



Dear Sisters,

Today, September 2, 2020, at 3:00 PM, in our DM community of Albano, at the beginning of this new month, the Divine Master called our sister to celebrate the eternal Pasch

**SR. M. PACIS ANTONINA DI MAGGIO
born on January 11, 1936, in Terrasini (Palermo).**

The smile and openness with which she greeted everyone transmitted the sunshine of her native place - Sicily - characterized by flowers, fruits, and the joyous vitality of the people. Antonina grew up in a large family, with five sisters and one brother. They cultivated the land with care and toil. She defined her family as poor, but hard-working, rich in healthy moral, Christian and religious principles. She recounted that on Sundays, after Mass, they would go to visit her grandparents «*who gave us a small offering that would serve to live for the entire week*». The parish and Catholic Action were frequented by her and her sisters and they were the places of their Christian formation. In narrating the story of her vocation, she recalled her First Communion, at which time she made a promise to belong entirely to Jesus. «*I experienced a strange sensation that I did not understand; and it was this way each time I received Holy Communion. I spoke to the Pastor about this and he began to help me to grow. I had a great desire to remain close to Jesus in Church. One day during Confession, I told the Pastor: "I will become a religious sister". He responded: "You are too young, you must grow"*». The way was long and marked with trials, and resistances, especially from her mother. Assisted by Father Cataldo, a spiritual father who directed many young women to the Sister Disciples, she was able to realize her dream. This priest explained to her our apostolates and she remained fascinated, especially by the Adoration: «*That Institute must become my Institute, my home: there I was meant to go and there I was meant to remain*».

Antonina thus entered the Congregation in Catania on July 16, 1961, and soon arrived in Alba where she completed her initial religious formation. «*I was happy because I was finally at home, I had reached my goal. Nothing and no one else mattered. The suffering was transformed into joy. I found the monstrance with Jesus exposed, that which I have dreamed of for many years!*».

She went to Rome for the novitiate and made her first Religious Profession on March 25, 1964. She made her Perpetual Profession on September 8, 1969. Immediately following the profession, she attended the school of professional nursing in Bologna, where she received her diploma in 1966. She continued her studies in Rome in 1980 with a Course for Head Nurses and obtained the *Certificate of Qualification for Management in Nursing Care*. She fulfilled this ministry of charity, sustained and animated by the Eucharistic spirit the dwelt deep within her: in 1966 she was in Sanfrè, in 1967 at Cinisello Balsamo, in 1968 at the newly established clinic desired by the Founder in Rome. In 1980, together with other Sister Disciples in the department for

the care of priests, she offered her service at the *Regina Apostolorum* Hospital in Albano. Due to her precarious health, she spent much of her time in the dispensaries. There she distinguished herself by her kindness and her ability to find a way to respond to the urgent needs of the persons, through her professional and humane mediation with the doctors and with the healthcare workers.

«I am content, happy and serene with regard to the apostolate I have fulfilled until now in the midst of suffering, first with the priests whom I love. I always sought to do good to everyone and the Lord has always helped me. I am grateful to the Congregation for all the good that I have received and that I will continue to receive». She remained in service at the hospital until 2002, after which she offered her service in the infirmary of our Community in Albano for the elderly sisters. At the same time, with exquisite diligence, care and finesse she fulfilled her role as sacristan, dedicated to the decorum and the beauty of God's house.

Over the past months, the situation of her health became more critical both for her heart and lungs, and she had only one kidney. The sisters remained close to her with their loving care, assuring her of their presence and their prayer. Yesterday her situation declined rapidly, leading to the conclusion of her earthly pilgrimage. We entrust to Sr. M. Pacis Di Maggio the vocations and also the discernment begun in the Province of Italy for the formation of the new government.

Sr. M. Paola Manzoni.