



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



Today, 16 January 2017, at 1.30 a.m.
in the community of Negrar (VR),

MARIA LUCIA SR METILDE DELLAI

went back to the Father's house.

She was 85 years old and 58 years of religious life.

"Forever will I sing the love of the Lord" with these words of Psalm 88, our sister Lucia responds to the call of the Father and was brought to Him by the Good Shepherd whom she sought and loved throughout her entire life.

Maria Lucia was born on 26 October 1931 at Longa di Schiavon (VI) and was baptized on 8 November of that year. She was educated in a Christian way in a large family, consisting of three brothers and four sisters, who actively participated in the life of the parish community, a sign of a deep faith. In 1944 still a teenager, Maria as she was called in the family, received a certificate of qualification to teach Christian doctrine from the Diocese of Vicenza. During her youth, she was also the chairperson of the female Catholic Action. In 30 May 1954, when a community of the Pastorelle was opened in her place, Maria, in her early twenties, was attracted by their lives and by their ministry and matured the choice of entering the Congregation.

On 12 September 1955, Maria entered in Casa madre Albano (RM), where she began her formative journey. On 2 September 1957, she entered the Novitiate and a year later, on 3 September, emitted her First Profession, taking the name of Sr. Metilda, but she was always called Sr. Lucia.

After profession, she was sent to the apostolate in S. Lucia Fiamignano (RI) where she remained for four years and then at Polpet (BL) for a year, dedicating herself to catechesis and visiting families, until perpetual profession which she emitted at Albano Casa madre on 3 September 1963. On the occasion of Perpetual Profession she wrote: *"It is my great desire to be forever all of the Lord and to be able to join the ranks of his daughters (...) trusting in the graces of the Lord"*.

Thus Sr. Lucia spent her whole life as Pastorella: she gave herself with joy, she had much care on prayer, work, apostolate, study. She loved fraternal life, had few words, she was easily contented in everything, lived in a sober way and she was serene and good

toward all the sisters. Righteous and of good religious spirit, she loved the Congregation and wanted to continually advance in the path to holiness. She was orderly in the care of the house and the church, she was dedicated to the pastoral ministry with good will and desired to seek in everything Jesus Good Shepherd and the salvation of persons to whom she was sent.

From 1963 to 1973 she was in the community Valbona (PD) where she carried out the pastoral activities, particularly in the kindergarten and the youth. After a one year break in Casa madre to obtain the Diploma in Education, she was sent to Adria (RO) as a teacher in kindergarten: she dedicated joyfully to this educational service, taking care of children and their families.

From 1980 to 1985, she was in Cive of Correzzola (PD), as an educator in the kindergarten, but having also special care of the visit to the families and especially the sick.

From 1985 to 2003 she was inserted in the community of Saliceto Cuneo (CN) in teaching in kindergarten; she also carried out the service as superior of the community for eight years.

In 2004, Sr. Lucia dedicated a break in the community Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd of Negrar, and then with renewed energy, she went back to the pastoral, especially in the family ministry in Romans D'Isonzo (GO) until 2011, when she was compelled, for health reasons, to retire permanently to Negrar.

Sister Lucia lived the last years of her life in prayer, in silence and in collaboration, as long as her strength allowed her, to the small needs of everyday community life. She became unstable in walking, recently Sr. Lucia, following a fracture on the hips, underwent surgery, but she was not able to recover and so she gently handed herself to the Good Shepherd.

We entrust to the Lord Sr. Lucia, while we thank her for her life given in the ministry of pastoral care and ask her to intercede for each Pastorella an increasingly strong love toward "*Jesus Christ, Way, Truth and Life: who is the greatest wealth of world*" (Alberione, PrP VI, 1953, p. 178).

Pray for us, Sr. Lucia, and together with the other Pastorelle of Heaven, intercede so that we may live the preparation for our 9GC in listening to the Spirit and in ever deeper communion among us.

sr Marta Finotelli
Superior general

Roma, 16 January 2017