



Dear Sisters,

Today, August 1, 2016, at 7:00 AM, in the Divine Master Community of Albano Laziale (Rome), Jesus Master called definitively to himself our sister

**SR. M. JOSEPH - FRANCESCA MULASSANO,  
born February 11, 1939 in Bra (Cuneo).**

On March 8, 1960, shortly after reaching the age of adulthood, introducing herself as the niece of the Sister Disciples, Sr. M. Adalgisa and Sr. M. Alessandrina Tavella, she wrote to Mother M. Lucia Ricci, the Mother General at that time: "For many years I have known the Sister Disciples of the D. M. through Sr. M. Anselmina and Sr. M. Ecclesia, and the various retreats I have attended in Alba. Now, with the help and advice of the priest, I have decided to consecrate myself to the Lord in your Congregation". She was admitted and entered at the Mother House in Alba (CN) on April 29. The person who accompanied her during the initial formation underlined her gifts of determination, commitment, and generosity in every aspect of the Pauline life: piety, study, apostolate and poverty. Completing her novitiate, she made her first profession on March 25, 1963, and her perpetual profession on March 25, 1968, always in Rome. In the meantime, she was sent for further studies; she attended the Institute for Social Services from 1967 to 1971, successfully completing her degree with the defense of her thesis entitled: "*Collaborazione tra responsabili delle vocazioni ed esperti in scienze fisio-psico-sociali*" [*Collaboration between those responsible for vocations and experts in the physical, psychological and social sciences*]. Promising and well-motivated, she left as a missionary for Brazil where she was given responsibility for the initial formation of the young women. Her insertion in this vast and complex nation and the service to the Church of God present in this land developed within her pastoral attitudes and the capacity for dialogue with the people of God, bringing to maturation what she had hoped for during her time of studies: "*The human sciences must work together to help the person develop harmoniously in all his/her components: biological, psychological, spiritual, supernatural. The religious and priestly vocation (...) manifests itself as a gift of God and as human conquest; the free response of the person in an ongoing dynamic that involves the entire existence of the person*" (Letter to Mother M. Lucia, January 2, 1971).

In 1973, Sr. M. Joseph, together with other sisters, began the Divine Master community in Brasilia. As an apostolate, they coordinated the liturgical program and catechesis in the Cathedral. She was also an extraordinary minister of Communion. During this time she collaborated with a Salesian sister to prepare the *Metodologia della Catechesi* [*Methodology of Catechesis*] (CNBB), a pastoral structure which is still bearing fruit today.

On November 16, 1972, she began her service as regional councilor for a three-year term. During these years she discovered the need to invest in the liturgical ministry for the formation of priests, of catechists, and of the people of God. Following the Italian edition, the liturgical magazine "*A Vida em Cristo e na Igreja*" came into being and Sr. M. Joseph, gave her constructive contributions from the first editions. In 1979, after a term as local superior in Brasilia, she returned

to Italy enriched by this missionary and pastoral experience which was to make a qualitative change in her interpersonal relationships. She offered her service for two years at the diocesan office for religious in the Vicariate of Rome, until January 11, 1981, when she went to Portugal as a missionary, content to live as a disciple of Jesus Master at the service of the Eucharist, the Priesthood and the liturgy, wherever obedience to the Gospel sent her. Her stay in Lisbon was brief, since on September 12, 1982, she returned definitively to Italy - in Bordighera (IM).

The following years were spent in Rome, where she held various responsibilities: from 1984 to 1990 she was at the Liturgical Diocesan Office in the Vicariate. During these years she also completed her masters in Liturgy at Saint Anselm's Pontifical Institute (December 18, 1989).

She was a regional councilor in Italy for two terms (1990-1996) and had special responsibility for the liturgical spirituality and formation of the Pauline Cooperators – Friends of Jesus Master.

From 1996 until 2009, she was a member of the Bethany community and was the coordinator for the Formation Course on the Charism of the Pauline Family, an initiative desired and sustained by the Superiors General of the Pauline Family for the charismatic identity. It was a service she carried out with passion and intelligence, completely dedicated to the growth of the new Pauline generations. It is a service that was greatly appreciated by many and in which she distinguished herself for her generosity and charismatic identification as a Sister Disciple. Many remember her attentive, competent and joyful dedication. The teachers also treasure the memory of many years of collaboration in the Course, in which they were able to experience the beauty of the unity of the Pauline Family.

At the conclusion of this responsibility, she was assigned as the delegate of the Mother General for the Mother Scholastica Community, which is characterized by the hospitality and service to the international students of the Congregation who are undertaking various studies and must remain in Rome for varying periods of time. The final ecclesial appointment to which Sr. M. Joseph offered her service of experience in coordination and animation was the trimester of ongoing inter-congregational formation at the national site of USMI (Union of Major Superiors), from September to December 2015. During this period she began to experience unusual tiredness and a persistent cough, which she attributed to the double responsibility at USMI and at the Mother Scholastica house. It was here that the Lord came to visit her with the trials of suffering and illness that would purify her like gold in the crucible. Suffering from intestinal cancer, she received the necessary treatment and especially the loving and caring attention of her sisters in the community of Albano Laziale. The community accompanied her throughout the course of her illness with intense prayer, respecting her shy and silent nature, proper to one who has oriented her daily choices over time to the Essential. She prepared herself for her meeting with the Lord of Life, who today, at the beginning of the new day as the community celebrated the Morning Prayer, took her into his embrace of mercy and peace. She left this world as the final blessing was being imparted to her by the Pauline priest who had come for the Eucharistic celebration of the community.

We are grateful to God for the gift of this sister who actualized the charism and the mission in the cultures in which she lived, encouraging insertion in the local church, without losing sight of the uniqueness of the Pauline charism. To her we entrust the Juniors who began the trimester of preparation for perpetual profession this morning, as well as all the initiatives in the areas of vocational and liturgical work that are scheduled for this time: initiatives of life that transmit life. This will certainly make her smile, with that smile of one who knows that with death, life is not ended, but transfigured.

*Sr. M. Michaela Bonetti*