



Dear Sisters,

Yesterday, March 30, 2017, at 7:00 PM (local time), at Blessed Timothy Giaccardo Community in Rome, the Lord turned his merciful gaze to our sister and called her to the joy of his Kingdom:

SR. M. AGOSTINA BONARIA PODDI
born on February 20, 1936, in Cabras (Cagliari)

Bonaria entered the Congregation in Alba (CN) on September 8, 1958, in the fullness of youth, bringing to the community the gift of a rich sensitivity to beauty that is characteristic of the people from the island of Sardinia. She grew up in a close-knit family, blessed with eight children and animated by great faith. She was the companion of Sr. Pinuccia Cauli, also from Sardinia, who brought the perfume of her youth to Paradise at the age of seventeen.

Following the novitiate, she made her religious profession in Rome on May 7, 1961, and her perpetual vows on May 7, 1966, also in Rome. In the fulfillment of her mission, she was especially appreciated for her ability in embroidery, which she had learned in the family. After the religious profession, she was initially in the tailoring workshop in Genoa, then in embroidery at Alba (1962), Rome (1964-1966), and Paris (1970). From 1968 to 1970, she was in Nice (France) for the propaganda. She then went to various communities of the Society of Saint Paul: Alba (1970-1973), Vicenza (1980-1988). In 1988 she was asked to offer her assistance in the souvenir shop of Saint Peter's (Vatican). She then went to the Liturgical Apostolate Center in Milan (1992) and Bordighera (1994). From 1995, after a short stay in Nice, she went to the community of Nogent to assist in the Liturgical Apostolate Center of Paris. In 2009 she would take care of the Chapel, welcoming the adorers and serving as the porter's.

Sensitive to the liturgy and well-prepared songs, with her strong and harmonious voice, she added beauty to the celebrations. In various periods she served the priests, in whom she honored Jesus himself, always joyfully manifesting her delicate and kind sensibility.

Some recent letters addressed to the Mother General, Sr. M. Regina Cesarato, manifest her interior attitude, and may be considered as a spiritual testament: *«I am writing to tell you that the God of peace and joy has called me in these days to tell him my thanks for the Jubilee of consecration to him. He has been faithful. He told me: I will not abandon you, as a mother does not abandon her child, created from her flesh; I will guard you as the pupil of the eye, because you are precious to me. What can I say to the Divine Master? That my poverty is great in light of such great love and fidelity! I can only thank him for having protected me until now, to sing his marvels; despite my infidelity, he is always faithful. My heart rejoices for his great love and I want to shout this love and joy to the entire world, that there is no just and holy God like him. Now that my days are passing quickly, I do not know how much more time I will be granted to serve him, but with the help of his grace I want to be faithful until the end to continue to sing his marvels to those around me, to make them understand that there is no God as great as he is. I greet you affectionately, and continue to intercede for all your intentions and for the Congregation» (Rome, Casa Betania, June 28, 2011).*

«...Thank you also for the Congregation and the Pauline Family journeying toward the centennial of its foundation. We have much to thank the Divine Master for the great works he has done and continues to do in us. I prayed and continue to pray for the good fruits of the 8th General Chapter that each one of us may have an open heart and a generous spirit to fulfill the work of God, making it fruitful for the benefit of the Congregation and for the coming of the Kingdom of God...

Everything passes, the good fulfilled with love and for love remains for life and for eternity. Therefore, I make the effort daily to lovingly fulfill every apostolate, to testify that it is worthwhile to spend all my energy for the one who has chosen me» (Nogent, September 4, 2011).

When the sickness came, she entrusted herself to the Lord with the certainty that God would help her to overcome the trials. In fact, in 2013, while she was in France, Sr. M. Agostina underwent surgery for colon cancer that had already metastasized to the liver and the lungs. In 2014 she returned to Italy and went to the Blessed Timothy Giaccardo Community. There she underwent chemotherapy, which temporarily slowed the course of the disease. With great courage and silence she faced the advancing sickness, aware of its precious nature in that it united her to the cross of the Lord. It was a difficult calvary, but she progressively abandoned herself to the will of God, in peaceful serenity. During this final period, assisted by the sisters in her prayer, she participated intensely, making of herself a living offering for the intentions that were suggested to her.

Once again she was able to experience the support of her family, which was present and near her. The Provincial Superior, Sr. M. Giovanna Colombo, the nurses and the others sisters were beside her at the moment of her passage to new life.

Sr. M. Agostina, now you are singing once again to your Spouse and your Lord for the wonders you experienced in your earthly life, wonders that are being revealed to you in ever more surprising ways. Invite Jesus Master, Mary Queen of Apostles, Saint Paul and all our sisters in Heaven to turn their loving gaze upon the Pauline Family in France, in Italy, and throughout the world.

S. H. Paolo Hancock