



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



Last 19 September 2014, at 12.10 p.m.

In the Community of "Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd" Negrar (VR),

Sr ALESSANDRA ALINA ASSUNTA PAOLI

has returned to the Father's house

at the age of 91 and 61 years of Religious Life

While the liturgy invited us to sing: *"Lord, when your glory appears, my joy will be full,"* last 19 September, the Good Shepherd has handed in the Father's hands our sister Alessandra, so she could finally enjoy that face, whom she sought so much in her life.

Alina Assunta was born Assumption on 11 June 1923 in Rio Elba (LI) and was baptized on 6 September of the same year. Last of three children, she was educated in the Christian faith and was actively involved in her parish, an environment where she matured the vocation to religious life.

She entered the Congregation at twenty-five years old, on 23 September 1948 at S. Pietro alle Acque (PG) and was one of the first young persons who became passionate about the pastoral charism. Already in 1949 we find her in propaganda in Genzano (RM) and then from 1950 to 1953 as a nursery school teacher, first in Marciana Marina (LI) and then Massa Martana (PG).

On June 12, 1953 in Massa Martana, she made her first profession, taking the name Sister Alessandra. Her first profession took place simultaneously with the first group of sisters who professed their vows among the Pastorelle, immediately after the Diocesan approval of the Congregation. After a brief break at Albano Laziale (RM) for studies and the apprenticeship in the kindergarten of Siror (TN) in 1955, she was sent as superior of the community of Budrione (MO) until 1963. It was in this period that she made her perpetual profession on 2 August 1958 at Albano-casa madre.

Sr Alessandra carried out for several years the service as superior of the community, from 1963 to 1977, for fourteen years in S. Prospero s / Secchia (MO) and in the years 1979-1984 Solara (MO), a service always done with care and firmness but also with great delicacy and feminine taste, while she was also engaged mainly in the education of children.

We see her from 1977 to 1979 in Reggio Calabria, engaged in the kindergarten school and then from 1984 to 1986 in Capoliveri (LI), where, together with teaching, she also held various pastoral activities, especially the visit to the families and catechesis.

Sr. Alessandra felt much the lack of family affection: at twelve years old, she remained an orphan when her mother died since her father died when she was still young and also lost her two small siblings. She was alone without any relative and with a deep nostalgia for her homeland, the Island of Elba. In 2005, during her spiritual exercises, she wrote thus: *"How did I live my existence? I was left alone at a young age, but the Lord has always held my hand in this journey which was not always easy. He has saved me from so many dangers, He chose me for himself."* With her strong and determined character, Sr. Alessandra had open antennae on what was happening in the world and also had a particular attention on the ecclesial sense which she manifested in her pastoral ministry.

Of refined tastes, she loved beautiful and well-done things - in the years when she was in charge of the nursery school, she distinguished herself for the care, not only in the educational, but also in the aesthetic environment that housed the children, she particularly loved having beautiful gardens, well cultivated with many flowers.

Her prolonged insertion was in Sestri Levante (GE) where she remained for 23 years from 1986 to 2009, uninterrupted years with only a forced break after a delicate surgery to remove part of the intestine. She returned to her beloved Parish of St. Bartholomew and resumed with zeal the visits to families and to the elderly and sick people, making herself close to persons in an intuitive and wise manner, even in the most delicate and difficult situation.

Don Mauro, the Parish Priest of Sestri describes her, *"an intelligent woman, keen and guided by the Gospel which she loved and lived."* She persevered in her ministry of healing and consolation until her waning strength allowed her. So in 2009 she was transferred to the community Mary, Mother of the Good Shepherd in Negrar.

During the years lived in this community as long as she was capable, she maintained the curiosity of learning and love of reading, remaining informed on the events of the world, so as to bring everything to the Tabernacle.

In the beginning, she had difficulty accepting her illness and being bed-ridden and often invoked the Lord to take her to His House. The waiting time was long and painful, but she consumed herself more peacefully until she finally surrendered herself to the Lord.

In January 2010 she wrote me: *"I have worked many years in the apostolate with joy and commitment, trying to live as a good Pastorella."* Yes, dear Sr. Alessandra, you have accomplished your life in the joy of giving it as a good disciple of Jesus Good Shepherd, now enjoy his happiness for always and intercede for the needs of our Congregation and the Pauline Family.

Sr Marta Finotelli
Superior general

Roma, 23 September 2014
St. Pio da Pietrelcina