



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



On 31 October, at 10:20,
in the community of Albano Laziale (RM) – Mother House, our sister

ANNA MARIA SR GIORDANA PRINCIPI

returned to the Father's house
at the age of 69 and 50 years of religious life

"...For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rm 8:38-39). With this certainty in the heart today our Sister Anna Maria has left us to celebrate the Solemnity of the Saints together with the Pastorelle in Heaven.

"I feel the presence of the Lord and I have sought and continue to seek to entrust my life, my situations to Him and every day rediscover the beauty of vocation and the goodness of God which is mercy... always trusting in the help of the Lord to be faithful until death". This is what Sr. Anna Maria wrote on November 2008, on the occasion of the Canonical Visit of the Superior General. And it is in this faithfulness that Sr. Anna Maria spent her life as a Pastorella till the Good Shepherd took her into his arms to consign her to the Father.

She was born on 18 August 1944 at Genga (AN) in a large family, Sr. Anna Maria was the seventh of nine children and was baptised on 20 August in the parish of Rosenga of Genga. Educated in the Christian faith, while still an adolescent she entered the Congregation on 3 October 1960 at Albano Laziale – Mother House where she lived the first years of formation and on 2 September 1962 entered the Novitiate. On the 3 September the following year she made her first religious profession and took the name of Sr. Giordana.

She spent her time as a Junior in different parishes: from 1963 to 1966 at Premadio Valdidentro (SO) helping in the preschool and carrying out her first apostolate in the parish which was just recently opened. In 1967 she was at Transacqua (TN) for her training as a preschool teacher and in 1968 she was in the community of Ancona where she remained until the vigil of her final profession which was celebrated on 3 September 1968 at Albano Laziale.

Sr. Anna Maria, who was rather shy and reserved in character, besides being reflective and responsible, right from the beginning of her vocational journey expressed a great love

for community life. Despite her shyness, she was very sociable and discreet in her interpersonal relationships.

With energy and generosity she dedicated herself to the pastoral mission: from teaching in the preschool to the liturgical animation, home visits, to the loving care of the elderly and the sick. She lived everything with deep dedication, above all she loved being with the young people, to whom she devoted herself with joyful availability in every parochial reality where she carried out her pastoral ministry. In fact she was present in an unpretentious but incisive manner in diverse communities, from 1968 to 1996: Reggio Calabria, Capoliveri (LI), Cittaducale (RI), Collemaggiore (RI) up to her departure as missionary in Albania, in 1997.

Sr. Anna Maria was part of the first community of Pastorelle who generously established themselves at Ungrej in the Diocese of Lezhe, just when Albania opened its doors to the first missionaries. A frontier reality, of extreme poverty and above all needing freedom and dignity, after over 40 years of brutal dictatorship. In this community she remained well over 15 years offering herself with joyful and compassionate care to the most weak and poor. For some years Sr. Anna Maria also carried out the service as animator of the religious community.

Her pastoral sensitivity, her love for the Congregation and the Church are well expressed during these years, through her generous dedication to the people, without stopping even when faced with the difficulty of language and cultural adaptation. Sr. Anna Maria lived her pastoral maternity in the manner of Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd, accepting the exhortation of Blessed James Alberione: *“Know Mary, (...) love her, which means to imitate her in her humility, in her ardour of charity, in her zeal, in her love of souls, in her virtues which she possesses all in high degree. Imitate her at least a little bit!”*¹.

Sr. Anna Maria remained in Albania up to the end of February 2012, when a sudden illness forced her to withdraw to Mother House at Albano, to begin a series of medical procedures that would soon lead to the diagnosis of a cancer in the head. Immediately she undertook the necessary medical care, but despite two surgeries, the outcome was not what was hoped. Consequently with alternating moments of recovery and other increasingly more difficult, with the loving care of the Sisters of the Mother House, after having been consigned to the Lord, Sr. Anna Maria, peacefully took leave from this world.

Thank you Sr. Anna Maria, for your trust in the Lord and for having offered your life for the vocations, for the Church and for the Congregation. We are certain that you will continue to intercede for us, for your family and for the Albanese Church, those graces which we have greater need to be united one day in the glory of the Saints, which today joyfully welcome you together with the Pastorelle of Heaven.

Sr Marta Finotelli
Superior General

Rome, 31 October 2013

The First Vespers of the Solemnity of the Saints

¹ PrP IX, 1959, p. 31.