



*Dear Sisters,*

On April 4, 2021, Easter Sunday and the anniversary of the birth of Blessed Father James Alberione, our sister entered into the Garden of the Resurrection from the Beato Timoteo Community in Rome

**SR. M. ZEFIRINA – GIULIA CALABRESE  
born on November 13, 1936 in Quadri (Chieti).**

Like Mary Magdalene, Sr. M. Zefirina also sought Jesus ardently, passing through the darkness of the agony and today, at 3:40 PM, she found the Face of the Risen Jesus resplendent with light. On Holy Saturday she was comforted by the reception of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum, in the prayerful presence of many sisters, and then accompanied by turns until her last breath.

Giulia came from Abruzzo, a land rich in sunshine, mountains and the sea, a setting that favored peace and contemplation. She entered the Congregation in Rome on November 19, 1958, even though she considers the date of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple as the official date. Sr. M. Zefirina recalled this in one of her personal writings: *«Today is a day of thanksgiving to the Lord for all the gifts of kindness and mercy that he has shown me in these 70 years of life: 22 in the family and 48 in the Congregation of the Sisters Pious Disciples of Jesus Master. ...I am 70 years old and it seems like yesterday when, on November 21, 48 years ago, I left. To go where? Where the Lord had been calling me for some time. I was the first of 7 swallows to take flight from the same nest; two are already in Paradise and five who hung from my lip. Even though I was aware of what I was doing, I did not know what awaited me! But I was sure that this was my way! I always obeyed with serenity and promptness and I have always been content in my decision to be a Sister Disciple of Jesus Master!»* (November 13, 2006).

In a certificate, through which at the time the novices were invited to express their apostolic inclinations, she stated: *«I am willing to accept any office, to fulfill even the most humble task with docility, in order to follow the specific aim of the Sister Disciples»* (April 29, 1961). In the written reports of those responsible for the formation, her generosity in her work and her great spirit of sacrifice were evident.

Following the initial formation, she made her first profession in Rome on May 7, 1961, and her perpetual profession, also in Rome, on May 7, 1966. After various years of profession she was entrusted with the important service as cook to foster the life of the Pauline brothers and sisters. She was helped in this ministry by participating in a *Program of specialization for sisters who are cooks*, sponsored by the Diocese of Milan, and receiving a certificate of merit in 1968. For this apostolate, she was in Alba (1961), in *Nogent SSP*, France, (1962), for short periods in Rome

SMM, in the Vatican SSP, in Rome San Paolo Film, in Modena, in Cinisello-Balsamo SSP (1966), in Catania (1970), in Bari SSP (1971), in Rome RA (1972). With hands that were always busy and with the intelligence of her heart she prepared, as a gift, food that was well-prepared and healthy, seasoned with love and the desire to sustain the life of those who were dedicated to the mission of evangelization, on the front lines fighting at the service of the Gospel and to announce Jesus Master.

Deemed capable of assuming responsibility for a community, she fulfilled this ministry for several successive terms: in 1974 she was the local superior in Rimini (ad tempus), in Cinisello Balsamo SSP (1975), in Catania SSP (1978), in Rome Vocazionario San Paolo (1980), in Rome Casa Generalizia SSP (1983) in Albano Casa Don Alberione (1987), in Rome Comunità Don Timoteo Giaccardo (1991).

In the following years she fulfilled various roles: in Rome San Paolo Film (1994), in Rome Saint Mary Major, wardrobe (1999), in Albano DM, assisting in the infirmary, (2001), in Rome Casa Generalizia and the Vatican as assistant to the cook (2006). Since 2015, when her health required greater care, she was transferred to the Beato Timoteo Community.

The spirit that animated Sr. M. Zefirina in her life is expressed in the synthesis of her vocational story as well as in a letter to Sr. M. Regina Cesarato (August 26, 2010): *«I always felt that the Lord was accompanying me and nothing was too much; even when there were so many changes! And yet, Jesus Master gave me the grace to always correspond promptly and with joy and solicitude... without regrets! Deo Gratias! [Thanks be to God] My thought was only this: I gave myself to the Lord, He can ask everything of me, I must only obey and be a good, prompt, humble and obedient sister because the superiors represent Jesus Master and his will for me. I was like the widow with two small coins, but I always gave everything spontaneously!...».*

*«For a long time I have desired to write these two lines, but this morning the word of Paul inspired me: In Christ you are enriched with all gifts! It was truly a miracle from the Lord! You had faith and I believed. If the Lord asked this through you, I am sure that every day he would have given me the necessary strength. **These are the miracles for those who believe. If Jesus asks something he also gives the strength to go ahead. This is my way of thinking that has always accompanied me in every act of obedience asked of me».***

Sr. M. Zefirina was characterized by the meekness, kindness, and simplicity that she drew from her encounter with the Eucharistic Jesus from the first hours of the day and her assiduous prayer to the Virgin Mary. In her service as responsible for the community, she had a special sensitivity for the human and spiritual needs of the persons; she was able to unite the hearts of the sisters, foster affection and communion, joining all the energies toward the mission.

In the early afternoon of this great day of Easter, our sister serenely and in great silence joined the divine risen Bridegroom. In prayer beside her were the Provincial Superior, a niece and another sister. Hers was a long existence marked by an illness, bronchial asthma, that flared up at the most unthinkable moments. Especially in the middle of the night, it would come suddenly, obstructing her breathing. Assisted in a timely manner, she would serenely resume her generous service, always confident in the help of the Lord for restoring the strength that she desired to spend entirely in His service.

During the week before Easter, her condition rapidly declined: she was ready for the great Voyage.

Sr. M. Zefirina, intercede before our risen Master and Lord joy for every Disciple called to proclaim that He is the Life of the world. Ask especially for the spirit of discernment for those accompanying vocations and courage for the young women called to the radical following of Jesus Master!

*S. H. Paolo Maurini*