

PACE E BENE
GREETINGS TO ALL
MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2009



Crib in African style-

*The message
of hope
and of peace
reach to each
and every corner
of the world,
because in every person
be recognized
the image of the Son
of God,
who came as poor among
us to make
us rich in his
poverty*

*Sr Emmapia Bottamedi,
Superior General,
and the General Council*

WALKING WITH THE CHURCH...



The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated life publishes an Instruction on the service of authority and obedience

“The service of authority and obedience” is the title of an Instruction by the Congregation for Institutes of consecrated life and Societies of apostolic life which was published today by the Vatican and presented to an assembly of General Superiors at the Salesianum in Rome.

The fifty-page document points out that “the root of obedience” lies “in the search for God and His Will that is proper to the believer”. That is the reason why everybody is called to obey “authority first”. “Christian and reli-

gious obedience does not simply mean compliance with ecclesial or religious laws or dispositions, but it is a path of search for God that goes through the listening to his word, the coming to awareness of his plan of love, the fundamental experience of Christ, who is the Obedient, out of love, to the point of death”.

“Authority in religious life” must be viewed as a service to the community “so that the will of God should be both sought and carried out”.

The text deals also with the delicate theme of “difficult obedience”, that is when “what

is being asked to the religious is particularly burdensome to perform” or when -as St Francis of Assisi observed- “the subject sees things which are better and more useful for his soul than those which the superior orders him to do”. In such cases, reference is made to “the Obedient par excellence, Christ”, who “learned obedience from what he suffered”.

Furthermore, the document mentions possible “objections of conscience” from those who should obey, by making use of a still topical text by Paul VI. The reference to the conscience -it is said- “helps the religious view obedience not merely as a passive and unaccountable implementation of orders, but as a conscious undertaking of commitments, which they must welcome, being aware that they are actual fulfilments of the will of God”.

The function of authority is presented through the categories of the “human mediation” of the will of God. Which does not mean -it is pointed out- “that the superior’s will coincides perfectly and automatically with the will of God: it is an instrument of its knowledge, which, like all things human, is characterized by flaws and limitations”. It is however re-

minded that “every time (the religious) finds him/herself faced with a command given legitimately that the Lord requests obedience to the person in authority who, at that moment, represents him”.

The Instruction also mentions the fact that the exercise of authority may become “difficult” and the persons in authority may experience discouragement and tiredness, which might lead them to cave in or restrain from carrying out an adequate guidance and animation of the community”. It therefore urges persons in authority to “listen, to favour dialogue, sharing and co-responsibility, to create communion in spite of differences, to treat the persons that have been entrusted to him/her with mercy and to stimulate “fraternal obedience”.

Finally, a special emphasis is given to the religious community, as a place in which, “under the guidance of the superior, a “community discernment” must be made of the decisions to be taken”. And although the final decision is expected from the persons in authority, they “cannot ignore that the community is the best place in which to recognize



Benedict XVI: “Pauline Year Seen as Invitation for All Christians”

POPE SAYS IT IS CALL TO BE MISSIONARIES OF GOSPEL

Benedict XVI says the newly inaugurated Pauline Jubilee Year is an invitation to every Christian to be a missionary of the Gospel.

The Pope affirmed this Sunday before praying the

Angelus with thousands gathered in St. Peter’s Square. On Saturday, he inaugurated the Pauline year at a ceremony at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

“Historians in fact situate the birth of Saul -- who later became Paul -- about seven to 10 years after Christ’s,” the Holy Father noted. “Thus, after the

passage of about 2,000 years, I wanted to call this special jubilee, which will naturally have Rome as its center, especially the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls and the place of martyrdom at Tre Fontane.

“But it will involve the whole Church, beginning with Tarsus, Paul’s city of birth, and the other Pauline places in present day Turkey and the Holy Land, which are pilgrimage destinations, as well as the island of Malta, where the apostle came after a shipwreck and sowed the fruitful seed of the Gospel.”

The Pontiff said the “horizon of the Pauline Year cannot but be universal because St. Paul was, par excellence, the apostle of those who, in regard to the Jews, were ‘distant,’ and who, ‘thanks to the blood of Christ,’ were drawn ‘near.’”

“For this reason, today too, in a world that has become ‘small,’ but where many have not yet met the Lord Jesus, the Jubilee of St. Paul invites all Christians to be missionaries of the Gospel,” the Pope affirmed. “This missionary dimension must always be accompanied by that of unity, represented by St. Peter, the ‘rock’ on which Jesus Christ built his Church.

“As is underscored by the liturgy, the charisms of the two great apostles are complementary in building up the one people of God and Christians cannot offer a valid witness to Christ if they are not united.”

“The Pauline year, evangelization, communion in the Church and full unity among Christians,” Benedict XVI listed, “let us now pray for these great intentions, entrusting them to the celestial intercession of Mary Most Holy, Mother of the Church and Queen of the Apostles.”



THE GRACE OF THE ORIGINS

FROM THE MUSEUM OF "ST MARY OF THE ANGELS" MOTHER HOUSE
(Continuation...)

LAURA LEROUX: 1859- 1917

In 1858 the Duchess de Bauffremont left for Switzerland and Germany to undergo homeopathic treatments.

On the return trip (October 1859), on her way to Rome, she had to halt in Venice. It is here that the providential encounter with father Gregorio Fioravanti took place. She told him of her intention to found an Institute of Franciscan Tertiary Sisters, with the twofold aim to educate poor girls and help Missions.

At first, father Gregorio was wary of the Duchess' enthusiasm, but he was encouraged also by the Minister General of the Order and finally he adhered to the foundress' project and helped her to implement it

Owing to the Duchess' special devotion to Saint Anthony, it was established that the new foundation would rise in Gemona del Friuli, where there was already a Sanctuary that was dedicated to him. For the first foundation the Duchess chose former St Clare's convent, bought the buildings and started immediately the renovation and extension works.

On 21 April 1861, the canonical opening of the new Institute, which numbered already 53 novices from different countries, was solemnly celebrated in the cathedral. In the first two years, "St Mary of the Angels" Convent flourished extraordinarily but, in 1863, the Foundress, who had taken the name of Sr Maria Giuseppa of Jesus, besides being troubled by serious financial difficulties, started to have such health problems that her doctor suggested she took a long period of rest outside the Convent. Therefore, she left Gemona, although she kept the title of Superior until 1865. She returned to Gemona for a short time only in 1900, as the Duchess of Bauffremont. She died in Montecarlo, in the Principality of Monaco, on 3 April 1917. (from the didascallic panel)

There are only a few traces left of the brief but intense period during which our Foundress, guided by Father Gregorio, gave birth to our religious Congregation. However, they testify meaningfully to Mother Giuseppa's adhesion to Franciscan spirituality.

ENGRAVING OR LITHOGRAPHY WITH TREE SYMBOLIZING HOLINESS IN THE FRANCISCAN ORDER. 1860

It is a printing bearing father Gregorio's hand signature. As was probably customary with distinguished people, he donated it as a warm-hearted gesture to the Foundress, Mother Maria Giuseppa of Jesus, who was still a Passionist and a guest of the Sisters in St Francis of the Vineyard in Venice.

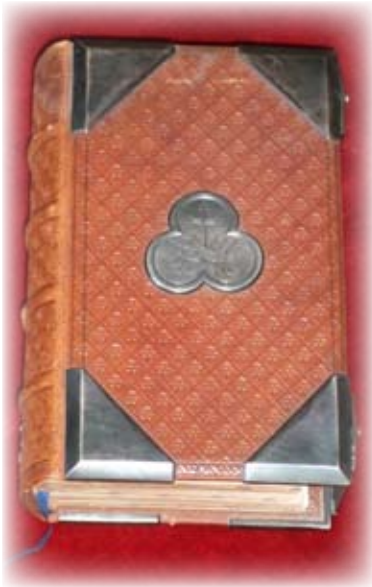
The dedication says: "Gregorio of Grotte di Castro / of the Order of Minors of the Regular Observance of our Father St Francis, Lett.e (Lecturer) Giub.o (Jubilate) / in



Theology, Provincial Minister of St Anthony's Province and the Lord's humble servant / To the most revered Mother Maria Gioseffa of Jesus, née L. (Laura) Leroux / P. (Princess) of B. (Bauffremont).
St Francis of the Vineyard in Venice 22 Jan 1860.

Fr Gregorio of Grotte di Castro / Prov Min."

From the stump, in which St Francis is portrayed, 113 images of Franciscan Saints branch out. At the centre, starting from above: image of Mary Immaculate; hand-written dedication by Father Gregorio; text of registration to the Franciscan Fraternity only out of gratitude and, below, the seal of the Provincial Minister of St Anthony. The engraving is the works of G. Contarini, 1839, Venice.



BREVIARIUM ROMANUM SERAPHICUM, ROME, TIBERINA, 1858.

The book illustrates Mother Giuseppa's final choice: by embracing Franciscan spirituality, after her encounter with Father Gregorio, she carried out her project: the foundation of an Institute of Franciscan Tertiary Missionary Sisters.

The binding of the breviary is elegant and refined. On the cover, lined with tooled leather bearing geometrical motives, the Franciscan coat of arms is imprinted on a metal plate. The edge is golden with brown floral motives; the following phrases are printed on the metallic locks: *Laudate Dominum de coelis* and *Laudate eum in excelsis*. The flyleaves (= inside covers) are covered with blue velvet.

The book contains engravings and illustrations about the lives of Jesus and St Francis.



SERAPHIC LOVE – ST CLARE'S ANGELIC LIFE

Milan, 1646

Handwritten note: Foundress' library



SAINT ANTHONY

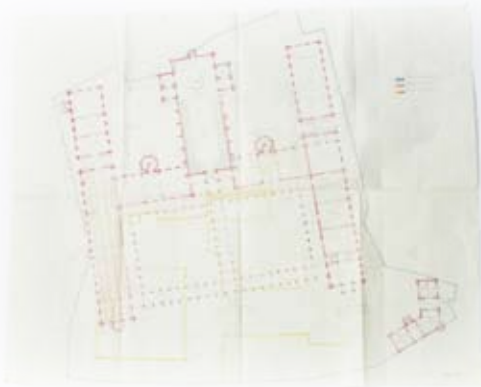
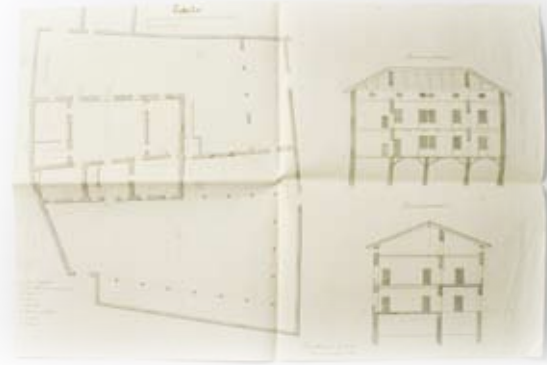
First half of 19th century.

The statue bears witness to the Foundress' profound devotion to the Saint, since she had started the foundation "to the greater glory of God and for the good of souls and with the help from St Anthony of Padua, whom I elected as the special protector of the Institute".

The statue was placed at one side of the altar in the church of the original Institute, while on the other side there was a statue of St Francis, which was destroyed by the earthquake.

PROJECT OF DI TRASFORMATION OF THE FERIGO MANSION (WHICH LATER BECAME THE SEAT OF THE STIGMATINE FATHERS) IN THE MONASTERY 1860

The project was drafted or commissioned by the Foundress, according to Father Gregorio: “In Gemona we had to start and continue the renovation of the house which had been bought in order to be turned into a Convent, according to the drawings that were sent from Venice by the Duchess herself... She hastened to make them quickly and to that end she had asked the plan of the whole building with its divisions”.



ONE OF THE FOUR PROJECTS OF THE NEW “ST MARY OF THE ANGELS” CONVENT

Mid-nineteenth century

pencil drawings, watercolours and inks on tracing paper. The drawings were made by the Foundress herself or made according to her instructions.



CHALICE AND PATEN

Second half of 19th century

The chalice, of neo-baroque style, is a small silverware work of Venetian or Friulian making. The Franciscan coat of arms is engraved on the foot of the chalice.

According to some sources, this chalice was used during the solemn opening ceremony of our Institute.



MARY IMMACULATE

about 1870

The small statue of the Virgin, carved in boxwood, with a refined gothic-style niche, was donated by the Foundress to the Superior General, Mother Assunta Ménard, during her last stay in Gemona in 1900. (From Sr Elena Facini's testimony).

In 1917, during the tragic period of World War I, the announcement of the Foundress' death reached Gemona.

LETTER EDGED IN BLACK ANNOUNCING THE FOUNDRRESS' DEATH. 1917

The letter, sent from the Principality of Monaco on 6 April 1917, was written by princess Antonietta de Mondarco to the Sisters of the Mother House. It says in French language:

“I write to you to communicate the death of the Duchess of Bauffremont on 3 April. She died in my arms, provided with all the sacraments like a saint and smiling, as a result of a cruel illness which lasted many months, was followed by a quick but misleading improvement, and finally by death. I ask you to keep her in your prayers, in consideration of the past”.

A very meaningful phrase was printed on the image: “Her life was a storm, her death a smile”.



FOUNDRRESS' LOCK OF HAIR 1917

Glass casket with gilded brass frame.

It contains the lock of hair sent to the Sisters of the Mother House by princess Antonietta de Mondarco, a devout memento of the Duchess.

The casket is kept in a small silver-plated box with a round glass on the lid.

**CRUCIFIX OF SR MARIA OF ST JOHN OF THE CROSS
(ADELAIDE PITTINI)**

Second half of the 19th century.

Wood and brass

Adelaide Pittini was born in Gemona in 1860 from a very numerous family. When she lost her father, at the end of 1862, she was adopted by the Duchess, together with Luisa Quaino. Both girls remained with Laura Leroux until 1877. With her sister of adoption, Adelaide joined the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, in the English convent of Bartestree-Hereford. There she donned the religious habit in 1882 and died a saintly death in 1889.

The crucifix was sent to Adelaide's mother by Sr Maria of St Andrew (Luisa Quaino, born in Udine in 1859 and deceased in the same Hereford convent in 1934). In 1994 a descendant of Adelaide Pittini's family donated the crucifix to the Sisters of “St Mary of the Angels” Convent.

(from: *Voices and silences for Luisa and Adelaide*, by Sr Eligia Capriz, Gemona 1994)



LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council went on with their works according to the six-year programme, in answer to the formation needs of the Congregation. In particular:

- The sisters from the various Provinces who celebrated their Jubilee in religious life in 2007 or 2008 were welcomed in the General House and took part in the renewal course on “Minority, the evangelical strength of fraternity”, which was organized for them from July 6 to July 20. By giving joyfully thanks to the Lord, they celebrated the jubilee on July 20.

- The preparation, and, later, the implementation of the second meeting of the historic-formative Commission, which took place in the General House from 7 to 19 September, was demanding but fruitful. Aware of the importance for the whole Congregation of the historic research that they had carried out, the Committee members worked together with readiness, following the suggestions of experts, bringing to light true spiritual treasures of our tradition.

- To our great joy and satisfaction, after a long wait and careful preparations, our wish was that we could be present in the village where our founder, Father Gregorio, was born, finally came true. Indeed, on 19 October, as was reported in an article, the new community in Grotte di Castro was opened with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration presided by the Bishop of Viterbo, Msgr Lorenzo Chiarinelli.

- The admission of new sisters to perpetual profession is always reason for joyful hope for the vitality of the Congregation:

- Sr M. Loida E. Pondang, Sr M. Nida D. Malanog and Sr M. Lirie Brahaj from “Mary Immaculate” Roman Province
- Sr M. Renée Mbida Essama and Sr M. Pascaline Edzimbi from “Saint Martyrs of Uganda” African Apostolic Region.

The Vicar General, Sr Cecilia Subiabre, was delegated by the Superior General, who at present is in Africa, to receive the vows of the three sisters from the Roman Province, who made their Perpetual Profession on 16 November, in Rome’s Provincial House.

- The Educational Project of the Congregation, updated during the meeting of the educators, which took place in Chile last April, was carefully examined before being definitively approved. It will be printed and distributed, so that, by referring to it, every educational institution can elaborate its own educational project.

- The six-year programme contemplates the theme on Mission for 2008-2009. The Council reflected on this subject for a long time in order to discern the lines of intervention at the formative and operational level.

- The opening of the Chapter of “Mary Immaculate” Roman Province on 26 December, will start the series of chapters of the Congregation’s institutions, which will take place according to the following schedule:

Latin American Province:	second half of January 2009;
French Province:	April 2009;
African Apostolic Region:	May or June 2009;
Venetian Province:	first half of July 2009;
Eastern Province:	second half of July 2009;
North American Province:	second half of August 2009;
Indian Province:	September or October 2009;

Besides praying, the General Council made a careful reflection on the themes of the chapter meetings, in order to discern “the signs of the times” in the light of the Spirit, in view of an authentic renewal of the whole Congregation.

- From 3 November to 9 December, the Superior General, Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, went on her canonical visit of the sisters in “Saints Martyrs of Uganda” African Apostolic Region, calling on the communities located in different places.

- On 8 December, the General Councillors Sr Germana Tomat, attended the solemn Eucharistic Celebration in Cavasagra (Province of Treviso) for the centennial of the presence of our Congregation in that church community.

- Before the beginning of the new pastoral and school year, a mandate was given to:

- Sr Beatrice Bifouma as Novitiate Mistress in Nkoabang, “St Martyrs of Uganda” Apostolic Region;
- Sr Chiaremilia Lavatori as Local Superior of the Asisium community (2nd triennium);
- Sr Rosangela Bregani as Local Superior of the community in Viole di Assisi (2nd triennium);
- Sr Margherita Menegazzi as Local Superior of the community in Grotte di Castro (1st triennium);
- Sr Gabriella Bernardi as Local treasurer of the Asisium community (1st triennium);
- Sr Loredana Borsato as Principal of the Asisium Institute (2nd triennium);
- Sr Ernesta Bilibio as Principal of the Asisium Primary School (1st triennium).

THE HISTORIC COMMISSION IN GROTTE DI CASTRO



Our Lady has come among us! It is a lovely feast! It is with these and many other invocations written on thousands of leaflets that poured in from above that the “Descent of Our Lady” was welcomed by a vast crowd, who gathered since early in the morning on September 7 in the nice Basilica of Our Lady of Suffrage in Grotte di Castro, in the Italian Province of Viterbo. The beautiful statue of Our Lady was actually carried down slowly from its niche amid songs and prayers from the throng, while a shower of messages bearing invocations to Mary made this event even more suggestive.

We too, scattered among the crowd, took part into this moment of intense and sincere Marian devotion. The event, which has been renewed every ten years since a long time ago, is prepared with big celebrations and celebrated solemnly; it attracts people not only from the surrounding villages but from all the Lazio Region, tourists from the nearby Bolsena Lake, people of every age and walk of life. Therefore, it was an opportunity that we could not have missed to pay homage to our founder Fr Gregorio, a joyful start for the works of the historic-formative Commission, gathered in the General House from September 6. By walking along the village streets, splendidly decked out, and entering Casa Fioravanti, a stone’s throw from Our Lady Sanctuary, our thought naturally went to Fr Gregorio. Back in 1828, as he was still a child, he undoubtedly took part into the celebration, which had been organized very solemnly, according to the history of the Sanctuary.

From September 8, in the chapter hall of the General House, the members of the Historic Commission coming from all Province of the Congregation (Sr Teresa Della Pietra, Sr Petra Zanghi, Sr Beatrice Skorti, Sr Armelle Kosta, Sr Tiziana Tonini, Sr Fides Lorenzon, Sr Georgette Bininga and Sr Ann-



namma Kumpalathu) listened carefully to the speakers: Fr Giancarlo Rocca spp, Fr Giuseppe Buffon ofm and Sr Antonietta Pozzebbon, who presented historic and archive management criteria and started studying the quantitative data by examining the Congregations's statistics.

The sisters in the commission searched for historical documents and rediscovered our rich tradition, studied with testimonies of consecrated life lived with faith and passionate love, sometimes even heroic acts, carried out with simplicity and a spirit of authentic minority.

On September 18, as the meeting was drawing to an end, we were again invited in Grotte di Castro. In the large celebrations programme of the tenth anniversary of the "Descent of Our Lady", an afternoon had been set apart for the commemoration of the famous townsman, our founder Fr Gregorio Fioravanti. Sr Antonietta Pozzebbon and Fr Gianni Califano ofm, vice Postulator of the Order, presented the figure of Fr Gregorio and aroused lively interest in the audience.

In the village we are now called "the nuns of Fr Gregorio" and people are expecting joyfully the arrival of the sisters of the new community. The Bishop of Viterbo himself, Msgr Lorenzo Chiarinelli, announced it to the Christian community on September 7, during the solemn celebration in honour of Our Lady and the good news has spread quickly and has been welcomed with great satisfaction not only by the Parish priest, Fr Tancredi Muccioli, and by the villagers, but also by the people from the villages nearby.

The lucky coincidence of the meeting of the historic-formative Commission with the celebrations in honour of Our Lady in Grotte di Castro contributed to promote and spread the devotion to our founder, Fr Gregorio, whom we feel increasingly present in the life of every sister and in that of the whole Congregation.



THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART OPEN A HOUSE IN THE FOUNDER'S VILLAGE



The Grotte di Castro parish community will remember the year 2008 first of all because of the tenth Anniversary of Our Lady of Suffrage, which was celebrated from 7 to 12 October (see article). 2008, however, and especially the month of October, will also be remembered because of another big event, which coincided with the World Missionary Day: the opening of a Religious House by the Congregation of Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart (FMSH).

The decision to open a new house in Grotte di Castro was due to the fact that the FMSH Congregation was founded in 1861 by Laura Leroux and by Father Gregorio Fioravanti ofm, who was born in Grotte di Castro. For a long time, during the General Chapters of the Congregation, mention had been made of opening a Religious house in the founder's village. Finally, in the month of October, this wish has come true.

The FMSH Congregation draw the source of their spirituality from the contemplation of Jesus Christ Crucified. The specific mission of this Congregation is evangelization through prayer for the announcement and welcome of the Gospel, direct participation into the Church's missionary activity and pastoral ministry, as well as the mission of education and charitable assistance.

On Sunday 19 October, the local Bishop, Msgr Lorenzo Chiarinelli, who granted the permission to



open the House, presided the Eucharistic Celebration of welcome for the three Sisters who make up the religious Community of Grotte di Castro. It is a missionary Community in the true sense of the word, since the Sisters come from Italy (Sr Margherita), from Bolivia (Sr Martina) and from India (Sr Mini Alex).

Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, the Superior General, and the General Council, also attended the celebration. Many sisters coming from Rome joined the feast too. The songs, which had been carefully prepared, the service of the altar servers and the uniformed presence of the Sisterhood of Our Lady of Suffrage made the Celebration all the more solemn. The parish priest, Fr Tancredi Muccioli, was also accompanied by Fr Angelo Maria Patrizi. At the end of the Holy Mass and before the final blessing, the parish priest, the Superior General and the Mayor, Alessandro Viviani, made their thanksgiving speeches. To greet the Sisters, a fraternity party was prepared, with the help of many parishioners, at the Conference Room of the former Town Hall.

The religious community will take part in the Parish pastoral activity and they will teach catechism and evangelize, in order to make the parish community grow spiritually and religiously. According to the Congregation's own Charism, the Sisters will pay special attention to the old and sick by providing also nursing care, in a spirit of communion with the parish priest.

We would like to express our filial thanks to the Bishop Msgr Lorenzo Chiarinelli for the encouragement that he gave right from the start up to the 19 October event.

We would like to thank the Superior General, Sr Emmapia, and the Council, for accepting the request to open a House in their Founder's village.

We would like to thank the Diocesan Treasurer, Fr Giusto Neri, for actually assisting skilfully in completing the paperwork which was necessary to open the new Religious House.

(From Avvenire - Lazio Regione sette)

MINORITY, EVANGELICAL STRENGTH OF THE FRATERNITY

JUBILEE 2007 - 08



*“WE HAVE COME FROM MANY DIFFERENT WAYS, NOW WE ARE IN ONE HEART...BECAUSE, THE LORD HAS DECIDED SO.”
(From an italian song)*

These words introduced us to the Special time of the Renewal organized for us who have celebrated their Silver and Golden Jubilee of religious life in these two years. We have come to celebrate with our religious Community here in the “Feast of Love”.

Sunday July 6th, we have started in Asisium, in our Generalate our journey of this Spiritual and Fraternal Renewal of Praise and thanks to our God for having called us to Him. Sr. Emmapia Bottamedi, our Superior General and the Councillors have received us with great affection and they have introduced us to the dynamic of these days which the Lord has given to us. We have started with different Conferences which proceeded with the Retreat. Sr. Emmapia have animated us to live it with great joy this particular experiences.

MINORITY IN THE BIBBLE (Monday July 7th)

“Like Jesus, we too must transform ourselves in little things and we must become bread for others. (Personal reflection)

In this subject, Fr. Anthony Clemenza OFM have analyzed the following terms in relation to the MINORITY” in the Old Testament. a)- Minor: In the Old Testament this word does not exist: there are persons who live as Minors, Simple and Poor. Let us observe how the minority is lived in the internal of the family,

nuclei in which God choose not the best or the most important, but the little ones. That is not yet taken in to consideration. It is very clear in the story of David, his father does not think about him at all, in the moment when his family was visited by Propheet Samuel.

Another category of minors that God choose is in relationship to the social category. God chooses simple person of His people, to announce His messege and so we can find: Moses, Jeremiah, Amos. God chooses even women who in His time were considered inferiors. God make them active partecipants of the stroy of Israeal, in His plan of salvation. And the women have responded to this call of God by manifesting themselves as courage ous, creatives, industrious,contractors, able top up every hope in Him. Jesus chooses the sinners, prostitutes, people of bad reputation and so God makes to reflect on our form of judging others.. God the Father and His Son choose them because they love them and they don't stop on the human factors on what we give the importance as: the beauty, the intelligence," what is shining". God looks those who does not count for others. Jesus Himself makes us know that: the Kingdom of God is like the mustard seed". As St Paul reminds us that"...there are not many learned among you..." God chose the weak who are not counted...

b)Poor : In the Old Testament these are concrete poor, the "ANAWIM" the termi that defines one who is curved, in attitude of one who serves, a slave in the condition of obligation or voluntary. It is defined "AD-VION" one who desires to subdue for his proper will. So, uniting these two terms, it is deduced that the poor is who feels humiliated till the earth to be consoled with God, it is the one who is raised up for His Love. The term "Poverty" is united to that of Humility, the word which gives "HUMUS=EARTH", this is reported with justice, for this " it will be very different fortune of the poor from that of the wicked. (ps.37). The Propheet makes himself poor" in the name of who has no voice" Elija is keeping himself in favor of Nabot and the accusation of Amos.(5:5-7) It is very strong when he says:" what is the use of your going to the Sanctuary to pray, and after wards you are un just with the poor?". Today we must present in our life that Poverty is close to us. It can be that the sister of our Community, who invites me to be the poor. To take conscience of my poverty, because God can choose me as His favorite.

c) -Emptiness or sense of emptiness: it is difficult to realize the Minority. It consists to see God in the darkness of our difficult moments, where God is hidden, does not listen to us reminds in His silence which hurts us. This is lived by Abraham, Jacob and all the men and women who have Consacrated their life to God. Even we see Francis, Clare of Assisi, Theresa diAvila, and many many others.The believer knows and hope with his " eyes of fatih", the God passes through the nothing and He is present, when He wants,when the time is matured for that person,when we empty ourselves of every thing to receive Him, but this not yet automatic, even it is not less poetic, it is a reality,certain time gives sadness to the Soul. But in the mesaure in which each one knows his faith and hope, then we reach to see the luminosity of God Himself.



MINORITY, EVANGELICAL STRENGTH OF THE FRATERNITY. (Tuesday, July 8th)

“It is not possible to be minor, without being little, of the less importante: we are called to be “micros”, in a world of “megas”. (Fr.Bini)

With this affirmation, Father Bini, the ex Minister General of the friar minors, introduced us to the topic of MINORITY IN THE FRATERNITY.

At the time of Jesus, “Micros” did not have any importance and



He raised them of a category. He called them to His service. “ It will not be the same among you.... on the contrary who wants to be a first, will be the least.... who wants to be a great , will be the servant of others... ”that means...be little. Who says this is Jesus Who gave us an example above all in the washing of the feet of His Apostles. He made Himself servant of all. He invites us to enter in His King-

dom with only a “Great” condition: to become the Child. The child always depends on others, he trusts and abandons himself to others...he needs his mother. In MT 18: 1-4, Jesus put the children at the center and they are so proud of Him. Every thing is new and trustful to the child. At this point, it is better for us to ask: are we looking at the life with excitement? If we find that we have lost by abandoning from the attitude of self denial and trust in which speaks to us in Ps.131” Peaceful and Serene as a child who is in the arms of his mother”.

The Evangelist Luke in using the word”Father”, invites us to discover the mystery of God, through the Wisdom of the little ones. This is the Minority and if we don’t make this journey, we are not ourselves, and we will represent to others who we are not, and we don’t be who God wants us to be.

In Romans 12:vs. 16, the Apostle invites us to “ have the same sentiments of Christ in us...not to make us an idea of being too high.It is an invitation to descend, to bend on the little things, and to be minors; which is the strength of the Franciscan Spirituality. We Franciscans know that the Poverty is something of negativeness, it is to live in liberty, joy and it is emptyng ourselves to enter in to the “Hidden Tresaure”, which is Christ, the real sense of our life. For this, Francis, wanted to his brothers: Frairs Minor.

REFLECTION ON THE RULE AND CONSTITUTIONS IN RELATION TO THE SPIRIT OF MINORITY. (Wednesday- July 9th)
 “.....the Sisters serve the Lord in Minority, Humility and Joy...”(Const,17)

Sr Antonietta Pozzebon brought us to taste”our things” the Spirituality of our Origins. With Power point, we could observe the treasures of our Religious Family, which penetrated not only in our eyes but it entered in our hearts.

The term Minority in our Constitution contains our being Franciscan Sisters, our form of being , the philosophy of our life, the mentality and the heart, as disciples of Christ. This is our Code of identity. This expression supposes to recognize the brother as a gift who takes us to the common exercise of the corresponsability and of the participation, to the interpersonal meeting, to the prayer and to the study, and to the service of the Evangelization. To be Minor is a Code of our sanctity, because, it reminds us that the only journey is the humility and the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The humility is the base and the substance of the Minority, in which we recognize our proper limitations and the Sovereignty of God on the whole creation. God made Himself man and serve the man, by offering Himself to us by His death on the Cross. The second and another Code is: Minority is a call to not appropriate of anything we received from the Lord. It is to establish a relation of respect of gratitude and of solidarity with Him.

The Minority invites us to an attitude of not to a centralism, to reach others it invites us to open ourselves to the realities through the Inter religious Dialogue.



Sr. Antonietta helped us to discover the important aspects of our Minority; aspects which we did not yet know. This discovery helps us to live in our own Communities as real Minors, it made us to think and understand the real beauty of our Poverty which must bring us to discover the real sense of our being Minors and poor, depending on God for every thing.

THE VISIT TO GROTTA DI CASTRO..(Thursday. July 10th)

With great joy in the morning of July 10th, we started our journey towards GROTTA DI CASTRO, the native place of Our Venerated Father Gregory Foravanti. The man of God who together with our dear Foundress Laura Leroux, Duchess of Baffremont, gave life to our religious family.

The path opened in front of us of beautiful gardens and places of extreme beauty with the Lake of Bolsena. We climbed the city, walking for these streets characterized of Medieval people, all this reminded us about the beautiful City of Assisi. We have come to the "Church of Our lady of Suffrage" in which the Statue of our Blessed mother descends from the Altar every 10 years. In fact, on the 8th of September of this year will be celebrated the Marian feast, awaited for many of its inhabitants. The Parish priest, Fr. Tancredi, received us with lot of love and he celebrated the Holy Mass for us. After that, we visited the paternal house of our Father Gregory, an important treasure for our religious Family. Then we went to greet an important person for us, MR ALEXANDER FORAVANTI, who is the direct descendant of Fr. Gregory. Then we went to visit our future Community "Father Gregory" which was then opened in October 19th. After all these, we shared our Fraternal Agape with Pizza for all on the side of the lake of Bolsena.

WHAT TO DO BECAUSE THE COMMUNITY LIFE BECOMES FRATERNITY. (Friday July 11th.)

THE LORD HAS GIVEN ME THE BROTHERS.....

Sr Cecilia presented to us one of the topics more discussed, the Vital requisites for our life of consecration to the Lord: the life in Community. The fraternity is a very important element, almost as a person who wants to grow must take food, she needs to take care of herself, without getting tired of her "presence", without ignoring her, otherwise she gets "Sick" and because of this important part of our Consecrated life can "Die". We must have present ed that the fraternità is a "Person" not always easy to deal with, and not very few times asks our great strength and firmness to love her; we need to love her in all the simple moments of every day



A group of Jubilerians standing near the Holy water Fountain in marmo gift of our Foundress Laura Leroux to Pope Pious IX in 1860 for the St Paul Basilica.

and this request from us continual efforts. By reflecting of this topic, we came to understand that we all know lot about our Fraternity, but we need to out them in to practice. The most important attitude which allow us to make Fraternity is to come out of ourselves and to go toward our Sister, understanding her, respecting her, loving her even though she does things that we don't like..or wrong. Because , not always it is corresponded and this work we must always do, in, with and for Jesus.We have worked in

groups with this basic question: What to do because our Community becomes Fraternity? We were given a list f difficulties which block the Community life. This became object of our reflection, first in personal forms then in groups . From all the situations found we chose three points . We could see that the present difficulties in our Communitits are more or less the same, as for example: a)Our lake of sincerity and the inability of listening to others and dialogue , b)Activism, c) lack of trust among the Sisters and with our Superiors, d) lack of respect and love e)lack of acceptance and understanding of the Sisters. And by answering to the initial question, it was concluded that if each sister makes an effort and consider these difficulties, and try each day to transform them in to positive aspects, and then these can help us for the better growth of our Communites and to the same way they can become a gift filled with harmony.

THE VISIT TO ST PAUL BASILICA (saturday july 12th)

“it is not me who lives; the lord lives in me, for me to die is to gain, my life, Lord is in you”

Another great gift we received was to visit the great Basilica of our Apostle Paul. Our guide for this was a St.Paul Priest, he illumined us of great joy when he was talking of St.Paul, of this Cathedral and of the dedication of this to the Apostle Paul.We have visited and prayed in the Place of His Martyrdom, and he recalled us the missionary Spirit of “the Apostle of the People”.

THE RETREAT IN CHIUSI- AD AVERNA, (Sunday July 13th to Friday july 18th)

In the early morning we started our journey towards La Verna, for our week retreat. We stoped in Assisi. From far away, we have seen “the Hill of paradise”, the small city, respect to the territory, but very great in its spirit, the City known in all over the world for its special Man, the Brother of all: Francis.

We left Assisi and we directed to Chiusi- La Verna, the place very beautiful which is found near the mountain...the Sanctuary of the La Verna.

Father Adriano Busatto, the Frair Minor guided us these days of reflection, Father introduced us to the topic riferring to that of the course of Renewal: “Minority, the Evangelical Strength of the Fraternity.”

Minority: I am I in front of God, as His creature, invited to be my self, observed by the lord with love and mercy. To have these sentiments help us not only to discover who we are, but also my brother or sister. This help us to take care of her, to be with her, as a”Mother”, as St,Francis says, by helping others we find God and so helping us in silence to “Find Him” in our life.

The experience of St.Francis:”the Lord gave me brothers...” is all a project of life, of which not only we must be in-



involved but we need to understand that it is a reality which covers me and calls me to open and to give of my self.

THE JUBILEE CELEBRATION... FEAST...(Sunday - July 20th)

There I am, here I am lord I come.... to my lord I trust and he bends himself to lift me up...(from a common song in Italian)

With great joy, we walked towards the Altar, accompanied by the sweet melody of a Song of Love to the Lord. The Eucharist, presided by Father Adriano Buratto OFM, was joined by other celebrants, our sisters who came from the different Communities, people from our families and our friends... The Celebration was beautiful and full of symbols. Each Jubilarian has received a Candle, as the sign of her mission to continue to be the carrier of this moment to the entire world, without being blown off by any obstacle. We should be like the prudent Virgin who followed the Spouse, moved by the strength of the Holy Spirit, who guides our path and our hearts.

In his homily the Priest recommended us that we must always show in our life the Love of God which is in us. Our mission consists in being Carriers of this Love to all our brothers and sisters, especially to those who are alone and the most abandoned, making us ambassadors of Hope, instruments of Peace and Good, the gifts of the Lord. We are the presence of the Lord and the anticipation of His Kingdom here on earth.

WHAT SHALL I GIVE TO MY LORD FOR EVERY THING HE HAS GIVEN TO ME.

(cfr. Sl 115,12)



ASISIUM AND ITS 40 TH JUBILEE... RUBIN

It is our custom to celebrate Silver Jubilee or the Golden Jubilee, some times we celebrate that of Diamond also....but it is very rare when we hear about celebration of “ the 40th or Rubin” that means the events of some thing in its fourty years of existence!

If it is true, anyway , that each anniversary is or can become an opportunity of our historical remembrance, it remains attached to us also as in any date it contains the meaning and of that particular importance, which can be expressed by who knows to receive this joyful convenience to celebrate it.

This is what we experienced , we all present here in our Community “Asisium”, General Council and Community “S.Heart”, who during the year 2008 we decided to commemorate here with joy and simplicity of 40 years of foundation of our Institue, the transfer from our old Generalate which was in Rome Piazza Pitagora to our new Generalate at Asisium.

From the beginning of every plan, from the part of one sister and the others,to recall our attention to that special date of 1968-2008, remained as a simple primary object that from always our tradition and our places remains very natural, really spoteneous: that is to render all our praise and thanks to the Lord and to keep at the center of every historical revocation to the responsability to thank Him the best way we could.

On the June 21st especially, for us also the sisters of Asisium, infact it was very nice day- as for always we do very often to fix on thousands anniversary that is our story proposes- to be found once again to conemplate the mystery of the Divine Incarnation in time, to riscover the method in which God wants “ to be Present”, that of His “being present” among us and for us.





In the moment of Prayers and of the celebration after that, that from then in many occasions we could spend together in fraternal joy, not only in the Community or in the School, but also with our Jubilarians always we could understand that joy and the sharing of those ineffable sentiments which wants to translate in common and deep need of Praise, of thanks, of blessings to our Lord. Piazza Pitagora 1935, the second Generalate, after the Mother house. Piazza Pitagora and its surprising Scolastic activity. The restriction of the two buildings of the Institute St. Elizabeth.... The courageous plan of Mother Tarcisia Bracale' and her Council..... The foundation Stone for the new complex the new

building project in via Grottarossa..... June 21st 1968: the solemn inauguration of the Generalate which corresponded the arch of these 40 years..... While together we recalled, the pleasant reconstruction of it, in a power point we could see the significant piece of our story, between the joyful exclamations of few and the curiosity of others, all us wanted to repeat and share the strong emotion of us in front of the images we were seeing. And it was again a way of telling us about the mysterious presence of God, His being with us here. Closer to us, His providential care for us, as we normally define Him, the sign of Father who never passes, who never ends, but who pluses lively even to the death of the things, even in the passing of all of us. The pictures and the forms of different things and the not expectation of all open to us the past: the white-dressed Novices, the Chapter Assemblies, the young Students., the responsibility of study and of Formation, the Infirmary where we assisted, the passing of our missionaries after their rest, recurrences of Jubilees, period of formation of our Juniors.... and the faithful group of our Community sisters, in unrepeatable activities.

Certainly, only who have lived the historical moment of the situation, can understand the intrinsic value of this Anniversary which we remember today! The sequence of pictures, with the alternation of dates, the projection of the personal, the facts made us to understand that it is true even this anniversary was not only to celebrate it but it was to enter before any thing, else in desired the real significant of its life, of who" has lived it", it was to become one with the physical experience of "labour pain", it is to admire the intelligent planning of its project, at the end to make it proper in the developments, participating in the involvements of the hope, to share the satisfaction of the results.... of yesterday.... as of today.

As this the feast continues.

It is every thing new... the light of Rubin, to reassume of the rays of new hope. Which from the stem of our Generalate, with precious hereditary received and made it personal now in our sisters who guide us today, the Superior General Sr. Emmapia and her Council, sending us to be other rays of light, on the way of the new story which attend us.



Sister Antonietta Pozzebon

FROM THE HOUSE OF FORMATION

INTERNATIONAL JUNIORATE



On 14 October 2007, in the General House in Rome, the International Juniorate was launched, which is a time that includes the period of temporary vows and in which *the sister is put in a position to examine thoroughly her commitment to consecration and mission through an increasingly authentic experience of the requirements that God's call implies, in order to provide an ever renewed answer. It is also a time of progressive insertion in the apostolic mission of the Congregation, in a spirit of generosity and faithful love to the Father and to mankind. (Const. 94).*

The members of our Juniorate community are: the Mistress, Sr Bernarda Alvarez, from St Anthony Latin American Province, and us, 7 young sisters from different Provinces of our Congregation: Sr Shaiby Paul, Sr Nirmala Buradagunta and Sr Karuna Minj, from "Holy Family" Province, India; Sr Miriam Oyarzo (Chile) from St Anthony Latin American Province; Sr Elka Stanava (Bulgaria) and Sr Anabel Malabanan (Philippines) from "St Elizabeth" Oriental Prov-



ince and Sr Danute Anceryte (Lithuania), from “St Louis IX” Province.

Our programme consists mainly in the interiorization of the Franciscan missionary charism of the Congregation, in the service of evangelization and based on love, by experiencing a strong ecclesial dimension, taking advantage of the wonderful opportunity to be in Rome, the centre of Christianity, with many chances to feel that we are the Church, the true “People of God”, who are wandering in the world. We are making a beautiful experience of internationality and interprovinciality within our community.

Formation is always a constant and responsible commitment that must be undertaken while being aware that it is a renewal affecting all aspects and times of the person and of life. During this period, we benefit from a personal support, which helps us

young sisters to take on the responsibility of our path of conversion and fidelity, in order to proceed towards perpetual profession fully aware that we will unite with Christ for all our life.

As our Constitutions say, this period requires from us a human, spiritual, doctrinal, apostolic and professional formation (see Const. 95); that is the reason why we, young sisters, harmonize our spiritual and fraternal life through apostolic initiatives and especially through our commitment to study, by attending the Institute of Franciscan Spirituality and the Institute of Religious Sciences at the Pontifical University Antonianum in Rome, where we get a wealth of knowledge and especially of intercultural and formative experiences within the Franciscan family.

We would like to thank the Lord, Giver of every good thing, for granting us this time, and we would also like to thank first our Superior General Sr Emmapia Bottamedi, who is always close to us and has given us





the opportunity to implement this formation; we would like to thank the General Councillors for their time and care, and our Provincial Superiors, who accompany us and allow us to get formed today in order to live in joy and in the donation of our mission tomorrow. Thanks to the “Asisium” community, who have welcomed us; we are grateful to them because they help us grow every day in order to give an answer in Franciscan joy, a total response to God’s love.

The Juniorate community



XXVIII Franciscan March walking towards Assisi

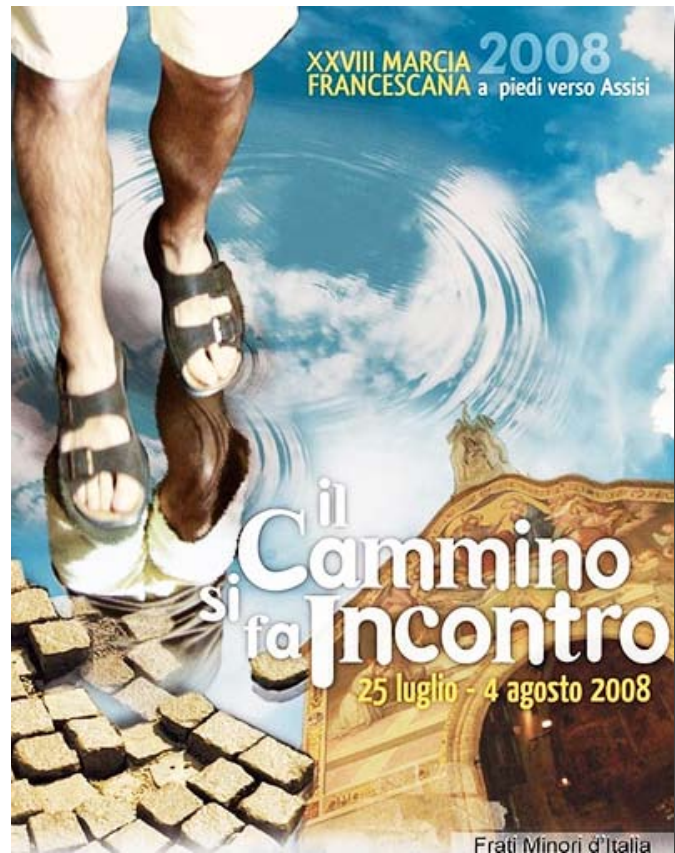
Next to St Francis' tomb there is a lit lamp whose oil is offered every year by a different Italian region. In 1980 it was Tuscany's turn. On that occasion, some Tuscan Franciscan young people decided to re-enact, on foot, St Francis' last trip from mount Verna, where he had been marked by the stigmata, up to Assisi. The organizers expected about thirty young people... but over 100 of them turned up!

The following year, the March had already become a national event, with the participation of four groups. Today, over 1,500 young people walk from every corner of Italy to reach the Porziuncola on 2nd August, the feast of Pardon, in order to celebrate together God's merciful love.

This year, we Sr Miriam Oyarzo and Suor Elka Stanava, sisters from the International Juniorate Community, decided to share in this experience, from 25 July to 2nd August, in St Francis' footsteps, together with over 180 young people and the friars from "Peter and Paul" Roman Province. Walking along the

roads of the Rieti Valley and crossing some villages of Lazio, we met many people who enriched us with their testimonies: many young people, friars and nuns, who were enthusiast to pray, sing, rejoice

for small things, standing the cold, the rain, discomforts and temporariness, but sharing their will to grow, toil and build a community. We decided to start our Franciscan March right where the centre of Christianity lies, that is Saint Peter's Basilica; in this way, we lived our days with the Apostle Peter's figure and experience in the background; with him, we outlined our own experience of faith. We walked singing and explaining the reason of our efforts so that people could understand it in their





heart of hearts; we kept quiet in order to reach our inner self and we celebrated everywhere we went, infecting all the people who were looking at us, telling them the meaning of our walk.

Therefore, the Franciscan March is a proposal for young people who want to make a journey which may be above all an opportunity to meet with their own truth: reach inside their

desires, their expectations and fears. A path which also opens itself to the encounter with other people, with those who walk the same way and share the joy and toil of the way. And at the same time it is for us an opportunity to examine our formation and our consecrated life, by serving with serene listening and a supporting smile many young people who, like us, wish to fix their eyes on Christ through the life of St Francis. In this way, the encounter may become an experience of simple sharing, of hearty solidarity and of fraternity which is open to everyone.

Finally, the March made it possible for us to meet the Lord Jesus, our teacher and brother, whom we were able to testify through our joy of consecrated women, as we could realize once more that He walks by our side, that He delicately puts Himself into our shoes to tell us that we are not alone in the path of life but that He is with us and accompanies and takes care of us.

The walk opened to the joy of the encounter with the Pardon in the Porziuncola, in Assisi and with the warmth of an embrace. Our passage in the Porziuncola was the final goal of all our efforts: we let ourselves be touched by the Father's love and mercy.

We are grateful for this opportunity to grow and we would like to remember it as the "grace" of an encounter with many youth and people who even today follow Francis' fascination and we wish to all "marchers" of life... a good walk in the Lord.

*Sr Miriam Oyarzo and
Sr Elka Staneva*



“ST JOSEPH” NOVITIATE PROVINCE “HOLY FAMILY” - INDIA

Carmel Nagar, Vijayawada, 4th September 2008

4 September 2008 is an unforgettable day for us as we, Sujatha, Devamatha, Lucy Rani, Parimala and Shoba were given special attention through the rite of initiation into the Religious life, that is the Canonical year of our Novitiate. The celebration was simple but very significant for us. In order to share our joy the sisters from near by communities also were present.



The day dawned with melodious music of praise and thanks and we joined the creation to thank God Almighty for calling us to religious life, to praise and thank him unceasingly and glorify him through our exemplary life charitable deeds. We are well aware of the graciousness of his call and we remain in silent wonder repeating with our blessed Mother ‘ the lord has done marvelous for us...holy is his name. “The Novitiate is the beginning of the radical following of Christ.” These words were re-echoing in our ears as we were standing for the ceremony. We were given the white sari during the rite, as the symbol of purity, and our re –entering into the chapel by wearing it with the burning lamps in our hands were very meaningful and significant. Our Provincial Superior Rev. Sr. Maddalena Moro gave a beautiful message reminded us of the importance of this period of Novitiate, that we are called to follow Jesus who is poor, obedient and chaste, following the example Blessed Virgin Mary who consecrated herself totally to God and to His divine plan for her.

We expressed our gratitude to God for choosing us to follow Him in this Franciscan Family following the life of Prayer, Penance, Silence, study and work. We are glad to put us in the school of Christ in order to form us for the future mission, that is to make known His redemptive love to every human being who wait for his coming.

Sr. Maddalena entrusted us to our Mistress Sr. Mini Joseph, and after the final hymn we all had an hour of Eucharistic Adoration. We thanked the lord for sowing this seed of religious vocation in our hearts, and we asked him to continue to guide our steps to serve him faithfully. We also thanked the Lord for the gift of our Franciscan Religious family, where we experience his love and care through our superiors.

We sincerely thank our superiors for guiding us we continue to pray for them that God may Guide and direct them always in their great responsibilities as spiritual guides of our Congregation.

With grateful hearts Novices Sujatha, Devamatha, Lucy Rani, Parimala and Shoba.

St. Joseph Novitiate, Carmelnagar, Vijayawada

PROVINCE “HOLY FAMILY” - INDIA

RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

*Carmel Nagar, Vijayawada,
8th September 2008*

*“We have contemplated,
O God, the marvels of your love”*



8 September 2008 was a day of joy for all of us as our Novices Sophia and Lucy said “Yes” to the Lord. The long awaited day has arrived with its charm and beauty. They prepared themselves to offer their lives to the Lord, through their religious profession of chastity, poverty and obedience. We could notice the joy of their hearts in their faces, the emotions and sentiments of gratitude to the Lord for calling them and accepting them as His Spouses.

The rite of Profession was very simple and touching. The novices entered in the chapel accompanied by their parents, priests and sisters. During the rite of religious profession they removed the veil and the little crown which adorned their head and pronounced the vows as a symbol of their consecration to God. Then they received the religious habit from the hands of the Bishop. The choir sang a melodious hymn while they entered in the chapel dressed in religious habit and with lighted lamps in their hands which they placed on the alter later.

The Bishop of Vijayawada His excellency Prakash Mallavarappu who presided the Holy Eucharist, gave a beautiful sermon, in which he asked the sisters to lead a life which really respond to the demands of discipleship. He added that our life must be a deep sign of God’s love here on earth.

Sr. Maddalena Moro, our Provincial Superior received them in to our Religious family with much joy and she encouraged them to be faithful to the Lord always and everywhere. Sr. Sophia and Lucy were touched by the expressions of fraternal love and family feeling in a deeper way in receiving the felicitations of our Mother General , Sr. Emmapia Bottamedi and her councilors. Faxes and emails from sisters of other provinces etc. We thank the Lord for the gift these young sisters in our Congregation and also for our Superiors for their love and support. As we thank one and all for their prayerful support, we also wish and pray for our newly professed that God may always help them to respond to their call persevere in it with enthusiasm and courage. May God be praised. .

Sr Mini Joseph St. Joseph Novitiate Carmelnagar.

APOSTOLIC REGION

“SS. MARTIRI D’UGANDA

RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

Cameroun, 11th August 2008

August 11th 2008, on the feast of St Clare, there was the ceremony of the Religious Profession of our 4 Sisters: Lilian Azieshi (Cameroun), Angele Mokoko and Lucie Bosila (Congo) and Victorine Mborra (Central Africa). It was held in the parish Church of the Nkobag mission where

is the Regional Superior Sr Giavanna Craighero.

The date was really appropriate for our young

Sisters, St Clare has been at the center for reminding them as the Model; of real Consecrated life in the Franciscan Spirit of Minority, Simplicity and the Joy.

The presence of the Provincial Superior Sr Luisangela Severin of the St. Mary of the Angel Province-Gemona together with Sr. Chiarafrancesca Cappelletto, the mission incharge has been very significant in this circumstance to accompany Sr. Victorine Moimbena, the native of Maigaro' (Central Africa).

The suggestive ceremony, prepared with very much care in every moment is characterized by symbols of African culture, have seen our four Sisters profoundly happy to be Consecrated to God, in pronouncing the vows, of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, all the sisters, family members, friends gave their assurance in supporting them with their prayers and witness, the journey of our new Sisters whom God gave to our Congregation.





Province "Mary Immaculate"

PERPETUAL VOWS

SR LOIDA PONDANG, SR NIDA MALANOG E LIRIE BRAHAJ

16 November 2008 - ROME - Italy

THE DAY OF GRACE AND FEAST



The day is filled with grace. One of those days when the Spirit speaks to the heart with emotional meaning of the song of songs, with the desire of the bride, and bridegroom, anticipate the eternal joy of being together that started , which will never end.

The emotion felt from the beginning of the hours, find its expression in the Solemn Celebration. The Sisters were there from the whole Province, made crown to the candidates, together with our Vicar General Sr.Cecilia Subiabre and Sr. Ermenegilda and the

General Councillors: Sr.Paola, Sr.Gracy, Sr.Germana and Sr.Augusta our General Secretary.

A long procession started towards the Altar and the Celebrant Fr. Massimo Fusarelli, receives: Sr.Lirie,Sr.Nida, sr.Loida in the name of the holy Church.

The eyes follow them, while prostrate in the presbitery, they are given to the protection of the Vergine Mary of



the Angels, of all the Saints and the voice of the invocation is heard, strong and harmonious of the voice of Fr. Joseph Buffon, in the reverent silence of the Church, attented and filled.

The chant of the Gospel which the same Celebrant intoned, made us to taste the beauty of the words for us and Fr. Massimo, who interpreted it more deeply in his homely, underlining the sense of the Consecration which make

us Sign for our world.

With voice clear but with little emotion, our three sisters, one by one, offered their Vows in the hands of the Vicar General sr.Cecilia Subiabre who representing the Superior General Sr.EmmaPia (in visit in Africa). The three sisters have the lit candles in their hands which was lit from the paschal candle, Risen Christ, memory of the baptism,. On the table of the Altar they signed their names, the acts of consecration, underlined by the Superior and by the Celebrant also.

The Holy mass continued by presenting to the Father on the Cross of our Lord, their offering and of all those who are present.

..... then the feast in the big hall well decorated, we find great Joy, of the families, sisters, relatives and friends, ...there is place for all, for the Monte Porzio parish people, the mission of Sr.Nida, for the guests of Lido dei Pini, where Sr.Loida works, for the brother and the friends of Sr.Lirie...

Every body is happy and all find the joy of the Lord to Whom goes every praise and Honor for ever and ever.... Amen....





*Who can separate us from
the love of Christ?*

Neither. death nor life

*can separate
us from the love
in Christ the Lord*



Sr ETTORINA BARISON

Born in Morgano Badoere (TV)
on 04-09-1919

Died in Le Mans (Francia)
on 01-06-2008

Sr Ettoreina Barison was born on 4 September 1919 of a deeply Christian family. She soon experienced suffering when her father died prematurely.

Since she was young she felt the Lord's call to leave everything in order to follow Him. This desire grew bigger in time and, one day, she mustered the courage to ask her parents to be allowed

to enter the Congregation of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona del Friuli. She entered the novitiate when she was twenty and in 1941, through her religious profession, she gave herself to the Lord, in His service, in the service of the Church and of the brothers that the Lord would make her meet.

She dreamed of becoming a teacher to be close to young people, but right from the start her superiors entrusted her the responsibility of big kitchens... Indeed, during the 1950 jubilee she was in Centocelle, where she gave all her energies to feed the numerous pilgrims that had come to Rome for this big event and to the service of the young orphans that were sheltered there.

Her mission was not limited to Italy: her superiors asked her to leave her country to go to France and in 1953 she was in a rest home in Picardy, in the

province of Oise, where she stayed three years, then she was called to serve in the big kitchen of the Paris community, where she prepared on average 130 daily meals for twenty years. The Lord knows how many sacrifices she made so that all the "customers" would feel well catered. Nights were often short for her, who had to get up early in the morning to go to the big markets and find sellers that would prove "compassionate" to our courageous and laborious sister, who cared for others rather than for herself.

The inventiveness she used to help in the Provincial House, where building of the novitiate started and was finally completed in 1963, was really matchless. Always in Paris, she was called to be the Superior from 1975 to 1978.

Then, she served generously in the Provincial House, not only the sisters who lived there, but

To the other side

also the old and sick priests who were given hospitality in “St Aldric” rest home and the ladies in our rest home in Le Mans.

In 1991, the superiors eased her workload and asked her to carry out her service in the small community in Carlepont, made up of three sisters, where she stayed ten years. Gradually, local people found that she had great listening skills and did not hesitate to place in her heart their secrets, which were sometimes laden with suffering and anxieties, knowing that she would carry them in her prayer and in the offer of her day, without revealing them to anyone... Sr Ettorina loved the Congregation and her family very much, and she offered herself and prayed for them. She set a big example as a person who was devout, always available, never complaining.

She used to say, shrugging: “I do God’s will, He thinks about the rest”. Thanks, Sr Ettorina, for your humble, silent and genuine example, full of charity and discretion. Thanks for what you have given us with your tireless work in favour of everyone and for the sisters’ problems that

you took upon yourself, also on behalf of the sisters who flew to heaven earlier than you.

Now that the Lord, in his great goodness and mercy, has welcomed you in his Kingdom after a long period of suffering together with the Holy Virgin, to whom you were particularly devoted, and all the saints, please intercede for us so that we can live in the Father’s will, as you used to teach us...

Today we praise and thank the Lord with you and for you, for all what you have been for us and for all what you have given us.

See you in heaven, Sr Ettorina.



SR PAUL GABRIEL

Born in West New York (USA)

in 10-03-1924

Died in Peekskill 15-07-2008

Sister Paul Gabriel, nee Josephine Licameli was the second of the future family of 13 children – seven brothers and five sisters. Josephine always celebrated her birthday with her Mom who was also born on March 10. Her family was very united, strengthened by the daily family Rosary and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sister Paul Gabriel first met our Sisters when she transferred from public school to St. Mary’s Grammar School in West New York, NJ when she was in the fifth grade. She found them friendly and kind and it was there that she established a lasting bond. After graduation she applied for two-year Business course at Holy Family High School in Union City, NJ. She enrolled in this program since her mother was not well and she was needed to care for her brothers and sisters. She did this for two years after graduation.

For some years she worked in the Editorial Department of The Sign preparing articles for publication, a position for which she was well qualified.

Three years after her sister, Sister Mary Carmel entered the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Sister Paul Gabriel followed in her footsteps, having a strong feeling to embrace religious life. Upon completion of the Novitiate she was assigned to Philadelphia where she taught the first grade – 90 boys. She thinks someone must have heard of her large family! Her teaching experience includes eleven years in Philadelphia and five years in New York City in elementary education. She was assigned to business education having taught three years at the Assisium in New York and later to Franciscan High School in Moberg Lake. In 1979 Sister was appointed secretary to the Provincial Treasurer and because of her expertise in business administration was assigned as Provincial Treasurer in 1986, a position she held for the next 14 years. Itness resulted in her resignation from this position.



In her own words, “Each new day is God’s gift. I thank Him daily and offer Him my all through my morning offering. On September 8, 2005 I celebrated my Diamond Jubilee with praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of my vocation to the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. With Mother Mary I pray: “... The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is His name...”

Now that work in God’s vineyard has been completed she has prepared herself well to spend eternal life with the God she served so faithfully and lovingly – a better life as promised by the Lord Jesus – a life more beautiful than anything we can imagine!

Sister Paul Gabriel is survived by sisters – Gae, Anna, Rita and Regina and also five brothers – Charles, Paul, Cosmo, Thomas and Joseph.

The Mass of Christian Burial took place in Friday, July 18 at 10:30 A.M. with Msgr. Patrick Brown officiating took place in the Sisters’ cemetery on the grounds of Mt. St. Francis.

May She Rest in Peace!



SR SERENA PORATO

Born in Paese (TV) on 07-01-1924

Died in Roma on 21-07-2008

Sr Serena died on 21 July 2008 at 21.15 in the Viale Saffi infirmary in Rome. The illness that had deeply debilitated her ended its course with an unexplainable bout of fever that, after overcoming all resistance from her strong heart, vanquished her then frail body.

It was a woman used to hard work and amiable. Her Christian name reveals her nature and her gnarled and deformed hands told, even from her deathbed, about an intense and laborious life.

She entered in the Gemona convent when she was 20. She was a contagious example for Antonietta and Luigia, who later followed her, and this caused her to worry since, as their elder sister, she kept judging them too young for such a compelling choice! Amabile left a big void in her numerous family, in which she was a sort of mainstay, the parents’ right-hand daughter, we should say! There were ten children, whom Angelo and Agata had welcomed as gifts from heaven and whom they strived to bring up, passing down to them the faith that they had in turn received. She was the third children, the second of nine daughters, and she had to grow up fast, learning to take care of her younger sisters, to help with the housework, to sow, to work in the fields during the most demand-

ing periods: she carried out all sorts of tasks, revealing precociously her generous character.

In her file, beside the notes listing the various changes of communities, we can read only one task: cook. From 1944 to 2001 Sr Serena carried out this service for the sisters. Saying this amounts to sum up a history of uncommon simplicity, love and generosity. She did not see it as a job, but as a mission. She was careful and diligent in preparing dishes: although they were made of simple things, she knew how to present them with taste. We have learned many practical things from her and, most of all, availability, kindness and patience. How many times she had to wait for us latecomers, keeping food warm and serving us amiably when we arrived! How much care in cooking meals for the children in Lido dei Pini, and earlier in Centocelle! She was always ready, always serene. The numbers were never small: 100 and more people to feed, 70, 60...: the boarding school in Udine, the General House and the College in Pitagora Square, the internship in Centocelle, the General House in Grottarossa... only in Borgo San Michele (Latina) and in Viole of Assisi could she slow down and breathe a little in her last twenty years.

We must also mention her ability to sacrifice herself, nourished by the prayer that accompanied constantly her work and by love for the sisters. Sr Serena never backed out, she never complained that she had too much to do, that she was too tired, offering us a clear example of a dedication that found its reason in something true and deep: the love that had conquered her in her twenties and to whom she had remained faithful.

We thank her for her life example, we thank her because we can see in her a true Franciscan Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart. We wonder how she will welcome us in heaven!





SR FABIOLA MARCUZZI

Born in Trasaghis (UD) il 22-01-1914
Died in Santiago (CHILE)
on 27-07-2008

Sr Fabiola Marcuzzi left for the House of the Father on 27 July after a long illness that had slowly deteriorated her frail organism, but had not taken away her lucidity, so that she could donate totally her failing health and then her life to the Lord.

She was born in Trasaghis, a small village in Northern Italy, on 22 January 1914. After the war, her parents emigrated to Argentina with her two younger sisters, leaving Avelina (Sr Fabiola), who was 10 years old, studying in "St Mary of the Angels" boarding school of Gemona, under the guidance of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

She was a teenager when she felt a strong vocation to a religious, Franciscan and missionary life, but her father did not allow her to enter a convent and so she had to wait until she was 21 to fulfil her dream and start her religious formation.

After her religious profession, she was sent on mission to the "Sacred Heart" boarding school of Udine, where she worked for

17 years with young female students.

After she re-established her relationship with her relatives, the higher Superiors offered her the opportunity to go to Argentina to meet her parents after a 26-year separation. This was a good chance to learn Spanish in the city of San Juan de Jujuy and to live six months with her parents, with her sisters, who were now adult, and with her brothers, whom she had never met.

When she came back to Italy, she found a big surprise: the Superior General, Mr Cecilia Lazzeri, had chosen her to open a new mission together with four other sisters in Southern Chile, in the town of Puerto Montt.

So she had to cross the Atlantic Ocean and the famous Argentine Pampa once more to reach Llanquihue province on 7 March 1951.

The poverty and troubles she experienced in the first period revealed her fortitude, her faith in the Divine Providence, her spirit of prayer and her love for the sisters that had been entrusted to her, as well as her great fidelity to the Religious Family. After a few years, new communities were opened in Puerto Varas, Santiago and Rancagua. As the Superior General's delegate, she was responsible not only for the sisters coming from Italy, but also for the new Chilean vocations who started entering into our family.

From 1969 to 1975 she stayed in Rome, since she had been elected Councillor and General Treasurer. When she returned to Chile, she kept working with the same enthusiasm, accepting with a serene generosity the new tasks

that were given her in the Province.

She loved music and gardening: when she had some time to spare, she was busy teaching and playing harmonium and she liked to grow flowers and plants. It was for her a way to remember her nice native Friuli, surrounded by mountains, and the beauty of ever budding life.

She was able to visit the missions in Bolivia, and at the same time get in touch with the aspirants and the young women who had just started their religious life formation. Her affectionate ways always carried with them that special family taste and home warmth, as well as an impression of consecration and mission, of strength and decision, because, as she used to say, "it is not good to set a hand to the plow and look to what is left behind".

When our sisters left Chile for other Latin American countries to open new missions, she always accompanied them with her prayers, her affection and her suggestions, and she always found the right word for each departing sister and a warm welcome for each returning one, which made them feel like true sisters.

O Lord, we thank you for Sr Fabiola's life, death and resurrection. Thank you, sister, because you have been a parable of God, thanks for your moral integrity and your daily donation, for your charity, your prayer, your suggestions, thanks for being like a foundation of this Province for 57 years.

Thank you, sister, for the pain that you accepted for many years because of your illness.

God has prepared you for the

final encounter, He has purified your mind and your heart. Your wounded body will be transformed one day in the glory of the Resurrection.

Every single sister in this Province, the first ones as well as the youngest, carry in their heart the wonderful memory of your goodness and the fruitful memory of your fidelity. Thanks, on behalf of all the Sisters in the Province.



SR AGOSTINIANA LUPI

Born in Vedelago (TV) on
11-06-1920

Died in Gemona on 10-08-2008

These days, Liturgy constantly steers us into heaven, by pointing to the witness of brothers and sisters who already enjoy the beatific vision of God. It is with this spirit that we, using St Clare's words "Blessed be you, my God, for having created me!", would like to thank the Lord for the gift of Sr Agostiniana Lupi.

Her life, dedicated to God for the welfare of so many brothers, is a call for us, her sisters, and for every person, to realize that the "preciousness" of our life lies in offering it generously and without reservations.

Adelia, who took the religious

name of Sr Agostiniana of the Immaculate, was born on 11 June 1920 of parents that were simple but rich in Christian values, and she grew up nurturing her faith and many other virtues.

Following the example of her sister Romilda, she asked to be able to dedicate her life totally to the Lord in the FMSH Congregation and, when she was 28, she entered "St Mary of the Angels" convent.

Immediately after her Profession, she was moved to Rome to continue her studies. After she became a professional nurse, in 1953, she was sent to Chile, a mission that had been founded only two years earlier, and she stayed there for a good 23 years. It is with a true spirit of simplicity and minority that she served as a teacher and nurse in Puerto Mont, Puerto Chico, Santiago and Rancagua. In 1976 she came back to Italy and kept offering her services where obedience asked her, until her health, which had become rather frail, had her retire in Gemona, in the Mother House, to keep living her mission, especially through prayer and the offer of her sufferings.

It pleased the Lord, whose generosity is unrivalled, to reward her by taking her with Him, on the feast day of St Laurence martyr, which was on Sunday, the week's Easter.

Sr Agostiniana, the variety of your experiences enriched your life: now please ask the Lord to grant us and the whole Congregation a new zeal that leads us everywhere to witness and announce the joy of belonging totally to Christ, so that everybody can recognize him as "the Lord of their life!"



SR EMILIA BRANCO

Born in Larnaca (CIPRO) on
27-02-1920

Died in Roma on 05-11-2008

At the christening font of St Mary of Graces parish church in Larnaca (Cyprus), Maria and Emilio Branco gave their first-born, who saw the light on 27 February, the names of Elisabetta, Aloisia, Giorgia and Matilde. This was on 17 May 1920. In the cosmopolitan and multilingual island, the political and social situation was still quite calm. Elisabetta and her younger sisters, Mafalda and Iolanda, grew serenely, educated to be kind and to have pleasant manners, raised in a delicately cultivated faith, through imitation, prayer and the word.

As she was quite bright, she easily graduated from high school and learnt the various languages that mingle in the island's Mediterranean crossroads: Greek, French, English and, above all, Italian, the language of her parents and grand-parents, who had landed in Cyprus many years earlier.

Deep into her heart there quietly grew a special intuition, which soon became more precise and turned into a firm decision as

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soon as Elisabetta was eighteen years old: she would consecrate herself to the Lord, and precisely among the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who had been present in Larnaca for many decades.

We meet her as a postulant in Gemona already in August 1938: her freshness and kindness marked her out. Those who remember her can still see her whirl, tiny and thin, in an elegant dance that even the severity of previous Conventual regulations granted to her innocent joy.

With the Profession of Vows, she embraced consecrated life, sensing its beauty and assuming it devotedly and lovingly, in the depths of her soul, even in the smallest details.

She studied in Rome from 1940 to 1945, got a Master of Arts degree and devoted herself immediately to teaching. Initially, she remained in Pitagora Square; then she stayed for eighteen years in Gemona as the school's principal and, later, as a provincial Councillor.

In 1965 she went back to her native island: she was a teacher and the Superior in Famagusta for a year, then she moved to Limassol. There, she was a provincial Councillor for six years and next she became the provincial Superior. In 1975 she was called to Rome - Asisium as a General Councillor. It was a really demanding life, but she kept being exquisitely kind of heart, serenely obedient and jealously observant throughout.

In 1981 she was transferred to Centocelle, where she kept teaching; then, she spent a year

in Lido dei Pini and next, from 1994 to 2000, she was again in Rome, where she acted as the school secretary.

She was in love with the Congregation and always tried to show its paths of sanctity, sometimes insistently, but always righteously, setting the example first. She devoted herself passionately to the study of the history of the Founders and of the first sisters, offering a good contribution to the initial research, triggering further studies and debating her ideas with tenacity and conviction, until her decline in the last few years.

In the end, she gradually abandoned all her tasks, allowing her soul to roam in the peace of prayer, which she shared with the sisters that assisted her lovingly. Hers was a quiet, calm presence, grateful for everything.

She passed away in peace, on 5 November 2008 at 8 a.m., in the provincial house in Rome.



Sr M. PALMIRA FABIANI

Born in Dierico Paularo (UD)
21-03-1942

Died in Gemona on 09-11-2008

Today, 9th November, the Liturgy reminds us the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, where our sister Sr Palmira Fagiani, by answering to the Bridegroom's call, joined the feast of the eternal nuptials, adorned with the wedding dress. Now her desire, hidden in her heart for all her life, has come true:

*"There, my eyes have opened and I can see your face, o Lord,
I can contemplate your glory forever!"*

Sr. Palmira, Agostina Fabiani, was born in Dierico (province of Udine, Italy) on 21 March 1942, at the beginning of the spring season, in which nature awakens, and was christened in Paularo only four days later, on 25 March, on the Solemnity of the Assumption... A date that immediately sounded like a good wish: indeed, like Mary, she too received a call from the Lord, a call to consecrate her life to God among the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Her vocation was fulfilled when she pronounced her vows in her first religious profession in Gemona, taking the name of Sr Palmira of Mary's Immaculate

Heart... It happened on 14 September 1960, the feast day of the Holy Cross... Sr Palmira was among those who listened to and welcomed the words that Jesus addresses to those who are willing to follow him:

"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me".

Not without difficulty, she embraced the cross, her cross, the cross that life had prepared for her: the eye sickness that would gradually lead her to complete blindness. This, as well as other health problems, did not prevent her from carrying out her mission in various schools in Veneto and Friuli, teaching catechism in various parishes and guiding other sisters as a local community superior in Buja, Piano D'Arta and Lancenigo.

She returned in Piano D'Arta for a second time in 2002: it was her favourite village, the place to which she felt especially attached: there she found again her natural environment, her people, her mountains and, above all, the children, that are "the light of her eyes".

In the six years that followed her return, she always lived with the same commitment... and now that her journey in the footsteps of Jesus had reached the top of the Calvary, Sr Palmira, like Jesus, threw herself in the hands of the Father and cried out, in a gesture of supreme donation: "O Lord, Your Will be done!"...

And the Father's Will was "that her eyes opened forever on the splendour of God's Holy City" where, in the communion of Saints, she will be able to thank, praise and bless the Lord eternally.

Sr. Palmira, protect us from Heaven and intercede for the gift of holy vocations

that will carry on your mission among those whom you loved and served down here!

From the darkness of our earthly journey my eyes have opened wide to your glance, o Lord!

Next to you everything is light: I can see your radiant face, o Father, I can see you, God-Love, source of grace and holiness, I can see the truth and the eternal destiny of life, I can see those that I loved on Earth and that I will keep loving in Heaven. I look... and here: everything shines with joy, love and peace!



Sr MARIA D'AMBROSI

Born in Paese (TV) 05-04-1913

Died in Gemona on 13-11-2008

"I have experienced much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the holy ones have been refreshed by you, brother (Philemon 1:7). This expression from Paul's letter to Philemon, that we heard in the Liturgy of the Word of the day on which the Lord took away our sister Sr Maria D'Ambrosi, seems to be specially tailored for her.

Our little Silvia, in religion Sr Maria, was born back on 5 April 1913 and was christened the following day. In her family, she cultivated the values of a deeply Christian life, which favoured the ripening of her desire to consecrate herself totally to the Lord. She could fulfil



her dream by entering the Convent of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona in the Holy Year 1933.

As a true Franciscan and missionary, soon after her religious Profession, she embraced obedience by being ready to carry out any service she was required, knowing that "in the house of the Lord there are various tasks to be performed". Indeed, she was first sent as a cook to Treviso and Piano D'Arta, then as an aide in the nursery schools of Raveo, Cercivento and Badoere. Later, she was asked to go to the Roman Province to serve first as a wardrobe-keeper, and next as a cook in Narni, Montale and Monteporzio until she went back to the Venetian province in 1971 and was destined to the community of G. Menegazzi rest home, which at that time was called "Casa Cronici". There, Sr Maria spent all her energies in the service of the poorest and most deprived. Sustained by Jesus' words: "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40), apart from her service at the wardrobe, she daily went into the wards to offer her words, her smile and her help to those who could not feed themselves alone... And she carried out this mission

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for almost thirty years, until 1999, when, due to the weakening of her strengths and health, she was sent into retirement to the Mother House in Gemona, in order to keep donating herself through the generous offer of her prayers and suffering. And today, November 13, the day on which the Franciscan family celebrates the memory of St Diego of Alcalá, sister death came to take away Sr Maria and unite her to the Saints, so that she could sing with them the *“the Praises to the Most High God”*.

We all wish to entrust her to the Lord and commit ourselves to her through the prayer in memory of the Saint.

*Almighty and eternal God,
you who choose the humblest
creatures
to confound all kinds of pride,
grant that we may imitate their
virtues in all life circumstances,
so that we can share their joy in
heaven..*



SR SERAFINA MUFFATO

Born in Salzano (TV) 28-06-1915
Died in Gemona on 16-11-2008

Sr. Serafina of the Immaculate, nee Romana Muffato, was born in Salzano, in the province of Venice, on 28 June 1915. Since her youngest age she put to good use

the talents she had been granted, thanks also to the gift of Baptism, which she received on 29 June, the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. The exemplary life of daddy Natale and mommy Luigia deeply affected the soul of Romana and of her two other sisters: indeed, owing to this testimony of love and fidelity to the family, the seed of religious vocation grew in her and in her sister Gemma (Sr Natalina).

Sr Natalina's admission into the Convent of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in Gemona and her religious Profession in 1939 were decisive for the young Romana, who too felt prompted to ask to enter "St Mary of the Angels" Convent. She could fulfil her dream on 8 September 1941, on the feast of Mary's Nativity. Romana strived to learn the most beautiful virtues from the Virgin Mary and, with her help, to multiply every talent she had been granted by the Lord. For this reason, she consecrated herself totally to God through her religious profession on 17 September 1943, the feast of the impression of the Stigmata of St Francis, taking the name of Sr Serafina of the Immaculate... Like Francis, she gave her life totally to Christ until she became conformed to him. Sr Serafina offered her life to Christ through her brothers, by committing daily to sow peace, serenity and support around her in a service made of generous and faithful love. She totally welcomed the exhortation from her great teacher, the apostle Paul: "So be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God for a fragrant aroma." (Eph 5:1-2).

Soon after her Profession, Sr Serafina was sent by obedience to Ampezzo, where she remained for 7 years, offering her skills as a cook, and she continued this serv-

ice also in the communities of Cercivento, Treviso and Vivaro, where, in two different periods, she stayed for a good 25 years.

She could give her best in those parishes, since she not only did her utmost to nourish the nursery school pupils in her capacity as a cook, but, above all, she welcomed, listened to and supported, many people and families and she foresaw and anticipated their needs... Whom did people turn to when they had a problem, or when pain knocked at the door of their heart?... They could not find a better consoling angel than Sr Serafina!

As a true "Seraph", she was able to humbly approach and share every kind of situation, cheer up every heart, re-establish jeopardized relationships, reconcile souls... She was so close to the families through her actual commitment and silent dedication in favour of the whole community of Vivaro that, on 11 October 2003, she was awarded the "honorary citizenship".

In the same year, due to her now frail health, she was sent into retirement to the Mother House, so that she could carry on her mission especially through prayer and the offering of her daily suffering, until 16 November, when the "Master" came back and, with a big hug, welcomed Sr Serafina, who was finally able to hand him back twice the talents she had received and answer to the call for the eternal nuptials: "Well done, my good and faithful servant. Come, share your master and spouse's joy." (Matthew 25:21) And now, Sr Serafina, who will replace you?...

Pray the Lord so that His call to follow him may be heard by many young women who wish to lovingly donate their lives to God and to their brothers like you did!