



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



Today, 21 June 2017, at 4.00 p.m.
in the hospital of the "Sacred Heart" at Negrar (VR)

MARIA SR MARTA BIANCO

our Sister has returned to the Father's house
at the age of 78 and 54 years of Religious Life

"Grant Lord that, following the example of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, we may participate in the heavenly Banquet, endowed with the bridal gown, to receive the abundance of your gifts". These words from the "prayer over the offerings" of today's liturgy, were realized in their fullness for our Sister Marta whom Jesus Good Shepherd consigned to the Father to receive fullness of life.

Maria was born on 30 November, 1938 in Caltagirone (CT) and was baptized on 1 December of that year. She was the second of five children, and lived very intensely the life of her parish community. The Parish Priest, in presenting her to the Congregation, which she entered on 23 June, 1960, at the Mother House in Albano Laziale (RM), testified that Maria was a member of the Youth Association of Catholic Action, and stood out: "for her exemplary conduct, for her apostolic zeal, particularly in teaching catechism to the children; visiting families in the area and visiting the sick, to whom she brought the smile of Christian comfort".

Deemed appropriate for religious life, Maria entered the novitiate on 2 September, 1961 and the following year on 3 September, made her First Profession, taking the name of Sr. Marta.

In her vocation as a Pastorella, she sought to combine the attitudes of the two sisters of the Gospel whose name she bore, Martha and Mary, who accepted Jesus into their home; she was at ease in the pastoral apostolate which she lived in continuity with that experienced in the parish of origin.

Sr. Marta had a good character, she was rather shy, knew how to live in community and, together with prayer, loved work which she quietly and generously carried out. She did well in practical things, had a spirit of sacrifice and, since her youth, learnt to love the

Apostolate in the various expressions, manifesting a certain preference for the sick and the poor.

Soon after her religious profession, Sr. Marta was sent to Cardinale (CZ) until 1965 and then in Gizzeria (CZ) until 1971. At this time she was preparing for the definitive commitment with the Perpetual Profession which she made on 3 September, 1967 at Albano Laziale.

Precisely in view of this moment, Sr. Marta trustingly wrote: "I know that in these five years of Apostolate, there has been some failures, but I also know that the Lord has so much understanding and mercy in the face of my wretchedness".

In the decade from 1972-1982 Sr Marta lived in the communities of Bari and Rieti, with a few breaks at Mother House to dedicate herself to study and for health care being rather fragile. From 1982 to 1983, she stayed at Albano for a pastoral aggiornamento and then, following the change of Province, was sent to Longa (VI) where she remained until 1985.

For another decade 1985-1995 Sr. Marta was at Vicenza as a teacher in "Fiorasi" kindergarten, where she devoted herself with joy and love to the children and felt reawakened the fine memories of the experiences lived in the parish when, in Catechism classes, she tried to pass on to the children the joy of knowing and loving the Lord.

From 1995 to 1999 she continued her experience in kindergarten at Capoliveri (LI) and devoted herself to the care of the Church, to catechesis and to family visitation, with particular attention to those of the kindergarteners, always animated by apostolic zeal and desire to witness the tenderness of God into any environment and situation.

Sr. Marta spent a year in Florence and one in Verona at the Provincial House, but in 2001 due to illness was transferred into the community Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd at Negrar, where she remained for 16 years, living with various forms of diseases that debilitated her progressively. Assisted by the affectionate care of the Sisters in the community, she was able to live even in the strenuous situation of suffering, the sense of pastoral offertory.

Last month during a phone call to me, she confided her serenity in offering to the Lord the inconveniences caused by the myeloid leukaemia, manifested suddenly, and expressed her trust in the Lord who gave her the strength to accept even this trial and to offer it for the good outcome of our coming General Chapter.

Sr. Marta thank you for the offering of your life. Now that you can contemplate the face of the Father, we ask you to intercede for our religious Family, together with the other Pastorelle of Heaven, so that we may be truly fruitful and bear fruits of communion.

Sr. Marta Finotelli
Superior General

Rome, 21 June 2017
In memory of St. Aloysius Gonzaga