

Guido has been my best friend. A friendship that has lasted more than 60 years.

Already our families did know each other; our fathers became close friends during their military service. His father was my wedding witness as I have been for Guido and Monica's wedding.

Our friendship began when we were teenagers. At those times we met nearly every day. At his home we played chess and monopoly. At my home we did play ping pong with a group of other friends. During the university years we did play tennis with other colleagues: Mario Greco, Toni DeGasperis, Spinetti, Maiani and others.

When I was 17 my father died suddenly and my link with Guido became even stronger: I was an only child therefore he was like a brother for me.

We were interested in physics but engineering did seem to us more sure as a profession. So at university, Roma La Sapienza, we began with engineering with the idea of a possible passage to physics.

We went together at the university lectures and sat generally side by side, but we did study each one on its own.

In the second year, given our good results and our interest in the subject we decided to switch to physics.

At university Guido was hard working and competitive, in his family he had many examples of professional success. Guido was ambitious but at the beginning he was not fully sure of his capabilities; once he said "I have just the threshold intelligence for this job".

In fact at that time in our course there were many brilliant colleagues: Doplicher, Gallavotti, Maiani, Buccella, Greco, DeGasperis, Franco Pacini, Cerdonio, Marcello Fontanesi and we were pressed up by the exuberant Preparata wandering in the institute corridors saying "have you read the Herman-Weyl, how can you study QM without it ..?".

During the university we took holidays together, at the seaside near Rimini where for once we prepared an exam together, at the mountains near Cortina (we both looked after for a young French girl, and Guido was more successful). After our degree we spent a couple of weeks visiting London with his brother Massimo and another friend [slides 1 - 5](#).

Guido made his theoretical thesis with Gatto together with Buccella; after the degree he went to Florence to work with Gatto who had collected around himself a group of brilliant young people as

Maiani, Buccella, Veneziano, Chiuderi, Ademollo forming the best school of theoretical physics in Italy.

When he left Rome for Florence we did no more meet so frequently as before but we never lost sight of each other.

In 66 he got married and in 68 me too, so also our wives were involved in our friendship.

In 71 we made with other colleagues a long trip in the States on the occasion of the Cornell conference. We visited Chicago and also my aunt Laura Fermi who lived there, then Washington and San Francisco.

After two years in New York Guido spent one year around 76/77 in Paris where he wrote the famous Altarelli-Parisi paper. In various occasions me and my wife we visited him at his comfortable apartment at Bvd Saint Marcel .

In 79 his achievements were recognized and he won the chair of theoretical physics at Rome La Sapienza. However soon after his marriage went in crisis; we were very close witness of the events, he was very worried about the impact of the separation on his children, especially on Fabrizio, who was about 10 years old at the time.

In 83 he went at Cern, I also was there with my family with a fellowship. There I met Monica for the first time.

In 92 he transferred his chair from Roma LaSapienza to Roma3. There, on the first year, given the recent foundation of the university, he had only one student for his course. This student had the privilege of individual lessons in theoretical physics from Guido who came express for him from Geneva !

Guido came frequently in Rome for his university lectures; and near every time we met either at home or for dinner at restaurant. On my side, when coming at Cern for Aleph, I was regularly invited by Guido and Monica at their Sergy house, where from year to year I saw growing up Giulia and Marco.

In July 2011 I sent him by e-mail my wishes for his 70th birthday and asked “what is your impression for reaching 70 years ?” and he replied “a bad impression”. Unfortunately he was prophetic: few weeks after his illness was discovered.

I was among the first ones to know. He told me in September 2011 with his typical indirect speech style . “ the holidays went well notwithstanding the bad news about my health” (these were

his exact words). He had a prostate cancer; often these cancers are curable or have a very slow progression, but he told me that in his case it was “ a fetid one”.

Since then, for the first following years he continued an apparently normal life:

When together, we did not ask about his health, but from time to time it was himself who told us about his status. He carried the burden of his illness with coolness (in fact many persons did not realize that he was ill) and courage without lose heart or false illusions.

Year 2015 started with a complicate and tiring move from Sergy to his new house in Geneve; then he had to increase the therapy but he was still in a reasonable health state that allowed him to travel up to Vienna in July to receive the EPS prize.

We met again in Geneva last August, he invited us to visit his new house at Grand Saconnex, another day he came to our home for dinner and before I left we had a dinner with friends at Auberge de Savigny : this was the last time I saw him.

In late August his state worsened. In September we had telephone contacts also at length: he was melancholy, we chatted about physics and colleagues, about his children. He was always very concerned about them, proud for their achievements and worried for their problems or difficulties.

Guido had a rich and complete personality, with many interests beyond physics (e.g. he collected Japanese prints). He was convivial, generous, and an exquisite host.

He liked to travel, he accepted almost all invitations for talks or seminars, being a very appreciated speaker. He visited a lot of countries and when travelling he devoted time to learn about the site (I remember deep studies before a trip in Rajasthan, a vivid description of Isfahan when he went in Iran). He was a good reader, of essays, novels and biographies: recently he appreciated a lot the Dirac biography by Farmelo and recommended it to me, so I also read it.

He also loved ski, the Greece seaside, the islands close to Sicily; he enjoyed and valued the better moments of life.

He had a brilliant conversation, full of irony and humour. As a matter of fact our conversation was mostly unidirectional; Guido spoke and I liked to listen to him.

Sometimes his irony could become sarcasm; and when irritated he could become rough; sometimes I saw this happening.

We remember his bright intelligence, his rational and equilibrated character. He was not interested in abstract speculation, also in physics he usually kept a rather conservative attitude. He liked to do analytical computations as well as to play with the Mathematica package.

He was honest and rigorous and these qualities he expected in other persons; he despised sloppiness and mediocrity not to say trickery.

Last Xmas Monica showed to me hundreds of messages and letters, many not simply formal but proving his popularity and a sincere wide regret for his death.

Few days after his death by chance I noticed at the Byron monument in Rome the following verses that did touch me and with which I would like to conclude [slide 6](#).

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;

Byron (Childe Harold)