sun filtered by

those trees, peering into the film reader, typing, re-typing, annotating and revising, as though filing “opinions” to be defended before the Supreme Court. That’s exactly the way he took his responsibilities. Bernard would never settle for mere opinions in his head. He was all conviction. At our evening meal, seated at the head of the antique-laden dining table, beneath an enormous portrait of Cardinal Gibbons, Bernard would go over his findings, always at the definitive stage, or approaching it confidently.

It is unclear at the moment where the canonization process stands. However, in 1993, Mazzuchelli was given the title “Venerable” by Pope John Paul II, which is the first step toward possible canonization.

For a different take on the religious life of Mazzuchelli, especially regarding the vow of obedience, one should read the account in the *American Dominicans* by Father Reginald Coffey.<sup>12</sup> Coffey succeeded Victor O’Daniel as Archivist of the Province of St. Joseph. Coffey is much less sanguine about Mazzuchelli’s committed religious life than Walker’s assessment. Mazzuchelli, once he discovered that the Province of St. Joseph, to which he had given the College of St. Thomas Aquinas that he had established on the Sinsinawa Mound, intended to close the institution, he tried valiantly to keep the college operating and have it returned to his own control. In this effort, Mazzuchelli had the Wisconsin legislature pass an Act that was signed by the Governor, which appears in principle to have legislated keeping the college open. The Act was signed into law in March 1864, but Mazzuchelli was dead and buried by this date. Coffey writes about this attempt to run around the edict of his religious superiors: “It was then that Father Mazzuchelli committed an act which could provide any *advocatus diaboli* with abundant material, should the cause of canonization ever come to trial. He took the law into his own hands.”<sup>13</sup> In a footnote, Coffey notes that the canonization process had begun its inquiry, which was chaired locally by Father Walker. One suspects that there is another



*Rev. James B. Walker (Courtesy of the Province of St. Albert the Great Archives)* side to this story. The Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters have been almost relentless in their pursuit of a successful canonization process for their esteemed founder.

One wonders what the communications were like between Coffey and Walker in the 1970s after Coffey’s history had been published. O’Daniel, while cognizant of Mazzuchelli’s dealings with the Sinsinawa Mound property, is generally quite positive on Mazzuchelli’s work as a Missionary Apostolic in Wisconsin.

#### Return to the Windy City

In the Autumn of 1969, Father Walker was assigned to the Priory of St. Pius V in Chicago. Suffering from the scourge of carrying out the duties of an archivist for so long, Father Walker was burdened with failing eyesight. Nonetheless, he continued his historical research and institutional record keeping as archivist of the Province of St. Albert the Great. In 1972, Father Walker was assigned to the River Forest Priory of St. Dominic and St. Thomas, where he spent his remaining years,



*Father Walker and his mother*

the last several of which were in declining health. In his last years, Father Walker undertook a task for the provincial that was quite heart rending for him; Father Gerlach describes this work in the following way:

In the late 1970s, early 1980s, Fr. Walker was retired in River Forest. He certainly suffered those years. To make matters worse for him—though certainly not intentionally—the provincial, Fr. Damian Fandal, who most certainly loved Fr. Walker, asked him to handle the processes and documentation for the departures of priests and brothers....

Fr. Walker did the work, of course, with his usual precision and thoroughness. But it was his agony. So many of those departures from the Order and from priesthood, and perhaps here and there, from the Church and the Faith—many of them had been “his boys,” graduates of “Hiram’s time” as Student Master.<sup>14</sup> I wondered how close he came to despair, for he certainly would have questioned and

agonized over his earlier responsibilities, how much he had trusted himself and the students, how much he was vigilant and cautious, and whether he should have been even more impossibly certain as he approved brothers for solemn profession of vows. He gave his recommendations and his judgment had always prevailed.

On June 17, 1979, Father Walker returned to the Diocese of his birth and remembered the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination with a concelebrated Mass at the Dominican Church of St. Patrick in Columbus.

Father Walker died, so one obituary says, “peacefully,” in Oak Park on July 5, 1984 and was buried in the Dominican plot in All Saints Cemetery in the Chicago suburb of Des Plaines.

#### Father Walker the Person

In his narrative on Father Walker, John Gerlach renders the following descriptive account suggesting the formality that Walker often demonstrated:

Many years later I met a Dominican sister who shocked me when she identified herself as Fr. Bernard Walker’s niece. She remembered the first and last meeting with her uncle after she and most of her community had changed into lay clothing. He looked at her and said nothing, and she felt his stinging reproach forever after. She took it as cruelty because that’s the way she felt it. He took it as treachery because that’s how it felt to him. For all his achievement as an upright, faithful and beloved Dominican, so worthy of the trust placed in him, Fr. Walker was a very “feeling” man. This was after a decade when we wanted to know, not what we thought, but what we “felt.” Bernard Walker suffered, living so long into our history.

Father Gerlach reflects upon the matter of fact attitude with which Walker approached everything that he undertook: “I don’t think he ever had a freely speculative, airy, theoretical thought or sentiment. He liked facts, events, rituals, discoveries, characters (accent on the 2nd syllable) of previous generations. He was quite sentimental.”

Of course, there was a lighter side to Father Walker, as Father Gerlach reports:

But he was not always so serious. In his days as Student Master “Hiram” presided, ex officio, over our summer camp, the professed students’ summer refuge on Green Bay, north of the Wisconsin/Michigan border. It had been put up by the student brothers in the early/mid 1930s, built of the tall, straight native cedars, a paradise for “outdoor friars,” and hell for those who preferred clean sheets and hot running water.... For Fr. Walker it was heaven, perhaps as heavenly as Somerset, O. I once referred to him in a memoir/talk as the “Poet of Plumbing.” He had a romance with the long “bay pipe” for the water supply drawn from the bay, the operation of perpetually breaking-down wash machines and toilets, keeping the truck in operation and serious consultation with other old codgers of the neighborhood. And he loved to see the brothers playing ball, cutting grass, sailing and fishing the bay and nearby river, and coming in to sing vigorously the Divine Office, full voice, full habit, choral, rubrical, ritual. And it was beautiful!

And a further reflection into the *persona* of a thoughtful and deeply religious person:

Bernard Walker was fiercely loyal to his Perry County heritage and even more so to the Dominican Order, perhaps to the extent that Loyalty might trump the Truth, at least to the extent that Truth is allowed to keep silence. He certainly knew the techniques and the allowances of Roman Catholic law. He was scrupulous, exacting, punctilious, in his readings of “the Documents.” Loyalty could also trump history in the same fashion. Though I am absolutely certain that Bernard had little or no reflective awareness of his own motivation, convictions or mores. He held strongly to Principle; loyal obedience stood the tallest in his consciousness and dedication.

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#### Acknowledgements

The author kindly acknowledges the invitation of Don Schlegel to undertake the research propaedeutic to writing this account of a fascinating

Somerset native. The books of O’Daniel and Coffey are always initial starting points for study of religious activity in the Somerset area. Yet the serendipitous discovery of Father Walker’s 1937 essay was a valuable event contributing much to this historical narrative. On-line sources from the Province of St. Albert the Great, with special reference to the *Lives of the Brethren* entries, proved indispensable for biographical data, and the on-line account of the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters rendered valuable information on their founder, Samuel Mazzuchelli. The Province of St. Joseph’s historical web page was the source of valuable photographs. Don Schlegel preserved *The Catholic Times* account of Father Walker’s fiftieth anniversary ordination, and he and Pat Mooney contributed photographic materials from Walker’s Somerset days. Father Richard Ambrose McAlister (Aquinas College High School, ’52) of Providence College dug out rich biographical information on Father Walker. Father John Gerlach of the Province of St. Albert the Great offered both biographical information and a richly reflective narrative on his work and study with Father Walker. Professor Ed Miller from Gwynedd-Mercy College offered substantive information on the Province of St. Joseph; Professor Miller thoughtfully put the author in contact with Father Gerlach. Marianne Lisska kindly keeps the author’s written style more lucid and less turgid through her astute proof reading skills.

#### Notes

- 12) Coffey, Chapter 13, *passim*.
- 13) Coffey, p. 235.
- 14) “Hiram” appears to have been a nickname for Father Walker; how this nickname came about is unknown.

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The September issue will reound out the story of Father Walker with articles on his confrere and Aquinas College High School graduate, Father Albert Nieser, and Father Walker’s essay on Dominican Secular Education.

## Abstracts from the *Catholic Telegraph*

(Continued, from Vol. XXXV, No. 6)

Subscriptions, Fourth Quarter 1857 (name, post office, date of issue)

Charles Glesche, Graysville, Nov. 7

James Hallecy, Coshocton, Oct. 10

J. W. Hilliard, Graysville, Oct. 31

Francis Howard, Columbus, Oct. 17

Rev. John M. Jacquet, Temperanceville, Oct. 17

T. J. Lenahan, New Albany [state?], Dec. 19

Rev. Philip McMahon, Wilksville, Dec. 19

Michael Mattingly, East Zanesville, Oct. 17

L. M. Montgomery, Ironton, Dec. 26

Rev. E. Thienpont, Steubenville, Oct. 31

Rev. Mr. Thisse, Chillicothe, Dec. 19

January 2, 1858

A collection for the Seminary was made in St. Patrick's church, Fayetteville, on Sunday last. The Rev. Dr. Rosecrans preached on the occasion. ...

January 16, 1858

At the consecration of Rt. Rev. J. H. Luers as first Bishop of Fort Wayne, on Jan. 10 in Cincinnati, Rev. Mr. Albrinck of Pomeroy was an assistant at the Pontifical Mass, as was Rev. Mr. Borgess of Columbus. Rev. Messrs. Rosecrans and Coppinger were Masters of Ceremonies.

January 23, 1858

A Post-Office has been established at St. Joseph's College. Correspondents in future will please direct - St. Joseph College, Perry county, Ohio.

COLUMBUS, O., January 8, 1858.

*Very Reverend Editors:*

I am giving my fourth course of lectures in the capital of Ohio; and though what relates to me personally can be of little interest, you may, perhaps, find some in matters that fall under my observation. The large, intelligent, and truly pious congregation, worshipping at the fine church of the Holy Cross, is very large

and edifying. Their children, more than three hundred in number, are taught by devoted religious, in Catholic schools, and sing Litanies or hymns, or say the Rosary. The music at High Mass is admirable, and I have seldom heard, anywhere, a better singer than their first soprano, a young lady from Cincinnati educated in the Blind Asylum. [Several paragraphs of little interest follow.]

T. L. N.

LANCASTER, O., Jan. 15, 1858

*Very Reverend Editors:*

From Columbus I came via Zanesville, where I spent a few moments in the beautiful church of St. Thomas Aquinas, to this quiet village, where I have spent a week very happily with Father Langi [sic], and have spoken four nights to the largest audiences, so they tell me, which have ever been gathered here, on any similar occasion. ... They can no longer plead ignorance of the claims of the Catholic Church upon their faith and obedience; but their rejection of the truth from me may not be so bad for them, as if they listened to an authoritative teacher. ...

The churches here, Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Methodist all seem to hold about the same standing. The spire of the Lutheran edifice is surmounted by a cross, but the other sectarian steeples have the usual and very proper symbol of the weather-cock. The Methodist chapel is quite near the Catholic, and their fine bell has rung out an opposition to my lectures, every evening; but, apparently with little results. The Methodists have a revival in progress, in Zanesville... I remember when there revivals were looked upon with awe, as something supernatural. Now they go to work in the coolest way to start them...

I go to Mount Vernon; then I hope to see the blue waters of Lake Erie.

T.L.N.

(To be continued)

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Catholic Record Society - Diocese of Columbus  
197 E. Gay St., Columbus, Ohio 43215  
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