



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



Yesterday 23 November 2016, at around 9:15 p.m.,
at the Provincial House of Verona

SPERANZA SR. STEFANIA FIORINDO

went back to the Father.

She was 75 years old and 55 years of religious life.

*"Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Mt 24:44), this verse that the liturgy of the First Sunday of Advent proposes, seems fitting to the unexpected call which Jesus Good Shepherd addressed to our sister Stefania, who responded with the antiphon of the Responsorial Psalm: *I go rejoicing to the house of the Lord!**

Speranza was born on 8 January 1941 in Codevigo (PD), to a hardworking and religious Venetian family. Fourth of six children, she was baptized in the Parish of Codevigo di Conche on 19 January 1941 and received Confirmation on 6 December 1949. She was brought up in the Christian faith, as a child she participated in the parish community where she learned to make her life a gift for others and matured the vocation to the religious life.

She entered the Congregation on 7 October 1959 in Casa madre Albano Laziale (RM) - where she lived with joy and availability the time of initial formation. She entered the Novitiate on 2 September 1960 and made her First Profession on 3 September 1961, taking the name of Sr. Stefania.

Sr. Stefania was immediately sent to the community of Lusina (RO) where she remained until 1968 as a teacher in the kindergarten and was devoted, in particular, to the catechesis of children. During this period, she took a few months' break at Albano in preparation for Perpetual Profession which she made on 3 September 1966.

She later returned to Albano in 1968 - 1969, for a time of study, in order to qualify as a teacher in the kindergarten, a privileged field in her pastoral ministry.

Good-natured, happy and sociable, grew up with a strong sense of duty, Sr. Stefania loved prayer, work and the practical things that she carried out with much love. Attentive to community life, she lived cordial relations with all the sisters, and generously accepted her service as superior which she exercised in different mandates.

From 1969-1986, Sr. Stefania was sent to Albiano (TN), Valbona (PD) and in Transacqua (TN). Most of her apostolate was expressed in the kindergarten, but she also

lovingly dedicated herself to family ministry, catechesis and the embroidery workshop for young girls.

After a sabbatical year in Tor San Lorenzo in 1986-1987, Sr. Stefania returned willingly to the apostolate. She was sent to Novoledo (VI) where she remained from 1987 to 2016, except for two years, in 1999-2001 which she spent in the community of Farra di Feltre (BL).

In the apostolate and in the fraternal life, she knew how to find the humorous side of the situations. She preferred above all the rural areas where there is a simpler pastoral collaboration and suited to her possibilities.

In the almost thirty years spent in Novoledo community, Sr. Stefania, gave the best of herself. The parish community is like her second family. Always smiling and happy, Sr. Stefania, donated herself tenderly to children, both in the kindergarten and in catechesis; she liked to keep the church clean and orderly, animate the liturgical songs, and despite the advancing age, she never forgot to encourage young people to participate in youth camps organized by the Congregation or the Parish.

She loved her vocation which she lived with much gratitude. Before her final consecration among the Pastorelle Sisters, she wrote: "*I am so grateful to the Lord for calling me to a vocation so high.*"

For some months, Sr. Stefania suffered fatigue and some health problems which were not resolved. For this, a few days ago, she went to the Provincial House to rest and to undergo a more accurate medical check-up. Last night, while Sr. Stefania was on the phone, perhaps planning some pastoral activities with a parishioner, Jesus Good Shepherd changes her plans: she will never return to Novoledo anymore, but will definitely enter in the Kingdom of the Father!

So dear Sr. Stefania, you suddenly bade goodbye to us to reach the community of the Pastorelle of Heaven. Now enjoy the merciful face of the Father, and entrust to Him the journey of the Church, the Pauline Family and the Congregation; the lives of your family, the sisters who are preparing to celebrate the Provincial Chapter and the parish community that you so loved.

Sr. Marta Finotelli
Superior general

Rome, 24 November 2016
Saint Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest, and Companions, Martyrs of Vietnam