



Dear Sisters,

Today, February 7, 2022, at 12:30 PM, from the community of Sanfrè (CN), our sister reached the heavenly homeland

SR. M. SALVATRICE – ANTONINA MAENZA
Born on January 26, 1932 in Alcara Li Fusi (Messina).

Little Antonina was brought to the baptismal font on March 27, 1932, and thus became a daughter of God and a member of the Church in which she always desired to be living and active.

The blessing of the Lord was abundantly bestowed upon the Maenza family, from which the Divine Master chose three fragrant flowers, matured under the hot sun of his Eucharistic presence. Antonina entered the Congregation in Alba (CN) on June 19, 1950, preceded by her sister, Sr. M. Sabbatina, who is already in Heaven since 2018, and followed by her youngest sister, Sr. M. Santina, who is a nurse in the community of Palermo.

Sr. M. Salvatrice willingly looked upon the story of her vocation with a contemplative gaze on God's work in her life. In a letter from February 5, 1997, she thanked Mother M. Lucia Ricci for the help she received in corresponding to her vocation *"because, although I had made the request for admission to the Congregation and I was decided and convinced of consecrating myself to the Lord, there were still many obstacles. The tragedy of the death of my father and of a sister left my mother in great need of assistance and comfort...My mother placed a great deal of hope in me since I was the eldest (I was 14 years old); there were 3 younger children. She wanted me to marry so that she would have a trusted person in the house! But the plan of God was very different. The evening on which the sister arrived from Alba, sent by you, Madre Maestra, **Jesus gave me the strength of a buffalo.** Leaving my mother at that moment was a real problem. Humanly speaking, she needed me. But Jesus knows how to carry out his loving designs! My mother, who was a woman of faith, left me free (after exhorting me not to go) to leave and, with the help of God, I was able to follow the voice of the Master who told me: Come, do not be afraid, I will take care of your mother... Madre Maestra, today, as yesterday and always, I am happy to be a Sister Disciple... Our vocation is the most beautiful. We have a mission that will last until the end of the world: to be adorers of his mystery of love in the Eucharist. May the Eucharistic Jesus make of me what he desires and have mercy for my sins. I trust in Him that having begun the good work in me, he will bring it to completion!"*

Antonina completed the novitiate and made her religious profession on March 25, 1953 in Alba, receiving the name Sr. M. Salvatrice, in memory of Our Most Holy Savior. As her feast day, she received the date of November 9, Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica. She made her perpetual profession in Rome on March 25, 1958.

The apostolate she carried out was primarily in the areas of charitable services, the confection of vestments and ecclesiastical tailoring. She began her mission in Bordighera with the diffusion of the Gospel, in Alba she would be the sacristan and work in the laundry. Following perpetual profession, she spent ten years in Lisbon, Portugal (1959-1969) tending to the kitchen, the workroom and serving as Local Councilor. She would later spend another period there (1983-1985), and she was also in Porto for the tailoring and the confection of liturgical vestments.

After her return to Italy in 1969, she was in Sicily, first in Catania for 5 years as cook in the St. Paul house and then in Palermo in 1974 in the sewing workroom. In 1976 she was in the refectory at the DM house in Ariccia and then in the tailoring in Milan (1978-1983). She was then again in the sewing workrooms in Alba, Naples and Catania. In 2010, due to advanced age, she was transferred to Sanfrè, where she made herself useful in a spirit of service, according to her possibilities.

In her writings, she mentions the intentions that animated her daily, especially in the Eucharistic Adoration: the Holy Father, the Pauline Family, priests.

In thanking Sr. M. Regina Cesarato, Superior General at the time, for her greetings, she wrote: *"This year, as always, I asked the Lord that I might truly be a small living stone of the edifice of the Holy Church, mother of all the churches of the world. Not only for myself, but also for all the Sister Disciples spread throughout the world... I am now settled in this land of Piedmont, near and in contact with suffering. It reminds me of the brevity of life and the beautiful words of our Founder: Paradise! Paradise!"*

In simplicity, Sr. M. Salvatrice lived a profound interior life that motivated her in her offering, with a great spirit of sacrifice. Her horizon of prayer was universal and included reference to all the sisters in the world. She loved to maintain cordial relationships with people and enjoyed music and singing, animating the community liturgical celebrations.

Around her, she radiated the spirit of faith that animated her and contributed toward the creation of a beautiful community atmosphere. Her joyfulness did not show her age, even though she was elderly with all the related problems and complications.

The phrase chosen for her 50th anniversary of profession expresses her lifestyle: *Today, with my heart filled with joy and gratitude, my soul magnifies the Lord!* Now, dear sister Salvatrice, continue your song of praise before the Blessed Trinity, interceding especially for the young women in formation, for those who will take a new step forward in the vocational journey next February 10!

S. H. Paolo Mancini