



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



Today, 21 July 2020 at 10.15am,  
in the community of Negrar (VR), our sister  
**MARIA SR GIUSEPPINA MARIA GRAZIA**  
returned to the Father's House.  
She was 96 years old and 69 years of Religious Life

The words from today's Gospel: *"Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother"* describe the motherhood, the sisterhood and the life as a daughter of God lived by Sr Giuseppina, who, rooted in the Lord, welcomed with serenity and peace the arrival of the Bridegroom who she always loved and followed with joy.

Maria was born in Ciciliano (RM) on 8 March 1924, and baptized on the following day in the parish of Santa Maria Assunta in her hometown. She was one of the sisters of the "First Hour" who entered the Congregation on 24 September 1941 in Genzano (RM). Since the Second World War was underway, even before her entry in the novitiate, she was transferred to various places in Italy, mainly engaged in Kindergarten teaching both before and after her profession. In 1942 in San Marzano (TA); 1943 in Lavena-Ponte Tresa (RM); 1944 in Puos D'Alpago (BL); 1945 Valdicastello (LU); from 1946 in Capoliveri (LI); in 1948, she returned to Genzano. She narrated with joy and gratitude her experience in Capoliveri where despite the difficulties experienced due to great poverty, solidarity and creativity provided the essential means to live on for the people with whom life was shared.

Maria began her novitiate on 14 August 1949 in San Pietro alle Acque (PG) and in this same place, she made her first profession on 15 August 1950. She made her perpetual profession on 06 August 1955 in Albano Laziale-Mother House. From 1950 until 1965, she carried out her pastoral ministry in Capoliveri. In 1966, she was transferred to Lignano Sabbiadoro (UD) and in 1971 to Longa (VI). In 1978, she returned to Albano Laziale-Mother House to participate in the Pastoral Theology (CTP) Course organized within the Congregation. In 1980, she returned to perform her ministry in Capoliveri.

In 1991, she was transferred to Tor San Lorenzo (RM) and was a member of the formative community that welcomed the second group of Korean novices. During her years of residence in Tor San Lorenzo, she saw the realization of various Congregational initiatives and formation courses at an international level. Here she gave testimony of her knowledge and love for the "Primo Maestro" as she loved to call him. She willingly shared and was very happy to tell about the origins of the Congregation and her pastoral experience, enriching those who listened to her.

Sr Grazietta, as we used to call her, was a prayerful sister. She had a particular care for people who died suddenly and she never neglected the prayer of the Rosary. The sisters have described her as a generous and joyful person, with a strong and firm character and untiring in her work. She had a special love for "mother earth", a love that she expressed in the essentiality of her life and in the care of the garden in both Tor San Lorenzo and Negrar. She used to say, *"I like being with nature because nature loves me"*. In 2003, on the day of her birthday, at the end of lunch, she thanked the sisters saying, *"May I be like a flower always ready to be picked by the Lord"*.

In 1998, she transferred to the community of Negrar where she made herself available for the needs of the sisters and devoted time to beautifying the garden. She followed the life of the Congregation with care and prayed for vocations. In confirmation of this, in a letter addressed to the missionary sisters of Pemba, she wrote, "May the Lord bless your daily work, your sacrifices and your love for these dear brothers and sisters. [...] Dear sisters, let us entrust everything to Jesus Good Shepherd. He will bless your every effort and so will make you mothers and sisters of this people and someday African vocations will come for you too".

Let us thank the Father for the witness of fidelity and simplicity of our sister and entrust her to His mercy. We ask Sr Giuseppina to intercede good and holy vocations for the Church and especially for our Religious family.

Sr Aminta Sarmiento Puentes  
Superior General

Rome, 21 July 2020

St Lawrence of Brindisi, priest and doctor of the Church