



Dear Sisters,

On November 29, 2012, as our hearts prepared to hear the proclamation of the Advent Liturgy: “*The Lord is at the door*”, he surprised the community of Sanfrè (CN) with a visit in the evening to call to himself our sister

SR. M. ESTER ANTONIA MARIN
BORN ON JUNE 27, 1923, IN CASSOLA (VICENZA).

Antonia entered the Congregation in Alba (CN) on September 17, 1946, with the maturity acquired in a large family, blessed with 6 children, from a region of Italy - Veneto - characterized by strong Christian values. Though tried by the recently concluded war, she bore within herself a simple but solid faith, matured by assiduous participation in parish life. After her novitiate in Alba, she made her religious profession on March 25, 1949, and her perpetual profession on March 25, 1953, also in Alba.

From the beginning of her formation, she was characterized by traits that accompanied her throughout her journey as a disciple of the Divine Master: *she was well-prepared, content, available for everything, pious, docile, simple, serene, a polite daughter, capable of development.* Sr. M. Ester communicated more by her gaze than by her words. She transmitted that transparency of the little ones of the Gospel, and her smile recalled the words of the Scriptures: “*Let the children come to me, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*” (cf Matthew 19:13-15). She was accustomed to spending a great deal of time in adoration, remaining before Jesus in the Eucharist with her gaze fixed on him.

She exercised her ministry for many years at the Bishop’s Residence in Alba: first from 1949 to 1963 and then again from 1975 to 1986, representing Mary and Martha, the disciples of Bethany, who solicitously welcomed Jesus and his disciples. The presence of the Sister Disciples contributed to making this House an oasis of peace not only for the Bishop, but also for the many persons who visited his house.

In the meantime (1963-1966), she was the cook at the Divine Master house in Ariccia (RM), in Alba at the SSP (1967), and in Milan RA (1997), and for short periods, at Centrale di Zugliano (VI), in Genoa, and in Turin. From 1998 she was transferred to Sanfrè, where she carried out various services for the community.

Gradually her physical energy declined and, following a fall in which she broke her femur (2011), she was forced to retire to the infirmary. With the residual effects of bronchial pneumonia, which she suffered in September of this year, and already suffering from cardiac ischemia, she required more care and attention from the sisters who are nurses.

Last night after supper, she and the community retired for the night, as usual. Toward 9:00 PM, at the time of the evening visit to the infirm, she was found to be resting in the eternal sleep of death.

Sr. M. Ester is for all of us a reminder to be ready and vigilant as the Gospel of the First Sunday of Advent exhorts us: “*Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to stand before the Son of Man*” (cf Lk 21:34.36).

Thank you, Sr. Ester, for your witness as a Disciple of the Master: and for allowing yourself to be transformed by Him, Way, Truth and Life, “a little every day”.

Sr. M. Paola Mancini
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