



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



Today, 03 March 2024 at 5.20 pm  
in the community of Casa Madre – Albano Laziale – Rome, our sister

**ANTONIETTA, Sr M. SERAFINA SANTUS**

has parted this earthly life.

She was 95 years old and 66 years of religious life.

As we entrust our sister to the Father's Mercy, we hear the words of the Collect, *Give us the wisdom of the Cross, so that in Christ your Son we may become a living temple of your love*, which describe the life of Sr Antonietta offered as a living temple of the love of the Good Shepherd in pastoral ministry.

Antonietta was born on 10 January 1929 in Sedilo (OR) and was baptized on 17 January of the same year in her hometown, in the parish named after St John the Baptist. She entered the Congregation in Albano Laziale-Mother House on 23 August 1956 and the novitiate on 02 September 1958. She made her first profession on 03 September 1959, taking the name of Sr Maria Serafina. After her first profession, she was sent to the community of Transacqua (TN) and, after five years, she returned to Albano Laziale-Mother House where she made her final profession on 03 September 1964.

Sr Antonietta has been described as a sister of great faith and prayer. She was a thoughtful, generous, joyful, responsible person, capable of sacrifice and with a serenity that shone through at all times; she was mature and capable of good relationships inside and outside the community. She expressed her thoughts with humility and truth, open to grasp and do the will of God. She loved and lived her pastoral ministry with enthusiasm wherever she was and encouraged communion. In a written sharing she wrote: *As I review my life, in everything I see the gratuitousness of God's love. I have always believed that I cannot call myself a Christian if I do not use the same logic of Christ Shepherd who died and rose again for me. And again: The apostolate is done by a community that lives in harmony, that bears witness through its life.*

After her perpetual profession, she carried out her pastoral ministry in various parishes, mainly in the pastoral care of families and various other tasks; she was a missionary in Albania and also superior in some communities: 1965 Bari (BA); 1966 Rossano (CS); 1971 Crosia (CS);

1980 Albano - Mother House; 1984 Oristano (OR); 1995 Rome – Generalate; 1997 Oristano (OR); 1999 Samassi (SU); 2002 Ricadi (VV); 2008 Albano Laziale – Provincial House.

In 2009, Sr Antonietta left, without hesitation and with great generosity, for the mission in Skutari (Albania). As well as her missionary spirit, Sr Antonietta brought with her the awareness of her eighty years and the difficulty of the language. Those who were with her testify that *Sr Antonietta was truly willing to help the sisters in Albania with an open and generous heart. She didn't worry about herself, her age, or even her health, for her it was important that the sisters could carry out their apostolate peacefully, thanks to her help with the cooking and household chores. In this service for the Lord, she also found her fulfillment as a Pastorella.*

In 2011 she returned to Albano Laziale, in the community of Maria Madre del Buon Pastore, where she offered her contribution in various services, while her health permitted. For some time, due to her age and illness, she needed assistance in everything. We wholeheartedly thank the sisters and staff who cared for her with love and generosity, accompanying her in her peaceful surrendering to the merciful Father.

The sisters remember Sr Antonietta as *a person of prayer, always ready to lend a helping hand to those who needed it. In the Novitiate she stood out for her wisdom and maturity; she was like an older sister who advised and encouraged us when there was some tension in the group. And again: she was a good Pastorella, in the true sense of the word; she was in love with Jesus Good Shepherd, and her vocation as a Pastorella. Always smiling and welcoming towards everyone, very generous, and always ready to roll up her sleeves to meet the needs of the people entrusted to her, in the parish, and of the sisters in Albano. In times of difficulty, she was ready to conciliate and lighten things up with her disarming smile. She was not a fan of gossip or criticism, if she wasn't busy with work she was immersed in prayer. For her, every occasion was propitious to announce the Gospel to every person, in every place, and in every situation. In recent months, her favourite word was "Jesus." And she said it endlessly until she could speak. She lived her last weeks of suffering in silence and serenity. Her presence enriched us and she made us reflect. We thank the Lord, who encourages us to live in his presence by placing his angels alongside us.*

To you, dear Sr Antonietta, as we entrust you to the Father's Mercy, we thank you for the gift you have been for us and we ask you to intercede for the whole human family a humble heart that loves communion, like your heart, in particular for those who are called to stop the scourge of war.

Sr Aminta Sarmiento Puentes  
Superior General

Rome, 03 March 2024  
*Third Sunday of Lent*