

**Prayer for the canonization
of blessed Giuseppe Toniolo**

Lord Jesus,
we thank you for having given us
blessèd Giuseppe Toniolo,
exemplary husband and father,
learned youth educator
as a university professor.
He dedicated his life
entirely to your Kingdom,
by giving testimony to your Gospel
as the source of salvation
for culture and society.
May his example
inspire us to love you
as he loved you.
May his intercession
sustain and help us
in all our needs.
Grant that the Church,
which he loved and served,
may be able to honour him as a saint beside you,
on your altars,
as a witness of lay sanctity
for the greater glory of the Blessed Trinity.
Amen

BIOGRAPHY - GIUSEPPE TONIOLO

(Treviso 7th March 1845 – Pisa 7th October 1918)

He graduated in law at Padua in 1867, where he stayed on at the same University, as an assistant lecturer until 1872. He then moved to Venice and Modena and finally to Pisa, where he lectured in political Economy until his death.

In 1878 he married Maria Schiratti and had seven children. His family was a true example of tenderness and prayer where the Word of God had a central place.

He started taking an active interest in the *Opera dei Congressi*. In the cultural climate which prevailed, he committed himself to ensure that Catholics made their presence felt in civil society through a net-work of associations of an economic and social nature.

On 29 June 1867, the *Società della Gioventù Cattolica Italiana* (Society of Italian Catholic Youth) which was the first nucleus of the Italian Catholic Action, was set up. After a short break, due to the conquest of Rome in 1870, in September 1875, during the Second General Congress of Italian Catholics, it was decided that the *Opera dei Congressi* and the *Comitati Cattolici* should be promoted as an established organization. The first

president was Giovanni Acquaderni, founder, with Count Mario Fani of the *Società della Gioventù Cattolica*.

Following on these same lines, on the 29th December, the Catholic Union for Social Studies was set up in Padua. The president and founder of this Union was precisely Giuseppe Toniolo, who, in 1893, started publishing the “*Rivista internazionale di scienze sociali e discipline ausiliare*” (International journal of social sciences and auxiliary disciplines“.

Toniolo developed a sociological theory, which affirmed that ethics and the Christian spirit should prevail on economic laws. In his numerous writings, he proposed a range of innovations: the Sunday rest, limitation of working hours, the defense of small property, the protection of working women and children.

He supported the idea that Catholics should be more active in the social field and in 1894, he became one of the promoters of the Christian democratic movement. In the educational field, he worked to reconcile faith and science. In 1908, he published the “*Trattato di economia sociale*” (Treaty on social economy). After the suspension of the *Opera dei Congressi*, Toniolo was entrusted with the drawing up of the new statutes of Catholic

movements. In 1906, he was nominated president of the *Unione Popolare* (Popular Union) whose aim was the general coordination of activities in Catholic spheres. On his initiative, in 1907, Social Study Weeks started being organized. He served the Church with great loyalty and was greatly esteemed by the Popes of his time.

Preoccupied by the war which was in progress, he wrote an International Law of Peace Statute which he gave to the Pope.

He died on the day dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, whom he used to invoke every day. His remains were laid to rest in the Church of S. Maria Assunta in Pieve di Soligo.

In Pisa, his house is still intact and it bears the marks of his holy and hard-working life. He lived mostly in Veneto and Tuscany, but, as in very few cases, one could say that he belonged to all Catholic Italy. He was declared Venerable on the 14th June 1971. On the 4th January 2011, His Holiness Benedict XVI authorized the promulgation of the decree of the miracle attributed to the intercession of the Venerable Servant of God. He was beatified by Cardinal De Giorgi on the 29th April, 2012 in Rome in the Papal Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.