



Dear Sisters,

Yesterday, December 31, 2019 in the Community of Albano Laziale, at 6:30 PM, the earthly pilgrimage of our sister was ended together with the conclusion of the year;

**SR. M. ENRICA – MARIA SOCCORSA SALERNI
BORN ON DECEMBER 25, 1928 IN SALLE (PESCARA).**

The land in which Maria Soccorso was born and raised, a zone at the foot of the mountains of Abruzzo, offers a panorama of incomparable beauty. This predisposed in the young woman a taste for contemplation and the interior life. At a little more than twenty years of age she left her family to enter the Congregation in Alba (CN) on January 23, 1950. The pastor testified: *«The undersigned, pastor of Salle, certifies that young Maria Salerni, my parishioner, has always maintained exemplary conduct. To my knowledge, I can ascertain that she is animated by a religious vocation. She demonstrates this in her piety, her humility and her seriousness... With the help of God and of the Virgin Most Holy, I believe she will be able to persevere»* (Salle, January 19, 1950).

The Holy Year was celebrated in 1950, and within the Congregation there was the climate of exhortation to profound conversion. The young aspirant received this invitation attentively. In the Bulletin of 1950, Primo Maestro wrote: *«May the Lord be with you, O young Postulant, as you aim to consecrate yourself totally to him: may he be with you in your spiritual work, in your studies, in the apostolate. May the Lord be with you, O Religious woman, who desires to conquer a high place in Paradise and who works courageously, with a high ideal».*

The evaluation of those responsible states: *«Simple and upright; calm, good. Continue the formation».* The words which recur in all of her requests for admission are *"I humbly ask"*, confirming that humility is a constant attitude in her sentiment and in her spirit.

Upon completion of the novitiate, she made her religious profession on March 25, 1952 in Alba, and her perpetual vows on March 25, 1957 in Rome.

Following her profession, she began an apostolic itinerary in which her flexibility and availability were evident. In the simplicity of daily life, in service carried out with the Marian spirit of recollection that led her to cherish the Word, she fulfilled the various ministries entrusted to her. Most of her service was in the communities of the Society of St. Paul: after profession she was in the kitchen in the seminary of St. Paul in Albano Laziale; in 1953 she was sacristan in Cibali (Catania), in 1956 in the workroom in Alba, in 1958 sacristan in Bari, in 1965 in the workroom in Pescara, in 1970 in the workroom of the seminary of the Society of St. Paul in Albano. In 1974 she was in the sewing room at St. Mary Majors (Rome), and then from 1977 she was in the workroom at Via Portuense, Rome. In 1980 she spent a short period of time in the House of Jesus Priest for various services before returning to Via Portuense.

Some of her brief writings are to manifest her gratitude for those near her in particular moments: the death of a beloved person or for her illness: *Health is a great gift from God for which we can never be too grateful. Everything is a gift when love is present (Albano, July 15, 1979).*

She had an evident care and interest in the interior life, also by seeking appropriate reading material. She was also constant in her prayer for vocations which she expressed in this manner: *«Lord, send us vocations! If you are not pleased with us then send us better ones!».*

In 1996 she was in Albano DM where she took care of the wardrobe until 2014, when she was transferred to the infirmary following signs of Alzheimer's Disease, which gradually but surely took precedence, leaving her space only for some prayer or song from the beginnings. Until a few days ago she was able to accompany the prayer animated by the sisters who were near her.

Now, Mary Most Holy, Mother of God and our Mother, has certainly presented her to her Son Jesus, recommending her as a beloved daughter! From heaven you will continue your prayer for the young women who will enter our Institute in every part of the world in this year of 2020!

S. H. Paolo Mancini