



*Faith in the resurrection
opens us to fraternal communion
beyond the threshold of death...*
(RoL 24)



Today, 12 March 2018, at 8.20am
in the community of Mary Mother of the Divine Shepherd
at Albano Laziale (RM)
our sister **ANNA MARIA SR LORENZA DOMENICELLI**
has returned to the Father's house.
She was 81 years old and 54 years of religious life.

"You have turned my mourning into dancing, O LORD my God; I will give thanks to you forever" (Ps 30:11-12). With the psalmist, we give thanks to the Father for the life without end to which our sister, Sr Anna Maria, has been called. After a long period of illness, her suffering has been transformed into dancing, and she has entered the joy without end with the Lord.

Sr Anna Maria was born on 15 March 1937 at Ancona and baptized on 21 March 1937 in the Annunziata Parish. She had two brothers, both deceased. She entered the Congregation on 30 August 1961 at Albano Laziale (RM) – Mother House, where she remained for the whole time of her initial formation. On 22 June 1962, she requested to receive the religious habit expressing "*trust in God's grace*" for the journey of discipleship that awaited her.

She entered the novitiate on 2 September 1962 and, at the end of this formative stage, in her request for admission to her first profession she wrote, "*I am fully happy with my vocation and with the Institute that I have chosen*". She made her first profession on 3 September 1963 taking the name of Sr Lorenza and remaining in Albano until the time of preparation for her perpetual profession. During these years in the Mother House, she served as doorkeeper with great care and dedication. Suffices to recall that whenever the *Primo Maestro* visited, she was very welcoming and would hurriedly ring the bell for the whole community "to gather" around the Founder.

At the end of her initial formation, Sr Lorenza asked admission to her perpetual profession expressing full trust in God and in the Congregation: "*I feel truly unworthy of the grace of my vocation, but I also know that God gives me his grace as long as I have faith. I want to give myself to the Good Shepherd without reserve and with joy. Through the grace of God and the help of the Superiors, I am certain that I will achieve the holiness to which God is calling*

me ". She made her perpetual profession on 3 September 1968 at Albano Laziale. Sister Lorenza was described as someone who loved the Congregation. She was humble, quiet, and gifted with a practical intelligence. She was a woman of prayer who loved poverty and order.

After her perpetual profession, she was sent to Perugia, in the parish of Sant'Egidio where she remained for a short time only but she lived her time there so intensely that when the parish community learned of her transfer, they asked the Director of the Catholic Action group and the Parish girls group, to write and ask for her return. The Director said, *"It is with great regret that we have learned of the transfer of our dear "Sister Lorenza". You cannot imagine, Mother, our sorrow at seeing our dear loving Sister leave our town. [...] Therefore, Mother, do send Sr Lorenza back to us, do not deprive us of this dear Sister who with her modesty, humility and simplicity, and with a truly felt and lived faith, has conquered the whole parish "*. Even the girls from the Catholic Action group asked to have Sr Lorenza back for with her they had established a relationship of deep trust that allowed them to confide in her even the "most intimate" things that are part of the journey of faith and search for God.

Sr Lorenza remained in Albano from 1970 until her transfer to Cesano Maderno in 1975. Here she worked in the kindergarten and was later sent to Villimpenta where she carried out the same apostolate. In 1979, she returned to Albano Laziale and resumed her role as doorkeeper. In 1982, she went back to the parish community of Sant'Egidio and was involved in the pastoral care of families. In 1992, she was in Avellino – Borgo Ferrovia, where she worked in the kindergarten giving special care to families through frequent home visits, and using the bicycle as her means of transport. She was particularly close to people in difficult times of illness and bereavement.

In 2001, she returned to Albano for a sabbatical year. In 2002, she performed various duties and in particular, the pastoral care of families. In 2008 she returned to Albano and there carried out various services. In 2009, given her poor health, Sr Lorenza remained in Albano as a member of the "community of Mary Mother of the Divine Shepherd"; the community that gave her, with great love and dedication, all the care she needed throughout her long years of illness. Heartfelt thanks go to this community and to all the Sisters in Albano Laziale for the testimony of love and dedication that they show towards those who are elderly and sick.

We entrust Sr Lorenza to the Father's mercy and we ask her intercession for our Religious Family in this 80th anniversary of foundation, and in particular, for the journey towards the reconfiguration of the Congregation, that it may be a journey of communion and hope for the future of our presence in the Church.

Sr Aminta Sarmiento Puentes
Superiora generale

Rome, 12 March 2018
St Luigi Orione