



Dear Sisters,

Yesterday, October 21, 2018, at 4:00 PM, at the *Ospedale Sant'Andrea* in Rome, the Lord called to eternity our sister

SR. M. AGNESE - GIUSEPPINA MENOCCHIO
BORN ON APRIL 4, 1943, IN CERVARESE SANTA CROCE (PD).

Giuseppina entered among the Sister Disciples in Alba on August 6, 1959. She made her first religious profession in Rome on March 25, 1962, and her perpetual profession in Rome on February 11, 1968. Sr. M. Agnese, apparently reluctant to talk about herself, accepted the invitation of Sr. M. Regina Cesarato, the Superior General at that time, to write the story of her own vocation, and on March 25, 2012, the 50th Anniversary of her religious profession, she contemplated and edited this marvelous page of in the history of salvation. She emphasized that, while fighting in Catholic Action, she did not initially think about a religious consecration, also because her family needed her assistance. Everything changed, however, after a trip to Rome. *«In Rome – she wrote – in 1959 I happened to meet Mother M. Tecla Molino. I saw the young women with long blue veils, that looked like two wings, leaving the Church. I asked who they were and I was told that they went to the adoration together. They were novices preparing to become sisters. Mother M. Tecla asked me what I did at home and if I had ever considered becoming a sister. I told her no. She told me that she would send a sister to accompany me to Alba for a course of spiritual exercises together with other girls. I told her that would not be possible. But she told me: We will see each other in Alba in September of this year! She gave me a book: Come and see (Vieni e vedi). I returned home but, to be honest, these words tormented me: "we will see", but as for becoming a sister, I did not even think about it».* After various events during the summer, she found herself in Alba... *«The sister who guided us asked us if we wanted to make an hour of adoration during the night, but to be at peace because there were also two sisters assigned. I went at midnight with three other girls. Towards one in the morning, as I gazed upon the Host and that great mosaic of Jesus, those eyes penetrated within me. I experienced a strong sense of rebellion because those eyes told me: "Why do you want to leave me? This is the way you must follow". I remained kneeling, crying, but I was not able to leave the pew; I remained that way throughout the night, struggling mightily...Until I was able to say: "Lord, what do you want of me?... very well, but you must never leave me". I can only say, even now, after many years: I felt a peace within that I had never experienced. It was as if I was alone with Him... it was the night of the Transfiguration between August 5/6, 1959».* ... Following this experience, she made the decision to remain. She spoke about it with the sister who accompanied her, and that marked the date of her entrance among the Sister Disciples! *«When Mother Tecla came to Alba in September, she told me: What did I tell you? Thank you for having listened to the voice of the Divine Master».*

Yesterday's Gospel, for the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time, was focused upon the figure of the Divine Master instructing his disciples and presenting himself to them as One who *"did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many"* (Mk 10:45). The Divine Master chose the liturgical context of this Sunday to call Sr. M. Agnese to himself, almost as a confirmation of the life of this disciple who had **service** as a constant and common denominator throughout her life. The specific tasks she fulfilled as a mission established in her spirit an attitude that can be summarized in the word *service*, a continual gift of her life out of love. The duties entrusted to her in the first years were consistently those of "kitchen, assistant to the cook, or cook": in Rome SP (1962), in Modena SP (1964). After an interval of one year in the Souvenir shop at Saint Peter's (1966), she was in Vicenza SP (1967), in Rome SPCG (1973) for the wardrobe and ironing, in Cinisello Balsamo SP (1974), in Vicenza SP (1975), then in Vicenza DM (1979) for various services; in Milan RA (1979), in Rome SP (1980). Then she began a period of a new form of service with various terms as local superior in different Pauline and non-Pauline communities: in Catania SP (1984), in Ariccia DM (1987), in Bologna (1983), in Palermo (1997) in Rome SP (2000) for two terms. In 2006 she

was in Casa di Preghiera di Centrale to offer hospitality for groups. In 2009 she was again local superior in Cinisello DM, and then in 2012 local councilor and treasurer in the RA community in Rome, local treasurer since 2016, a ministry in which she was also responsible for the coordination of the outside collaborators until the present time. The persons emphasized that she did everything possible to meet the various needs that arose, and that she was attentive and discreet in fulfilling her mission.

In the story of her vocation she also mentions her meeting with Primo Maestro, who confirmed her in her vocation: *«Then he looked at me and said: Jesus wants you as his disciple forever. Love the priests, the Disciples and especially the young, pray constantly for them. You will still have difficulties, but if you follow Jesus and the Madonna, they have the duty to help you... Now, after spending many years in the Pauline houses and our own, I can say that the grace of the Lord has always helped me and that I am a happy and content pious disciple. Everything is due to the grace the Lord has granted me. I pray always to our Blesseds that they may help us to become truly as he wants us to be: living and active members in the Church».*

The earthly existence of Sr. M. Agnese came to an almost sudden conclusion with the discovery of lung cancer in October of 2015. She was soon aware of the diagnosis and faced the proposed treatments of surgery and chemotherapy with courage, determination and great hope. The chemotherapy, especially, forced her to limit her activities and her service to the community, which she continued almost until the end. Her tenacity enabled her to rise to her feet during every interval in the chemotherapy. The community was always very close to her and accompanied her with much prayer.

When she became aware of the gravity of her illness, she manifested to Sr. M. Regina Cesarato her frame of mind: *«I thanked the Lord for the gift he gave me because I understood what it means to be a true Pious Disciple, in the offering of each day, in a total offering, for everyone».* Yesterday she told the nurse who was with her: *“what a sacrifice that is being asked of me! May God's will be done!”.* Her life ended invoking Mary, with the presence of the Provincial Vicar. The consummation of the life of this sister questions all of us on the meaning of our apostolic offering and the spirit of loving service! Thank you, Sr. M. Agnese for what you were. Before God, continue to remember us and invoke the Holy Spirit for our sanctification in Christ the Master Way, Truth and Life!

S. H. Paolo Mancini