



Dear Sisters,



Today, December 23, 2015, at 8:30 AM, in the Regina Apostolorum Hospital in Albano Laziale (RM), the mercy of God was made manifest with an eloquent sign of his coming through the call of our sister to eternal life:

Sr. M. ANNINA CAROLINA ROMAGNOLI
born on March 7, 1929 in Guarda Veneta (RO).

Carolina came from Veneto, at that time a land flourishing with vocations. She entered the Congregation in Sacile (UD) on February 2, 1946. She then went to Alba (CN) for the novitiate and made her first profession there on March 25, 1949, and her perpetual vows on March 25, 1954. She experienced the time of the juridical recognition of the Institute, together with the hope and the vitality that this entailed. Her request for admission to religious profession manifests humility and trust: *"I humbly ask to belong to the Congregation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. I am unworthy, but I trust that his goodness will allow me to take the religious vows"* (Alba, February 11, 1949).

From the time of profession, her apostolic life was primarily centered in the priestly apostolate. She began her mission in Catania in 1950, then after a period in propaganda in Lugano (Switzerland), she went to Modena in 1952. Following the perpetual profession she would spend fifteen years in Lisbon, Portugal. Initially she was the local superior for three years, then the cook or providing various services at the Society of St. Paul. At a time in which the European Union was unknown, the mobility of the members of the Pauline Family was a difficult reality. In her writings she manifested her joy for the life that was growing around her; for the "beautiful group of aspirants". On the occasion of her 50th anniversary she was able to make a pilgrimage with a group to Fatima. She wrote: *"Heartfelt gratitude for the prayer, the greetings and the gifts. I was very happy to return to Portugal after 30 years, 'my second homeland'...I was amazed by the progress; the sisters could not have done more, they treated us in an extraordinary manner. Too bad that there are no vocations at this moment, but I pray and offer for this intention. I thank and bless the Lord for the call, perseverance, and the love he has given to me."* (Sanfrè, May 12, 1999).

Upon her return to Italy in 1969, she was in Modena and then in Ospedaletti, always with the Pauline brothers; in 1971 she was the local superior at the "Famiglia Cristiana" community in Milan; in 1975 she was at the Society of St. Paul in Rome, and in 1980 at Vicenza. In 1981 she transferred to Sanfrè as a nursing assistant for the infirm sisters, and then to Bordighera as cook in 1990. Since 2006 she was in Albano to assist in the infirmary, then assisting in various services in the community, and finally as a sister in need of care. Yesterday she had an unexpected intestinal infarct which led to the conclusion of her earthly pilgrimage earlier this morning.

Sr. M. Annina was a lively and humoristic person who brought joy to others. The gift of herself, which characterized her life as a disciple, clearly grew at the feet of Jesus in the Tabernacle and in her intimate communication with Jesus in the Eucharist. She was always faithful and prompt to take her turn in the adoration, even in this last stage of her life; in advanced age. The prayer of adoration was truly her first apostolate where the apostolic charity she had expressed in the daily self-offering in service became the soul of her fervent and persevering prayer of intercession, especially for priests and for vocations. The liturgy today reminds us that, with the birth of John the Baptist, everything is a gift of mercy. In the face of the humble life of this sister, let us give thanks with the attitude suggested by today's Gospel: *"Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her"*. Let us look upon this new call to eternal life as an invitation to prepare ourselves to welcome the Lord who is coming!

Sr. M. Annina, as you contemplate Jesus Mercy face to face, remember us and Portugal, which you loved as your second homeland! Live in God and rest in peace!

S. M. Paola Manzoni.