



Dear Sisters

Today, November 30, 2019, in the community of Albano (RM), at 10:00 AM, the Lord came to call our sister

SR. M. PIERCELESTINA – TERESA RIZZO
BORN IN ACQUARICA DEL CAPO (LE) ON JULY 27, 1929.

Teresa, desiring to dedicate herself completely to the Divine Master, entered the Congregation in the prime of youth on August 15, 1947, in Alba (CN). She was introduced by the pastor as an "irreproachable" young woman. Other young people of the Rizzo family from Puglia also responded to a Pauline vocation. Br. Celestino, Pauline disciple, Sr. M. Agata Rizzo (1905 – 1964) Sister Disciple, her uncle and aunt, and a cousin Sr. M. Francesca Rizzo, Sister Disciple, who returned from the mission in Burkina Faso (Africa).

Following the regular novitiate, Teresa made her religious profession on March 25, 1950 in Alba and the perpetual profession in Rome on March 25, 1955. In her requests for admission, the words "in full awareness", "conscious" are used repeatedly, and she is presented by those responsible as a sister who is simple and of good will.

After profession, Sr. M. Piercelestina lived her apostolic mission primarily beside the Pauline brothers, where she was known for her generosity and her friendly and fraternal style. She was appreciated as a cook and, following the practices acquired in the family, she opted for authentic ingredients, well prepared as appetizing and healthy nourishment. After a period of assisting in the kitchen in Alba Casa Madre (1950) she was the cook at the Society of St. Paul in Albano (1952), in Pescara (1956), in Modena (1957). Then, always in the Pauline houses, she took on the role of seamstress: Alba (1958), Rome (1962). After a period of some years in tailoring in the DM House of Turin (1964), in Cinisello Balsamo (1967), in Centrale di Zugliano (1968) in Bari (1969), she returned to St. Paul, preparing the refectory at the vocational house in Albano (1977), in Bari (1978) in Rome (1980), once again at the vocational house in Albano (1986), in Florence as cook (1991), in Rome CGSP (1994). Then, due to declining health, with great sacrifice and prayer filled with many intentions, she left the Pauline houses for service in the Provincial House in Rome (1996) before transferring to Albano DM.

In her apostolate, Sr. M. Piercelestina revealed herself as a person who was responsible, delicate, orderly, sensitive to the problems of others, especially of the priests and brothers, the immediate recipients of her mission, and also of her family. From her prayer life emerged her love for Mary, who accompanied her in the encounter with God precisely on a Saturday, a day dedicated to her.

With regard to her health, she tenaciously fought her battle on various fronts: intestinal neoplasia with eventual complications, hypertensive cardiopathy, and cerebral ischemia which increasingly limited her mobility until she became totally dependent upon others.

She was progressively prepared for this final passage also thanks to the nearness of a Pauline priest. Her final moment was almost imperceptible and her entrance into the Kingdom surprised the nurses caring for her. The community was gathered for the monthly retreat, with the theme "*The Lord's Return*". As the meditation concluded with the words: "Let us go out to meet the Lord who is coming", the sudden passage to eternity of Sr. M. Piercelestina was announced. The community, gathered in prayer, entrusted her to the Mother of God with the *Salve Regina* in song, recognizing this departure as a significant sign that causes us to reflect upon the various comings of our Savior, and particularly his eschatological coming, in this opportune time at the vigil of the Advent season.

Sr. M. Piercelestina, now before the Throne of God, present to the heavenly Father the eight Juniors who completed the program of integration in preparation for perpetual profession and their mission as Sister Disciples of the Divine Master in the world, and the professed under65 of Rome gathered for a day of prayer and sharing!

S. H. Paolo Mancini