



Dear Sisters,

Yesterday, December 25, 2022, on the Solemnity of the Birth of the Lord Jesus, at 5:00 PM, the Lord definitively called to himself our sister

SR. M. ORSOLINA TERESA RIGONI
born on October 18, 1930 in Altissimo (VI).

A few days after her birth, on October 23, her father Augusto and her mother Guglielmina Ferrari presented her at the baptismal font to receive her adoption as a daughter of God and thus becoming, in Jesus Christ, a participant in his Body that is the Church.

As an adolescent, on October 5, 1942, braving the bombardments of the Second World War in full course, she entered the Congregation at Sacile (Pordenone) where the Sister Disciples were located with the Society of Saint Paul. The Pastor, Fr. Luigi Carlotto, attested that *«the young woman, Rigoni Teresa di Augusto, had always maintained optimal religious and moral conduct»*.

She continued her initial formation in Alba (CN), where she entered the novitiate on March 24, 1948. She was deemed *«prepared, growing in the awareness of her vocation. Content, desiring to make progress, well-disposed to obedience»*. She made the religious profession on March 25, 1949, and her perpetual profession on March 25, 1954, always at Casa Madre in Alba. In her requests she expressed her awareness of her own unworthiness and great trust in the Lord's grace.

During the first years following profession, she spent a period of time in the Pauline houses in Alba and Catania and periods of time in the bookbinding department in Alba (1952, 1956). From 1954 until 1956 she was hospitalized for pulmonary tuberculosis. In 1956 she was in the bookbinding in Alba, and then in 1960 she went to assist in the Liturgical Apostolate Center in Cinisello Balsamo. In 1962 she was in the houses of the Society of St. Paul: first in the workroom in Rome and then in Modena. From 1966 until 1979, she was successively responsible for the following Liturgical Apostolate Centers: Turin, Vicenza, Milan and then again in Turin and finally assistant in the Center at Saint Mary Major in Rome. On the occasion of her 25th anniversary of profession, she was offered the possibility of participating in a diocesan pilgrimage for religious women to Lourdes. *«I brought with me to the Madonna of Lourdes all of your intentions, those of the entire Congregation, especially for vocations and priests. May this destination be for me a source of new and stronger love for the Madonna, for my Congregation, renewed zeal and daily, conscious and generous fidelity. Love,*

fidelity, strength, holiness are the graces I will ask at Lourdes for myself, for every Sister Disciple» (Milan, 22.06.1974 to Madre M. Lucia Ricci).

In 1983 she was in the warehouse of CRAL (Roma) then, from 1986 until 1991, she was the Local Superior, first for the community in Vicenza and then in RA Milan. In 1991 she was responsible for the center of Saint Mary Major and then Local Superior in the same community. She would continue to exercise this ministry in Genoa and then in Naples. In 2003 she returned to Saint Mary Major in Rome for various ministries and, in the meantime, assisted in the preparation of liturgical vestments from 2005 until 2017.

Sr. M. Orsolina had a personality that was joyful, frank and open: this facilitated her in the exercise of the apostolate in the Liturgical Apostolate Centers and, in general, in the community life. In her ministry as Local Superior, she was attentive to the life of the sisters, their apostolic commitments and she was available to them with charity and a maternal heart.

She had a special love for Mother M. Scolastica and she gave witness to her also in the recent documentary on the Congregation: FRAMMENTI DI BELLEZZA [FRAGMENTS OF BEAUTY]. She was convinced that it was her intercession that intervened in the difficult moments of her health and family situations: *«I understood with certainty that Mother Scholastica intervened on my behalf. I prayed to her a great deal, she is the one who received me as an immacolatina (a very young aspirant) into the Congregation, she always loved me. I felt her closeness, she gave me a serenity that was not my own, but that came from within, from someone that I did not understand. ...She gave me great confidence, I learned from her, reading her writings, to love Jesus Master, and she made me understand that He is the one who arranges everything for our good»* (22.12.2007).

From an early age she was marked by pulmonary fragility. Her medical history references acute phenomena due to illnesses that affected the lungs: pneumonia, bronchopneumonia, conditions affecting the lungs that progressively compromised her respiratory system.

For health reasons, in 2017 she was transferred to the community for infirm sisters in Albano to receive adequate care for her situation. About a week ago, due to the decline in her health, she was hospitalized in the intensive care unit at Ospedale dei Castelli ad Ariccia (Rome).

While the community was gathered to sing the Vespers of the Birth of the Lord in the flesh, praising Jesus the Savior, light from eternal light, inextinguishable hope, our sister opened her eyes to the vision of the merciful Face of God. Sr. M. Orsolina, in fact, had translated into her life those profound values that motivate our being disciples of Jesus Master, way, truth and life: the primacy of Eucharistic-liturgical prayer, the love for priests, the sense of belonging to the Congregation and to the Pauline Family.

From Paradise, may she intercede for the needs of every Province as they prepare to celebrate the Provincial Chapters, and obtain for them a spirit of discernment and wisdom to face the complexity of life. And for all of humanity, may she intercede for the resolution of the serious situations of war spread throughout the world.

S. H. Paolo Mancini