



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



Today, March 30, at 2.30 p.m.
in the community of Mother House – Albano Laziale
Jesus Good Shepherd handed over to the Father our sister

MARIA TERESA GRAMACCIA

86 years old and 58 years of religious life

The Lord is at my side ... to Him, I entrusted my life! (Cf. Jer. 20). These words of today's liturgy that was placed on the mouth of the Prophet Jeremiah, is very fitting to express the experiences of our sister whom the Good Shepherd desired to be with Him in the Father after a long illness, precisely on the vigil of the Holy Week.

Maria was born on April 3, 1925 at Gualdo Cattaneo (PG) and was baptized on July 26 of that same year. She grew up in a big Christian family, she is in fact the third of seven children. She developed her religious vocation in the hills of Umbria, a land known worldwide for its Christian tradition, for its Saints, for the villages rich in art, for its green landscapes. A Region where our Congregation is also present since 1940.

She entered the Congregation on October 10, 1949 at S. Pietro alle Acque (PG). In mid-August of 1950, she was admitted to the Clothing of the religious habit ceremony and on that occasion she wrote: *"I feel weak and incapable with my own strength, but I trust in the help of divine grace."* With this confidence, the young Maria continued her formation. On June 12, 1953, at Verona - Borgo Milano, where she was for an apostolic experience, she made her first profession and took the name Sister Teresa. Her first profession was done simultaneously with the first group of sisters who professed their vows among the Pastorelle, immediately after the diocesan approval of the Congregation. Sr. Teresa remains in the parish of Borgo - Milano until 1957.

After the perpetual profession that took place on August 2, 1958 at Albano Mother House, she dedicated herself in parish ministry until 1980. With a spirit of adaptation and cordial openness toward all the sisters, Sr. Teresa lived her apostolic commitment in different communities of Italy: Longa (VI), Villamarzana (RO), Sestri Levante (GE), Verona – Borgo Milano, Adria (RO), Reggio Calabria, Sant'Angelo di Celle (PG).

In the parishes where she was sent, Sr. Teresa with jovial disposition and simplicity that characterize her, lovingly dedicated herself to the care of children in the kindergarten and at the same time was committed in many pastoral tasks, among which a beautiful liturgical sensitivity was evident. Sr. Teresa, in fact, carried out an accurate service in the sacristy,

adorned the altar with delicate taste and spiritual care and also offered a very special training to the young altar servers.

Wherever Sr. Teresa went, she expressed the hardworking attitude, typical of the children of Alberione: generous, industrious, joyful. Whenever it was possible, she cultivated her passion for flowers which she believed, are valuable gifts to offer to the Lord. Respectful and honest in interpersonal relationships, she participated in community life with fidelity, never neglecting prayer and in her relationship with the Shepherd of her life, she daily renewed her physical and spiritual strength.

In 1980 to 1987, she was assigned at the newly bought General House in Rome at Via L. Umile. Sr Teresa worked with her usual availability in the various services needed in a General government residence.

Back to Albano – Mother House, she was requested by the Carmelite Fathers of Sassone (RM) for the coordination of the reception services of their Spirituality Center.

With the passing of years, her strength started to decline, but not the will to serve. Finishing her commitment at the Spirituality Center of the Carmelites, she offered the little she could do for the community of Albano.

Slowly but without doubt, the Alzheimer disease started in Sr. Teresa and it deprived her of her autonomy day after day. She was lovingly assisted by the sisters of the Mother House in the last four years; she lived the cross of almost total immobility. Today, Friday of the fifth Week of Lent, she passed away peacefully in the arms of the Good Shepherd. Our sister ended her earthly existence with the offering of spiritual sacrifice of her body transfigured by suffering.

Dearest Sr. Teresa, we carry in our hearts the memory of your peaceful gaze and your clear bright eyes, especially when you manifested with holy pride your vocation as a Pastorella. Now that these your eyes can contemplate the face of the Good Shepherd, intercede for all of us the gift of evangelical radicalism.

Now you can celebrate the Passover of the Lord directly in the heavenly Jerusalem, together with the Pastorelle who have preceded us.

Thank you Sr. Teresa, for the example of hard-work that you left us. Your witnessing helps us to peacefully carry out the struggles of everyday life as participation in the redemption of the world brought by Christ, the Lamb and Shepherd.

Sr Marta Finotelli
Superior General

Rome, 30 March 2012
Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent