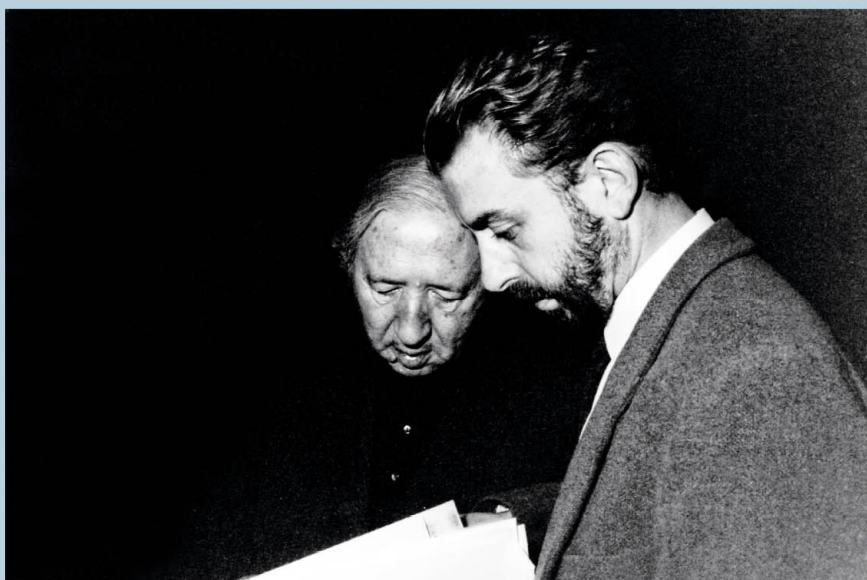


**“YOU HAVE TO PUT YOUR HEART INTO WHAT YOU DO”  
ENZO PICCININI: SURGEON, SON, FATHER, FRIEND**



The New York Encounter thanks the Enzo Piccinini Foundation for its generous support of this exhibit.

This gratitude extends to the many friends of Enzo who contribute to the Foundation, therefore allowing the Foundation to support this and similar initiatives.

Graphic design: Mauro Frega

Curated by Meghan Isaacs and many Friends of Enzo Piccinini

The curators of this exhibit would like to thank the Piccinini Family for their help and support of this project.

**NEW YORK  
ENCOUNTER** X

 **FONDAZIONE**  
Enzo Piccinini ETS

# IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIFE OF ENZO PICCININI

**June 5, 1951** - Enzo Piccinini is born to Angiolino and Ilde in Scandiano, Reggio Emilia, Italy.

**1965** - Enzo's brother, Sergio, is hit by a car and dies. In the following years, Enzo becomes involved with Marxist ideology, which was not uncommon at the time. By the end of high school, Enzo was questioning the Catholic faith he had received from his family.

**1970** - Enzo graduates from high school and enrolls in the College of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Modena. Around this time, Enzo encounters members of Communion and Liberation (Catholic lay movement) which ultimately attracts him more than his Marxist involvement.

**1973** - Marries Fiorisa Manzotti. The couple will welcome four children in the next five years. At the same time, Enzo also begins a close personal relationship with Fr. Luigi Giussani, the founder of Communion and Liberation (CL).

**1976** - Graduates with a degree in medicine and surgery. He begins a residency in general surgery, and later a vascular surgery fellowship.

**1980** - Enzo transfers to the University of Bologna to work as a general surgeon and researcher. Around this time, Fr. Giussani asks Enzo to take on greater leadership responsibilities in the CL movement. He had already been leading CL groups in Reggio Emilia and Modena since 1974. Those responsibilities will grow over the next several years to include visiting and helping lead CL groups throughout Italy and even abroad.

**1987** - Enzo travels to Boston for the first time for a surgical training at Massachusetts General Hospital. This began a series of visits throughout the 1980s and 1990s to hospitals in Boston, Chicago, and Tampa, establishing close professional and personal relationships during his stays, in addition to similar visits he had already started in Paris and London.

**May 26, 1999** - Enzo dies in a car accident near Fidenza, Italy. Over 7,000 people attended his funeral.

**May 8, 2020** - The Congregation for the Causes of Saints communicates the *nihil obstat* (meaning, "nothing stands in the way") of the Holy See at the opening of the Cause. With his edict dated June 29, 2020, the Archbishop of Modena-Nonantola, Msgr. Erio Castellucci, officially opens the diocesan phase of investigation. Enzo Piccinini has the title "Servant of God."

**December 10, 2022** - The first session of the diocesan inquiry into Enzo's life, virtues, and reputation for holiness, which is the most important part of the diocesan phase, is held in Modena under the presidency of Archbishop Castellucci.



## INTRODUCTION

*“When someone asked me,  
‘What do you want to do?’  
it was very clear to me,  
I wanted to be happy.”*

- Enzo Piccinini

In 1999, an Italian surgeon, Enzo Piccinini, died in a tragic car accident while traveling home late from a dinner with friends following a panel discussion on health care which he had organized. Seven thousand people attended his funeral.

For those who encountered him, whether in the hospital, at dinner, on the soccer pitch, etc., he was a larger-than-life figure—a man with great warmth, sharp intellect, untiring energy, and passion.


He was also a man with many faults, often abrasive or insensitive. He was human, and yet there was something exceptional about his humanity.

In seeking a life filled with meaning, Enzo took nothing for granted, especially not the answers to life’s most essential questions. His life serves as a provocation for us today to continually seek the answer to our own big questions:

*Is it possible to be myself in everything that I do?  
Am I truly in control of my life?  
What does it mean to be a son or a daughter?  
What is the real meaning and value of friendship?  
Is life inherently good?*

Our objective in this exhibit is to allow the visitor to discover a man who faced these questions with an uncommon intensity and fullness of life.

We have met Enzo Piccinini and can attest to the promise his life can offer to everyone today: **that reality is indeed good.**



## Who is this man?

We tell the story of this man and his impact on the people around him through the significant facets of his life—Surgeon, Son, Father, and Friend—out of a desire to show that we are each made to live an intensely beautiful life, which we see lived in Enzo.

**Enzo the Surgeon:** Enzo's career as a surgeon was one of impassioned commitment to his patients, students, and colleagues, and it was rooted in respect for authentic human freedom.

**Enzo the Son:** Enzo met Father Luigi Giussani in the early 1970s. Fr. Giussani was the founder of the Catholic ecclesial lay movement Communion and Liberation (CL), with which Enzo would become deeply involved. Enzo was so impressed by the priest and provoked by his approach to life that this relationship became a reference point for every aspect of his life; nothing, not even his work, was extraneous to this friendship. Though not related by blood, Enzo became a true "son" of Fr. Giussani.

**Enzo the Father:** Enzo and his wife, Fiorisa, had four children. Though his responsibilities as a surgeon and later as a leader in the CL movement placed huge demands on his time, his family grew in love. Concurrently, just as the relationship with Fr. Giussani influenced Enzo to the point of Enzo considering himself Fr. Giussani's son, so too did Enzo become a "father" to many who encountered him.

**Enzo the Friend:** while Enzo's death seemed premature, he continues to accompany friends new and old: his powerful witness remains a vehicle of faith for countless others around the world. As such, we consider Enzo a friend, even those of us who have never met him.



# SURGEON



## Enzo's career

Enzo was a skillful doctor. He cared passionately for his patients, and was interested in learning from whomever could help him become a better doctor.


Enzo attended medical school at the University of Modena and graduated in 1976 with the highest score in his class. He went on to study and work as a surgeon at the university hospitals of Modena and Bologna.

Over the years he established relationships with medical professionals on the other side of the Atlantic in order to gain knowledge and skill. He spent a semester in 1987-1988 as a Harvard University Research Fellow in Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital. This career-changing experience inspired several additional trips to Boston, Massachusetts, the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida, and several other U.S. hospitals. Working with some of the nation's leading oncologists, Enzo used the visits to gain expertise in the pathology of cancer.

One of the physicians Enzo befriended along the way was Lodovico Balducci. After several trips to Tampa, Enzo invited Balducci to a medical conference in Bologna.

*"Enzo had created a center of excellence [in Italy] by visiting at his own expense and on his own time the most prestigious surgical departments of America and Europe and by encouraging his followers to do the same. He resisted the temptation to build a personal empire because he lived his profession as a service inspired by a love that had infected his assistants and his students. That love supported the joy that permeated the actions of Enzo and his coworkers and that was also contagious."*

- Lodovico Balducci, Oncologist,  
Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa, Florida



***“Life is united if we put our heart into what we do”***

The same contagious intensity which Enzo brought to his job permeated every crevice of his life. The concept of “work/life balance” was irrelevant for him. **There was no separation between “work-life” and “home-life”—it was all just life.**

*“The unity of life is the most important thing in the world. We cannot be divided. We cannot be fractured. Life is not a mosaic of situations. But how is it possible for life to be united with its insuppressible desire for happiness? Here is the phrase that I will always use, that I will never stop using: **life is united if we put our heart into what we do.**”*

- Enzo Piccinini


He was able to be the same person whether in the operating room or in a patient’s room, whether leading Communion and Liberation meetings or playing in the living room with his children.

How was this possible?  
What does it mean, to “put our heart into what we do”?

***“Life has unity if you put your whole heart, that is, your desire for complete happiness, into everything you do, whether easy situations or hard ones, fatigue or leisure, family or work. The heart is the irrepresible desire for truth, for beauty, for being loved and for loving. It’s not a matter of philanthropy or of manners; it’s not a problem of technique. But tomorrow morning, when I visit my patients in the hospital ward, if I put my heart into it, I will recognize in them the same desire that I have, and I will look at them differently.”***

- Enzo Piccinini





***“We need something greater in order to be free”***

Enzo was acutely aware of his personal and professional limitations. But he embraced his shortcomings as an opportunity to encounter something greater than himself. For Enzo, this “something greater” had a name: Jesus Christ.

He understood that the thrills commonly associated with a career in medicine—adrenaline, heroism—were not enough to sustain one’s happiness forever. Enzo realized that it was not within his ability to heal or save people. Rather, this was God’s task, and he was simply responsible for doing all he could within the limits of his skill and the circumstances of each patient.

**What made Enzo unique as a doctor is that he understood his role as one who accompanies rather than one who cures.**

He saw that his patients were not sicknesses to eradicate, but persons to be loved. He was willing to accept more complex cases than his peers precisely because he entrusted the results of his work to God.


*“... We need something greater than ourselves in life to which we can respond.*

*Otherwise, we end up weighing what we do or do not get, the outcome of our work, and this kills the desire for happiness ...*

***We need something greater in order to be free. Life is not in our hands.***

*I do not make myself; I recognize that there is something greater and I begin to admit that I can maybe not understand, but that also what doesn’t go my way has a meaning.”*

- Enzo Piccinini



## *“We need to not be alone”*

*“You could put your heart into what you do and have the awareness of something greater accompanying you, but then you are there in the ward with that terminal patient, and it isn’t enough. It is not enough ... **Enzo knew it ... It is the final requirement: we need to not be alone.**”*

- Marco Bardazzi,  
*Everything I Did I Did for Happiness*

In one memorable case, Enzo was faced with a patient whose condition was rapidly deteriorating, and he needed to decide whether or not to operate on her—a risk other surgeons refused to take. Enzo called Fr. Giussani to discuss the case, not for surgical advice, but because Enzo needed a friend with whom he could ask the hard questions and be accompanied in this personal and professional risk.

Fr. Giussani responded: *“You did the right thing in calling me, because you need some consolation for these decisions. It’s right to want a judgment, because **all the scientific truth in the world cannot provide the courage we need to fully face life.** Consolation doesn’t solve the problem, but the things that seem hardest are made clearer by companionship.”*

The patient lived.

### **What does it mean to not be alone?**

*“His every action, initiative, and decision affirmed this personal connection with the charism that had generated him in Christ [that is, his involvement with Communion and Liberation, which led to his conversion back to the Catholic Church] and that **progressively guided him to the root of the Mystery who makes everything.**”*

- Pier Paolo Bellini,  
friend of Enzo, university professor



# SON

## An encounter with Fr. Giussani

*“Fr. Giussani did not teach me how to make incisions, or certain techniques; those things I had already learned. He taught me a human position because of which the technique, the sick person, what I was doing, became important and definitive. For this reason, now, because of how I am, I can say that, professionally, I have a way of doing things that I rarely see in others. I don't say it out of vanity. It is not at all due to my merit: I found myself caught up in this adventure.”*

- Enzo Piccinini

In his professional talks, Enzo did not shy away from announcing that it was Fr. Giussani who had taught him how to be a surgeon.

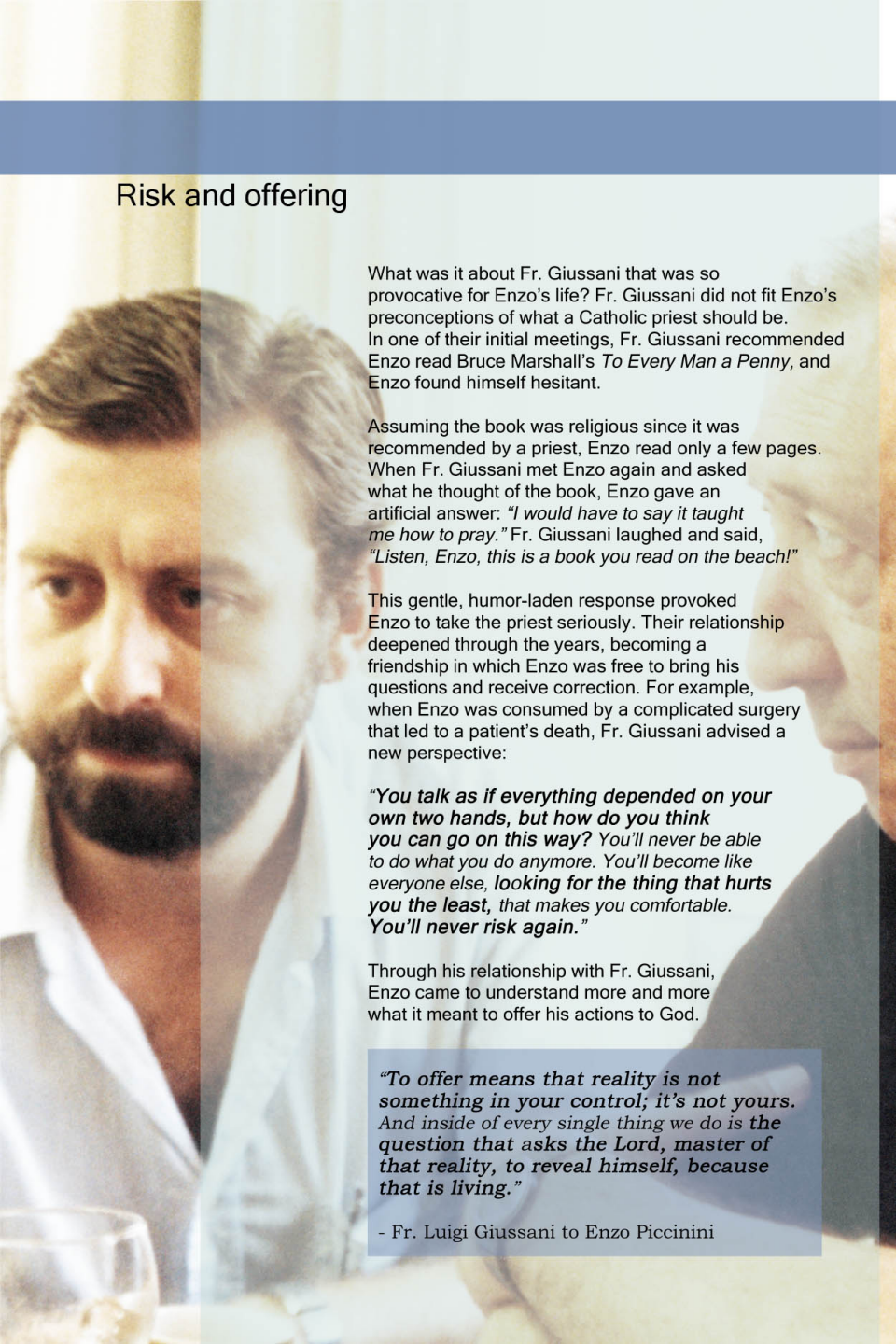
In the late 1960s, Enzo met a group of friends who invited him to their meetings together. At the time, Enzo was involved in the radical, often violent, Marxist left movements and not attached to the Catholic faith in which he had been raised.

These new friends, who were part of the Catholic lay movement Communion and Liberation, invited Enzo to meet the priest who founded the movement, Fr. Luigi Giussani.

*“At first, knowing that if he tried to teach me the catechism I wouldn't have stayed with him more than two minutes, he gave me novels to read ... I would read these books and then he would then ask me what I had thought of them.”*

- Enzo Piccinini

This meeting with Fr. Giussani would change the direction of Enzo's life forever.



## Risk and offering

What was it about Fr. Giussani that was so provocative for Enzo's life? Fr. Giussani did not fit Enzo's preconceptions of what a Catholic priest should be. In one of their initial meetings, Fr. Giussani recommended Enzo read Bruce Marshall's *To Every Man a Penny*, and Enzo found himself hesitant.

Assuming the book was religious since it was recommended by a priest, Enzo read only a few pages. When Fr. Giussani met Enzo again and asked what he thought of the book, Enzo gave an artificial answer: *"I would have to say it taught me how to pray."* Fr. Giussani laughed and said, *"Listen, Enzo, this is a book you read on the beach!"*

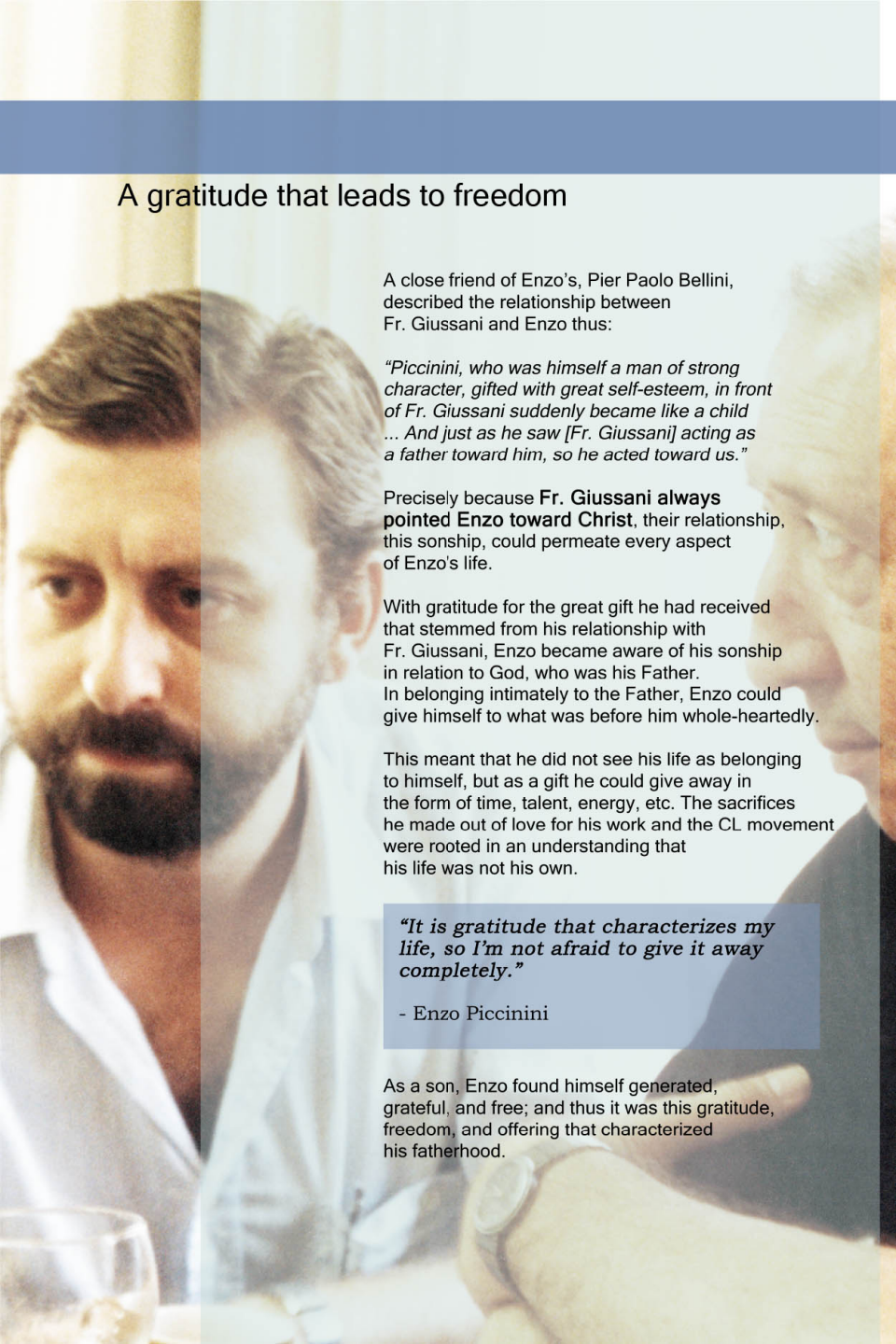
This gentle, humor-laden response provoked Enzo to take the priest seriously. Their relationship deepened through the years, becoming a friendship in which Enzo was free to bring his questions and receive correction. For example, when Enzo was consumed by a complicated surgery that led to a patient's death, Fr. Giussani advised a new perspective:

***"You talk as if everything depended on your own two hands, but how do you think you can go on this way? You'll never be able to do what you do anymore. You'll become like everyone else, looking for the thing that hurts you the least, that makes you comfortable. You'll never risk again."***

Through his relationship with Fr. Giussani, Enzo came to understand more and more what it meant to offer his actions to God.

***"To offer means that reality is not something in your control; it's not yours. And inside of every single thing we do is the question that asks the Lord, master of that reality, to reveal himself, because that is living."***

- Fr. Luigi Giussani to Enzo Piccinini



## A gratitude that leads to freedom

A close friend of Enzo's, Pier Paolo Bellini, described the relationship between Fr. Giussani and Enzo thus:

*"Piccinini, who was himself a man of strong character, gifted with great self-esteem, in front of Fr. Giussani suddenly became like a child ... And just as he saw [Fr. Giussani] acting as a father toward him, so he acted toward us."*

Precisely because **Fr. Giussani always pointed Enzo toward Christ**, their relationship, this sonship, could permeate every aspect of Enzo's life.

With gratitude for the great gift he had received that stemmed from his relationship with Fr. Giussani, Enzo became aware of his sonship in relation to God, who was his Father. In belonging intimately to the Father, Enzo could give himself to what was before him whole-heartedly.

This meant that he did not see his life as belonging to himself, but as a gift he could give away in the form of time, talent, energy, etc. The sacrifices he made out of love for his work and the CL movement were rooted in an understanding that his life was not his own.

*"It is gratitude that characterizes my life, so I'm not afraid to give it away completely."*

- Enzo Piccinini

As a son, Enzo found himself generated, grateful, and free; and thus it was this gratitude, freedom, and offering that characterized his fatherhood.



# FATHER

## *“Deeply bound to you forever”*

Enzo met Fiorisa Manzotti at Rinaldini high school in 1968. Their love deepened throughout his journey from following the militant youth of the Italian Communist party to meeting Fr. Giussani and embracing Christianity.

*“At the time I was looking for a real human relationship, a meaningful one, but I didn't know how to express this need to anyone ... I had no friends except at school, but I more or less found all my classmates to be shallow, uncaring and—why not?—even a little bit ignorant. **Enzo was different.**”*

- Fiorisa Manzotti, Enzo's wife

Enzo's depth and intentionality would continue when he would take time away from her at the beginning of college to mature for the sake of their relationship.

*“I feel like my heart and my whole being is **deeply bound to you forever.** Ahead of us, I know, lies a long road. I have to finish that road as an adult; that is, I need to become a man, so I can offer you my life with complete awareness, and a bond that will last into eternity.”*

- Enzo Piccinini to Fiorisa Manzotti

*“**Lord, I thank you because my path is clear.** I beg you to give me the strength and the will for this marriage to **not be a private matter as the world wants it to be, but the place where we will call one another back to life for Christ and for his Church.** The sacramental nature of marriage makes us adults in the faith. The adult is aware that salvation, that is, this new way of life, is not just for his own satisfaction or that of a few, but is **God's plan for the world.**”*

- Enzo Piccinini, the year he was married



## Away but never absent

Enzo and Fiorisa were married in 1973. The development of his relationship with Fr. Giussani was crucial for his marriage, just as it was for his work. Enzo was often gone, not only at work, but also sharing what he had found in Fr. Giussani with college students (giving talks, leading discussions, etc). Through their own friendships with Fr. Giussani and others, the Piccinini family found themselves able to spend much time away from their husband and father, and yet remain attached to Enzo.

*"Of course there were difficulties ... But I knew that everything would come out all right, even if it took patience. I tried to explain this to our children and make them understand that their father's obligations and his absence were something more for our lives, like a task to carry together. And Enzo always made sure that we were surrounded by friends with whom we could share the journey."*

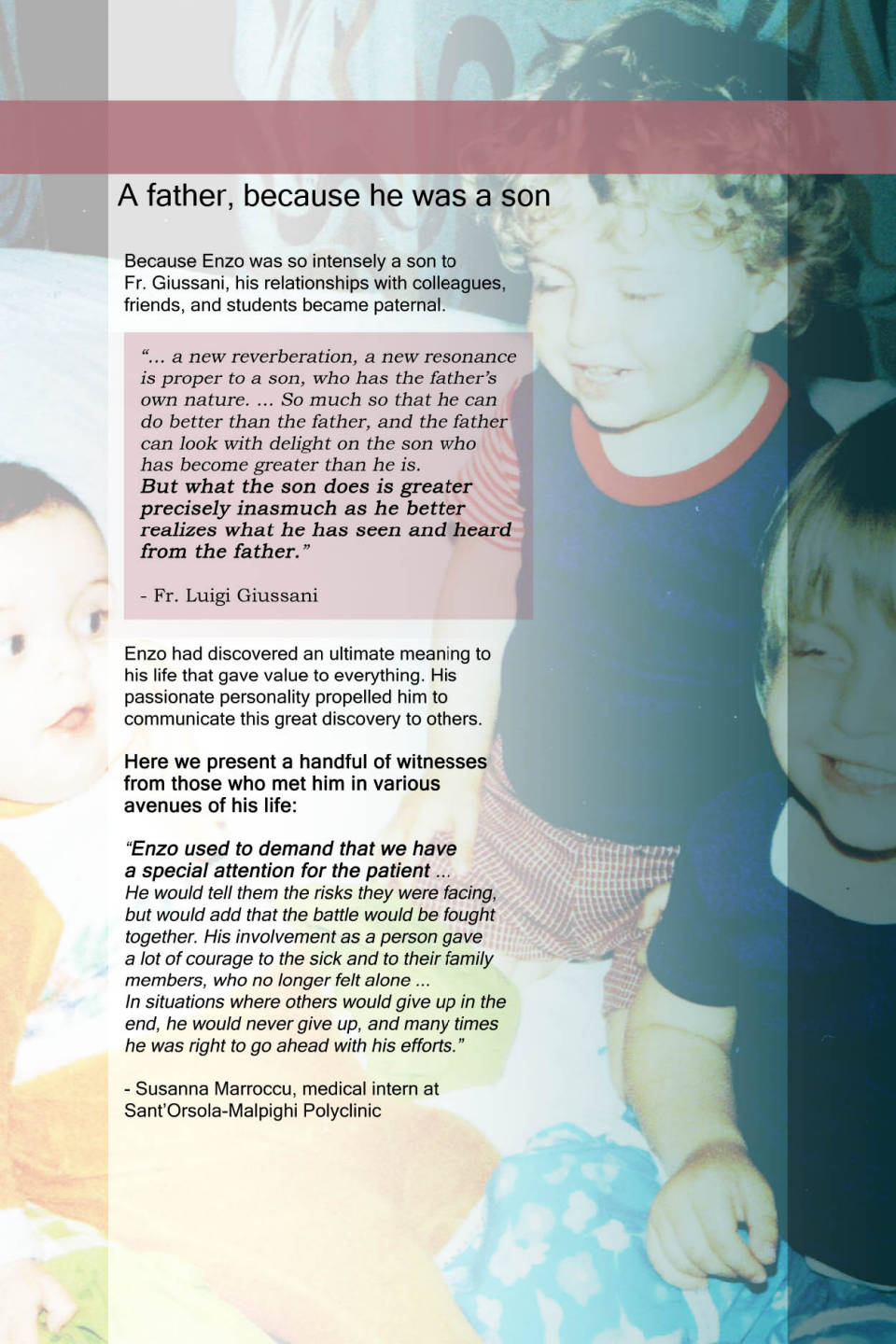
- Fiorisa Manzotti, Enzo's wife

*"When I was little ... I would cry and cry over his absence ... But when he was home, there was real joy. He would shake up our usual way of being together and challenge it, and he would help us get to the bottom of what we were living: school, current events, feelings. He would not leave us in peace, but ultimately that was what we were hoping for, and he kept us together."*

- Maria Piccinini, Enzo's daughter

*"[When you have them in your arms] you should step back and look at them, wondering, 'What will become of them?' This is how to really love them, because they have a destiny. They are not yours; they have their freedom, which is belonging to the Mystery ... This is the true position, love for their destiny ..."*

- Fr. Luigi Giussani to Enzo Piccinini



## A father, because he was a son

Because Enzo was so intensely a son to Fr. Giussani, his relationships with colleagues, friends, and students became paternal.

*"... a new reverberation, a new resonance is proper to a son, who has the father's own nature. ... So much so that he can do better than the father, and the father can look with delight on the son who has become greater than he is. But what the son does is greater precisely inasmuch as he better realizes what he has seen and heard from the father."*

- Fr. Luigi Giussani

Enzo had discovered an ultimate meaning to his life that gave value to everything. His passionate personality propelled him to communicate this great discovery to others.

Here we present a handful of witnesses from those who met him in various avenues of his life:

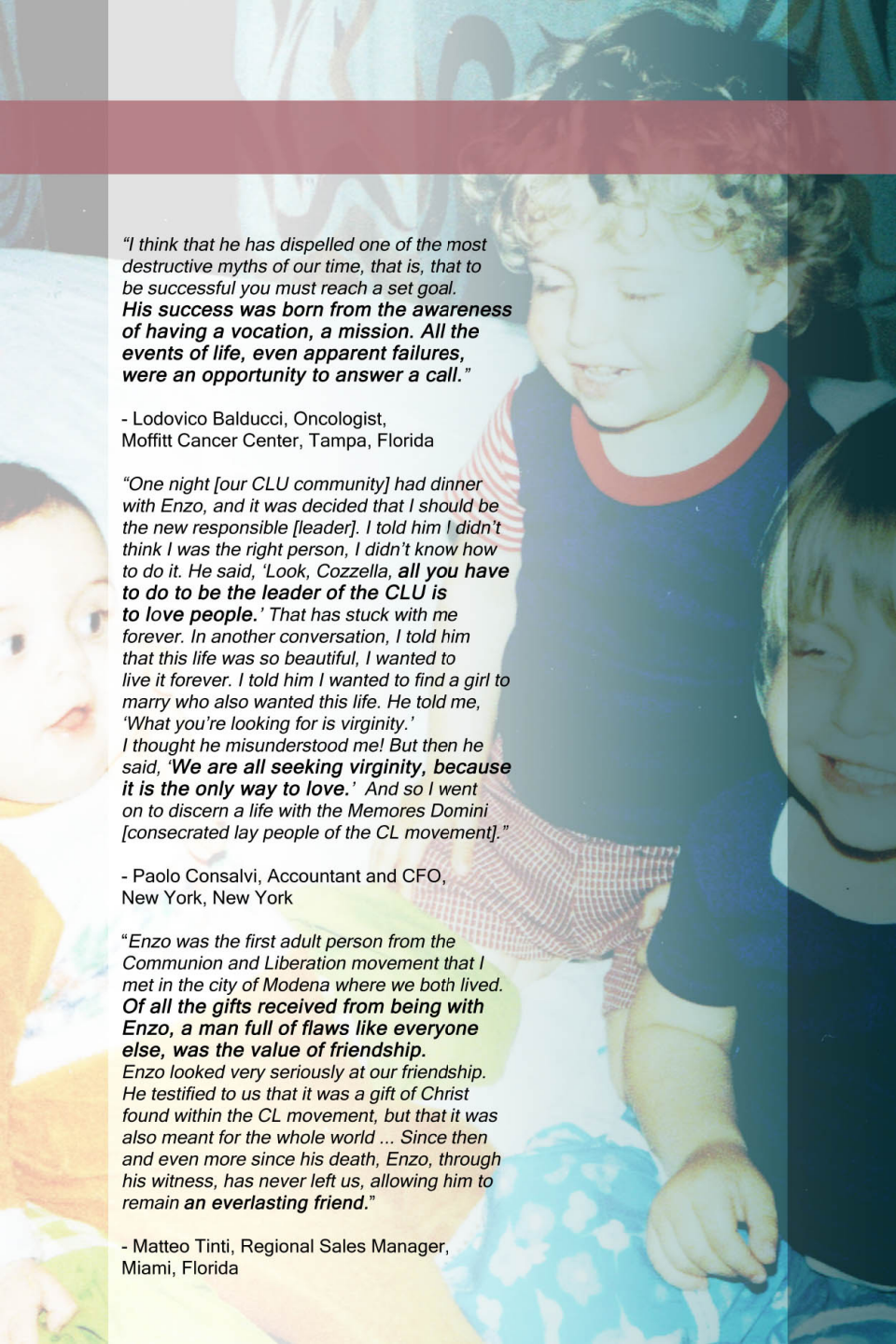
***"Enzo used to demand that we have a special attention for the patient ...***

*He would tell them the risks they were facing, but would add that the battle would be fought together. His involvement as a person gave a lot of courage to the sick and to their family members, who no longer felt alone ...*

*In situations where others would give up in the end, he would never give up, and many times he was right to go ahead with his efforts."*

- Susanna Marroccu, medical intern at Sant'Orsola-Malpighi Polyclinic





*"I think that he has dispelled one of the most destructive myths of our time, that is, that to be successful you must reach a set goal. **His success was born from the awareness of having a vocation, a mission. All the events of life, even apparent failures, were an opportunity to answer a call.**"*

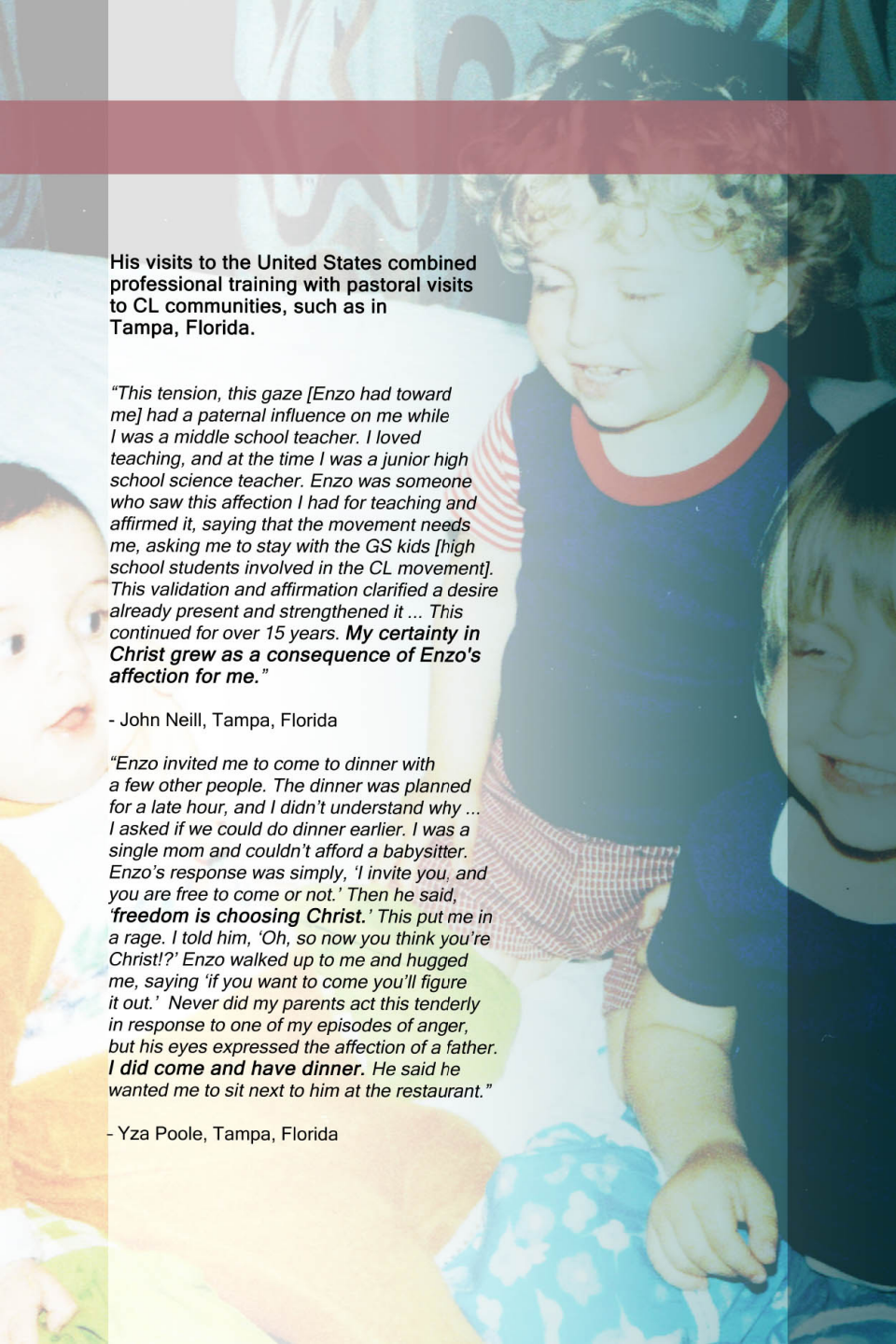
- Lodovico Balducci, Oncologist,  
Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa, Florida

*"One night [our CLU community] had dinner with Enzo, and it was decided that I should be the new responsible [leader]. I told him I didn't think I was the right person, I didn't know how to do it. He said, 'Look, Cozzella, **all you have to do to be the leader of the CLU is to love people.**' That has stuck with me forever. In another conversation, I told him that this life was so beautiful, I wanted to live it forever. I told him I wanted to find a girl to marry who also wanted this life. He told me, 'What you're looking for is virginity.' I thought he misunderstood me! But then he said, '**We are all seeking virginity, because it is the only way to love.**' And so I went on to discern a life with the Memores Domini [consecrated lay people of the CL movement]."*

- Paolo Consalvi, Accountant and CFO,  
New York, New York

*"Enzo was the first adult person from the Communion and Liberation movement that I met in the city of Modena where we both lived. **Of all the gifts received from being with Enzo, a man full of flaws like everyone else, was the value of friendship.** Enzo looked very seriously at our friendship. He testified to us that it was a gift of Christ found within the CL movement, but that it was also meant for the whole world ... Since then and even more since his death, Enzo, through his witness, has never left us, allowing him to remain an everlasting friend."*

- Matteo Tinti, Regional Sales Manager,  
Miami, Florida



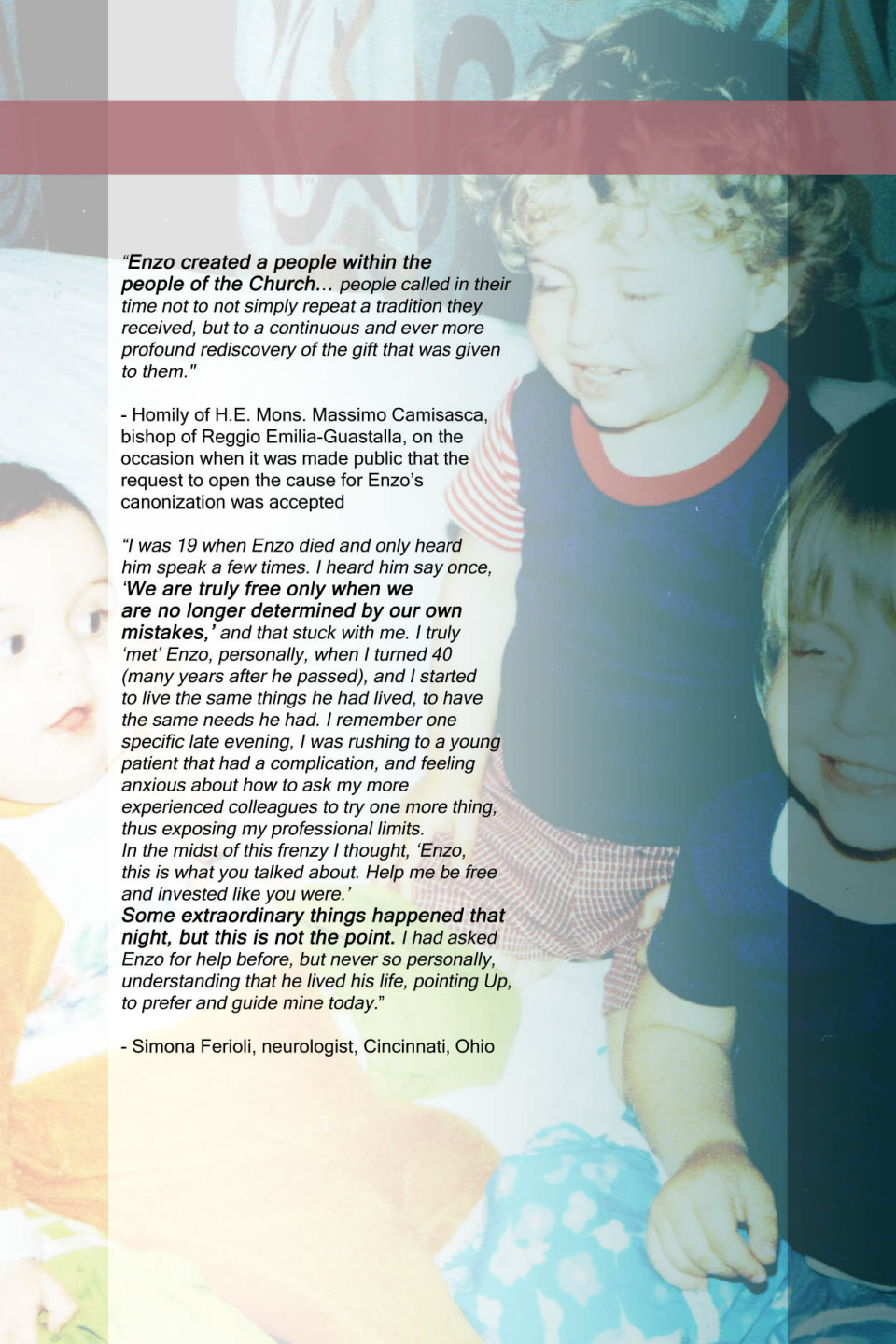
His visits to the United States combined professional training with pastoral visits to CL communities, such as in Tampa, Florida.

*"This tension, this gaze [Enzo had toward me] had a paternal influence on me while I was a middle school teacher. I loved teaching, and at the time I was a junior high school science teacher. Enzo was someone who saw this affection I had for teaching and affirmed it, saying that the movement needs me, asking me to stay with the GS kids [high school students involved in the CL movement]. This validation and affirmation clarified a desire already present and strengthened it ... This continued for over 15 years. **My certainty in Christ grew as a consequence of Enzo's affection for me.**"*

- John Neill, Tampa, Florida

*"Enzo invited me to come to dinner with a few other people. The dinner was planned for a late hour, and I didn't understand why ... I asked if we could do dinner earlier. I was a single mom and couldn't afford a babysitter. Enzo's response was simply, 'I invite you, and you are free to come or not.' Then he said, **'freedom is choosing Christ.'** This put me in a rage. I told him, 'Oh, so now you think you're Christ!?' Enzo walked up to me and hugged me, saying 'if you want to come you'll figure it out.' Never did my parents act this tenderly in response to one of my episodes of anger, but his eyes expressed the affection of a father. **I did come and have dinner.** He said he wanted me to sit next to him at the restaurant."*

- Yza Poole, Tampa, Florida



***"Enzo created a people within the people of the Church... people called in their time not to not simply repeat a tradition they received, but to a continuous and ever more profound rediscovery of the gift that was given to them."***

- Homily of H.E. Mons. Massimo Camisasca, bishop of Reggio Emilia-Guastalla, on the occasion when it was made public that the request to open the cause for Enzo's canonization was accepted

*"I was 19 when Enzo died and only heard him speak a few times. I heard him say once, 'We are truly free only when we are no longer determined by our own mistakes,' and that stuck with me. I truly 'met' Enzo, personally, when I turned 40 (many years after he passed), and I started to live the same things he had lived, to have the same needs he had. I remember one specific late evening, I was rushing to a young patient that had a complication, and feeling anxious about how to ask my more experienced colleagues to try one more thing, thus exposing my professional limits. In the midst of this frenzy I thought, 'Enzo, this is what you talked about. Help me be free and invested like you were.'*

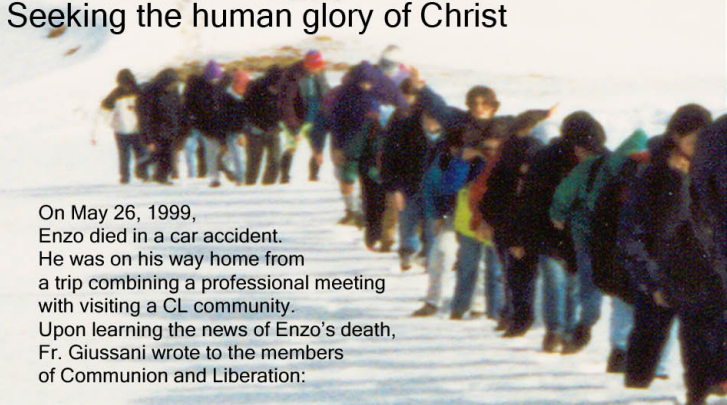
***Some extraordinary things happened that night, but this is not the point. I had asked Enzo for help before, but never so personally, understanding that he lived his life, pointing Up, to prefer and guide mine today."***

- Simona Ferioli, neurologist, Cincinnati, Ohio



# FRIEND

## Seeking the human glory of Christ



On May 26, 1999,  
Enzo died in a car accident.  
He was on his way home from  
a trip combining a professional meeting  
with visiting a CL community.  
Upon learning the news of Enzo's death,  
Fr. Giussani wrote to the members  
of Communion and Liberation:

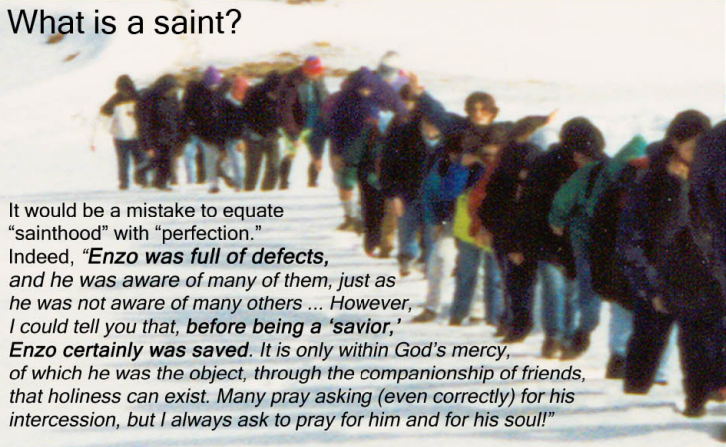
*"Enzo was a man who, from the intuition he had in a conversation with me 30 years ago, said his 'yes' to Christ with astonishing dedication, intelligent and complete in its perspective, and he made his life fully directed toward Christ and His Church. The most striking thing for me is that his adherence to Christ was so all-encompassing that **there wasn't a day in which he did not seek, in every way, the human glory of Christ.**"*

On March 11, 2019, the Archbishop of Modena-Nonantola, Erio Castellucci, accepted the request addressed to him by the Enzo Piccinini Foundation to initiate the process of the cause for the canonization of Dr. Enzo Piccinini, a decision made public on May 26, 2019 during the celebration of Holy Mass in the Cathedral of Modena. With an edict dated June 29, 2020, the Archbishop officially opened the diocesan phase of the cause.  
**At that time, Enzo Piccinini received the title of Servant of God.**

*"From the moment of Enzo's death, we have had the clear awareness of having met an extraordinary person, totally dedicated to the human Glory of Christ (to use Fr. Giussani's words). However, it is striking that the decisive invitation to turn to a postulator to verify if there were the elements to request the opening of the cause for canonization came in 2016 from a person—Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, now President of the Italian Episcopal Conference—who even didn't know Enzo personally and was not part of the CL movement. And Dr. Francesca Amedea Consolini as well, a very rigorous and competent postulator, is not part of CL, yet she became passionate about Enzo's life. She wrote in the booklet prepared for the solemn installation of the Tribunal who will investigate Enzo's human and Christian virtues and that will question the witnesses: **The Church of Modena-Nonantola sees once again one of her children walking toward the official recognition of sanctity, and joining many others who have taken this path, in a surprising variety of charisms that witness the richness of the gifts that the Holy Spirit sows in handfuls and finds here a particularly fertile soil.**"*

- Massimo Vincenzi, President of the Enzo Piccinini Foundation

## What is a saint?



It would be a mistake to equate "sainthood" with "perfection." Indeed, ***Enzo was full of defects, and he was aware of many of them, just as he was not aware of many others ... However, I could tell you that, before being a 'savior,' Enzo certainly was saved. It is only within God's mercy, of which he was the object, through the companionship of friends, that holiness can exist. Many pray asking (even correctly) for his intercession, but I always ask to pray for him and for his soul!***

- Fiorisa Manzotti, Enzo's wife

***"The saint is a true man because he adheres to God and therefore to the ideal for which his heart was made, of which his destiny is made. Ethically, all of this means 'to do the will of God' within a humanity that remains human and yet becomes different."***

- Fr. Luigi Giussani

Those that spent time with Enzo recognized that he spent his life pointing others beyond. That is why the experience of his life does not end with his death.

***"I am an 'atheist' who became a Christian by chance ... In my opinion, the Christian fact was really an adventure ... The challenge is that Christianity does not mean that man is a little less than the others, because he has some more moral obligations, but it means true humanity."***

- Enzo Piccinini

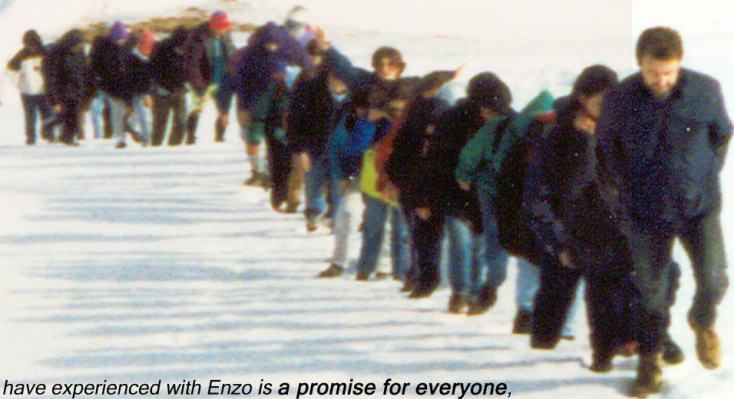
***"Nobody loves his friends as much as someone who gives his life for his friends.' Enzo did this with simplicity ... He concretely, physically loved our destiny more than he loved his own life. He was with us, he is with us, so that our life becomes truer, more and more glad and joyous."***

- Anonymous letter to the Enzo Piccinini Foundation





## A promise for everyone, today



*"What we have experienced with Enzo is a promise for everyone, because we have seen a person who continues to be among us. And everyone desires to live with the intensity that he had."*

- Fr. Julián Carrón, former president of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation

While Enzo's charisma and boundless energy seemed to define his character, most people are not granted that temperament. Yet his witness is one of awareness, not of personality. One does not need to shy away from one's own temperament because it does not fit a preconceived mold of a saint or perfect model of a doctor, father, priest, etc.

*"Who am I that you care for me?"*

This question from the Psalms, asked full of wonder, recalls Enzo's humble gratitude in meeting Christ through Fr. Giussani. It also encapsulates the experience others had when Enzo looked at them with love, even in his physical absence.







## WHO AM I THAT YOU CARE FOR ME?

Here, we offer the witnesses of several of the curators of this exhibit who never encountered Enzo in the flesh, and yet can attest that they have “met” him in very real and influential ways:

*“In my mind, I thought I had to be careful not to choose a specialty that demanded ‘too much’ from me. I had been told the most important thing was to achieve a good ‘work-life balance.’ But then I met Enzo, who threw the idea of ‘work-life balance’ out the window and instead lived everything intensely. And he was happy! Looking at the witness of Enzo’s life, I see the promise of what my heart desires. The decision surrounding my career no longer feels like a burden, but rather a great possibility for my life.”*

- Caroline Lamoutte, medical student, Gainesville, Florida

*“I was introduced to Enzo by my friend Meghan through a video of a witness he gave to the CLU. When I finished the video, I found myself uncomfortable and even a little angry. I wondered why a man who spent so little time with his family was being called a ‘saint.’ My husband had just started a new job where he would frequently have to travel ... and the idea of him being gone seemed only like something negative for my life. Meeting Enzo helped clarify what I was experiencing and led me on a path towards something new. Enzo is helping me to see that unity with my family is not measured in the time we spend together, but in the way we spend our time whole-heartedly, even when we are apart. It’s hard to explain, but I know that Christ, through Enzo, is helping me to embrace my husband’s absences as something positive. This is only possible, as Enzo encouraged his own family, ‘to never go alone.’”*

- Emma Greve, homemaker, Cincinnati, Ohio

*“As a robotics-focused graduate student who met Enzo recently through some friends, I am so impressed by Enzo’s life that, as I learn more about him, it leaves an impression on my own life. I am impressed by Enzo’s never-ending desire for great unity within his life, and by his relationship with offering and risk. This man whom I never knew when he was alive has shown me a desire for a fuller life.”*

- Luke Fina, graduate student, Gainesville, Florida





*"Though I was impressed and moved by Enzo's witness the first time I saw it on YouTube, nothing is automatic in life. Months after that first experience with Enzo ... I was at the point of considering leaving the CL movement when I was asked to help with this exhibit. When I began this work, I found my freedom engaged. I found myself annoyed and even wounded at some of the things I read in Enzo's biography because they reminded me of friends that I had [negative] histories with. But I discovered that it is possible to 'risk if you are loved.' I found myself wanting to engage with reality again because Someone was holding me by my sleeves to make me look at my life. In short, I was unafraid to look at my wounds. In this sense, Enzo is a companion on my journey."*

- Nick Villanova, Pensacola, Florida

*"When I first learned about Enzo, I reduced him to a caricature, or a saint in stained glass. When I was first invited to work on this exhibit, I initially declined. I was involved in too many things, and my wife and I just had a baby. But in front of the circumstances of my life, I also felt a looming insecurity. I had the feeling like I had to be some great man who, in the end, is just a cynic who doesn't risk anything. But since beginning the work for this exhibit, Enzo has shown me that life is not a thing to be balanced. Instead I can follow a proposal that posits that everything put in front of me is an opportunity to be aware of my great need. And life becomes much more dramatic and more beautiful because of this."*

- Patrick Lambert, teacher, Chicago, Illinois





*"Enzo has begun to accompany me in similar ways to my living friends. I ruminate on his questions, judgments, and wisdom, and I put them in dialogue with my own circumstances. This is particularly provocative and helpful for me because **my natural disposition is very different from that of Enzo**. Out of a desire to become more truly myself, more ablaze with the love of the One who makes me, **I have begun to follow Enzo, asking that his life might echo in my own flesh**, according to my own particularities."*

-Jessica Laenger, medical student, Pensacola, Florida

*"Enzo really found me, rather than the other way around. After several run-ins with him over the past 15 years, Enzo remained a figure on the periphery for me. When work began on this exhibit, I thought it would be nice for more people to know about this man whom we can see as an 'inspiring figure.' Instead I discovered that this was not about the life of one man, but about **something happening to myself and my friends now**. Seeing this for myself, that someone who has died can continue to be such a help to us today, has made me less afraid of reality because I understand better what we mean when we talk about **the possibility of life after death**."*

-Meghan Isaacs, homemaker, Nashville, Tennessee





Share your experience



**Source material:**

Bardazzi, Marco. *Everything I Did I Did For Happiness*. Slant Books, 2023.

Bonicelli, Emilio. *Enzo: The Adventure of a Friendship*. Hamilton Books, 2011.

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Members of the Piccinini Family (personal photo collections)

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