



*"Faith in the resurrection
opens us to fraternal
communion, beyond the
threshold of death"*
(RdV 24)



Today 22 September 2018 at 16.45
at Albano Laziale (RM), our sister
GABRIELLA SR MARIA GIULIANA BETTEGA

returned to the Father's House.

She was 91 years old and 65 years of Religious Life

On the day in which the liturgy invited us to sing with the psalmist: *I will walk in the presence of God, with the light of the living*, the Good Shepherd called Sr Giuliana home to himself, she who made of her illness and offering pleasing to the Father for the needs of the Church and of the Congregation.

Bettega Gabriella, the fifth of seven siblings, was born at Transacqua di Primiero (TR) on 28 August 1927 and baptized on 4 September 1927 in the parish church of her native town. Having known the Pastorelle Sisters present in her hometown, she entered the Congregation on 27 September 1948, in S. Pietro alle Acque (PG). On 7 October 1953 at Massa Martana, after a course of Spiritual Exercises, Gabriella, together with a group of first Pastorelle Sisters, made simple and public vows in the hands of Blessed Alberione, while remaining valid the date of the first private vows she made at Lusia (RO) on 12 June 1953.

Following her profession, Sr Giuliana returned to Lusia at first as a trainee Kindergarten teacher and then as a teacher. She carried out this ministry of teaching with dedication in several other places: 1959 Alcamo (TP); 1960 Gizzeria (CZ); 1965 Cervia (RA); 1967 again in Lusia. In various parishes, Sr Giuliana was mainly engaged in pastoral ministry: 1966 Cittaducale (RI); 1970 Montesilvano Marina (PE); 1974 Pescara "Madonna del Fuoco" and the following year in the community of "Angeli Custodi" of the same city; 1983 Statte (TA); 1984 Reggio Calabria; 1985 Albano Laziale - Mother House. Starting from the year 2000, she made herself available, in the community of the Mother House, for the service of receptionist, a service that she fulfilled with joy and dedication right to the end of her life.

Sr Giuliana is described as a joyful, welcoming sister, always ready to serve and attentive to the life of the Church and of the Congregation. She loved the liturgy and was tireless in carrying out the pastoral ministry with zeal and generosity in the various parishes she had served. Sr Giuliana took pleasure in every conversation about our missionary presences and cherished a special love for the mission in China, which she accompanied with prayer and offerings. She enjoyed speaking of her experience of the beginnings of our Congregation and preserved a great love and gratitude for the *Primo Maestro*, Blessed Giacomo Alberione.

In 1971, Fr Nicola, parish priest of Montazzoli (CH), wrote about the temporary help given him by Sr Giuliana in the pastoral ministry: *"I am writing to express my thanks for sending Sr Maria Giuliana to Montazzoli to help me in our pastoral activities. It has been a wonderful experience bearing good fruit, especially among the youth, and I trust that Sister Giuliana may soon return to Montazzoli to continue to sow well and to take care of the still delicate little plants. Now that Sister has left, everyone is missing her and praying that she may return definitively."*

Last July, Sr Giuliana was diagnosed with an advanced tumour. She accepted her situation with trust and abandonment, praying and offering all for the Congregation and for vocations. She was grateful for every little gesture of kindness extended to her and she serenely surrendered herself to the Good Shepherd. In contemplating Our Lady, she said she felt like a child in her mother's arms knowing herself protected and carried in her arms.

Let us thank the Good Shepherd for the gift of the life and vocation of Sr Giuliana. Let us entrust to the intercession of this sister of the *"prima ora"*, the journey of the Congregation in this 80th anniversary of its Foundation and, in particular, for the intentions of Pope Francis in this time of trial for our mother Church. We also wish to thank the sisters of Mother House for the care and the love they have had for Sr Giuliana.

Sr Aminta Sarmiento Puentes
Superior General

Caxias do Sul 22 September 2018