As a boy, Luigi aspired to become a veterinarian. But at the school run by Saint John Bosco, he discovered a new longing; the priesthood. Luigi joined the Salesians, and when ordained immediately asked to go to the Missions. “My trunk can be ready at a moment’s notice,” he said. For ten years, however, this Mission-spirited Salesian was assigned to work at the Seminary.

At last, Luigi was sent to Macau, a Portuguese colony on the Chinese coast. He set up an orphanage that soon became the hub for Salesian Mission. In 1920, he was named Bishop of a new vicariate in the Chinese interior. As Bishop, he opened orphanages and schools, and, in the Salesian fashion, these opened the way for trade schools, a hospice and eventually a Seminary. But civil strife created a dangerous situation.

In 1930, Luigi was traveling with Father Callisto Caravario and four young catechists to visit a new Christian community. Their boat was captured by a group of pirates, who wanted the three young women who were traveling with the group. When the Bishop and his priest stepped forward to defend them, they were brutally beaten. They were dragged ashore, where Luigi pleaded for the young priest’s life. Both men were shot in hatred of the Faith.

Father Caravario’s Feast day is also celebrated on February 25th. From his earliest years, everyone thought he was an excellent child for his meek and reflective nature. He seemed naturally inclined to prayer. He was amongst the first in his class at school, and served Mass each morning. On the advice of Father Garelli, the Rector of the Oratory, Callistus became a Salesian. In 1922, Bishop Versiglia was in Turin and spoke of the Missions to the Salesians. Callistus told him: "Bishop, you will see me in China."

"Willingly suffer a bit for God Who suffered so much for you."
- Saint John Bosco, Saint Luigi’s mentor

Discussion Question:
† The Saints featured this month made the ultimate sacrifice for their faith. Are there things in your life that you are willing to “give up” or “sacrifice” for God?
† Discuss with your classmates ways in which you can do this during the Season of Lent.

Birth: June 5, 1873
Death: February 25, 1930
Beatified: May 15, 1983
Canonized: October 1, 2000