



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



Today 22 December 2016, at 1.30 p.m.

in the community of Negrar (VR),

IOLANDA SR MICHELINA DELLA SALA

went back to the Father's house.

She was 81 years old and 56 of religious life

"You, Christ, we seek you; we want to know you in order to praise you eternally in the blessed land". Thus our sister Michelina sings the Hymn of the Advent season at the conclusion her earthly pilgrimage to praise forever the Word of God in the heavenly homeland, where she unites herself with the other Pastorelle to celebrate Christmas together. A different Christmas because now she can finally contemplate the face of Jesus Good Shepherd while he hands her over to the Father with joy.

Yolanda was born on 13 September 1935 in Avellino and was baptized on 13 October of that same year. The third of seven children, she grew up in a Christian home where she learned to love the Lord and to give herself unselfishly to others. In December 1956 our Congregation opened a community in Avellino and immediately the life of the Pastorelle attracted the young Yolanda that on July 20 of the following year she entered the Congregation at Casa madre in Albano Laziale (RM) and began the period of initial formation.

In presenting Yolanda for her entry among the Pastorelle, the Parish Priest of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, described her as a young woman of intense life of piety and of good moral character. These are qualities which Yolanda has always kept along the journey of her religious life.

On 2 September 1959 she entered the Novitiate and made her First Profession on 3 September 1960 taking the name of her mother, Michelina. She lived her first two years as a young sister in the community Medolla (MO) where she devoted herself to the pastoral care of families. In 1962 she was forced to retire to Casa madre due to some health problems that obliged her even to a prolonged hospitalization in the Regina Apostolorum Clinic in Albano.

On 3 September 1965 she made her perpetual profession and her health improved so well, that to her great joy, she could return to the active apostolate. From 1965-1987, Sr. Michelina dedicated herself to full-time pastoral ministry, except for a study break at Albano, from 1974 to 1976, obtaining the Diploma in Education. She was sent to the communities of Monsole di Cona (VE), Cervia (RA), Saliceto (CN), Capoliveri (LI), where she devoted herself

with great generosity to children in the kindergarten schools and catechesis in preparation for the sacraments of Christian initiation .

Then she was sent to Codigoro (FE) and Cornacervina (FE), communities where she mainly engaged herself in the social action ministry, in visiting families and also in catechesis.

Sr. Michelina stood out for practical and intuitive intelligence. Sociable and generous, and loved genuinely, a cheerful giver, both in the community and the apostolate. She had a beautiful prayer life and manifested good will in everything she undertook. Her great spirit of sacrifice made her always available to the needs of the Congregation.

After a break lived at Tor S. Lorenzo (RM) and Saliceto Panaro (MO) in 1988, she resumed her apostolate, with the desire especially to work in the kindergarten, a place she preferred, due to her great love for the younger generations and also for the families of the children.

From September 1989 to 2009, for another twenty years, Sr. Michelina was in the communities of Solara (MO) and again in Capoliveri (LI). In these two communities she also exercised the service as superior, devoting herself to the sisters with the same care and attention with which she carried out the ministry of the care of souls. After a sabbatical year in 1998 lived in Negrar (VR), she was sent to Corbola (RO) and then Cadé (MN) until 2008. Then she devoted a year to carry out some service in the community of Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd in Negrar, where some elderly and sick sisters live, then she returned in the apostolate in 2009 in Sestri Levante (GE).

Despite the passing years, Sr. Michelina did not lack the passion for the apostolate and even good humor expressed by spontaneous jokes, even in moments of her life which were not always easy.

Since May, she was in Negrar for some medical tests. And after a pilgrimage from hospital to hospital in Verona, the cause of her ailments was finally discovered: amyloidosis, a disease that affects some vital organs such as the kidney, heart, brain.

With great serenity and continuous prayer, Sr. Michelina lived her daily suffering, undergoing weekly dialysis, but the disease inevitably continued its course until death.

"I thank Jesus Good Shepherd for the gift of faith. Faith, the Eucharist and His Word give me life, confidence and courage each day to be united with Him." Sr. Michelina had written during the Canonical visit of the General Government in 2009 and so she lived thus the Pastorella vocation until the end.

Thank you, Sr. Michelina for having drawn *"from the Gospel the form and confidence to live and carry out what the Lord"* had asked you, as you wished. Now intercede for us and for this our troubled world, the trust in the Lord who comes to bring peace.

Sr. Marta Finotelli
Superior general

Rome, 22 December 2016
Christmas Novena