



Dear Sisters,

Today, March 28, 2023, in the heart of the night, at 02:00 in the community of Sanfrè (CN), the Groom arrived and found our sister with the lamp lit

SR. M. LEONARDA ALESSANDRA POMPIGLIO
born on 27 August 1927 in Villongo (BG).

Alexandra was baptised the day after her birth, on 28 August, made straight away a daughter of God and a member of the Church. On 30 October 1950 she entered the Congregation of the Sister Disciples in Alba (CN), with the awareness of offering her youth to the Divine Master. The Parish Priest presents her as follows: *«of commendable moral and religious conduct, such as to be able to be admitted as an aspirant in a religious Congregation»* (Fr. A. Varinelli, Parish Priest). She completed her initial formation in Alba until her religious profession which she made on 25 March 1953. Those responsible for her said: *«She gives hope of success. She understands and loves the Congregation»*. She professed perpetual vows in Rome on March 25 in 1958. In her request she expresses:

« For my greater sanctification and of my neighbour, consciously and of my free will, I humbly ask to be admitted to the perpetual profession in the Congregation of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master. I know from personal experience how great my weakness is, however, I hope in divine grace». After her profession she remained in the community of Alba dedicated to the embroidery, in the department which carried out the embroidery in gold! In 1955 she was at the General House of the Society of St. Paul, engaged in the workroom. Then for some years she was a collaborator in the Centers of Liturgical Apostolate: in Florence (1956), in Rome (1957) and in Milan (1958). She was also for a period at the Society St. Paul in Modena (1960) and then resumed the apostolate in the Centers of Apostolate Liturgical: to Florence (1960) to Catania (1966) to Alba (1967, to Rome SMM (1968); again, to Catania (1975), to Milan (1976) where she mainly dealt with ecclesiastical tailoring. In 2006 she was transferred to Cinisello Balsamo and in 2015 she passed to the Community of Sanfrè.

Writing to a young cousin, she sums up the spirit of her vocation as a Sister Disciple, premising: *« This testimony describes very well the genesis of my vocation and mission»*, then she recounts: *« I would have liked to be able to reach everyone! But every human being is by nature limited. Having become aware of this reality, I intensified my prayers in order to understand what my specific place or task was in the saving plan of God in my regards. After various circumstances, apparently trivial – according to the human logic – with the certainty*

that they were wanted or permitted by “He who, has always loved us and loves each one of us in a unique way”- I have made my choice: “Sister Disciple of the Divine Master!”. At first glance it may seem like a wrong choice... But as I wanted to get to everyone, I wanted to do everything and instead I go and close myself in a convent – but not only but I go to be part of a Congregation that has no mission or apostolates of a social nature?! But you see, dearest, how many aspirations I carried in my heart, no Congregation, with its various specific tasks, could have satisfied me because they were too limited. Jesus Master, who had placed great ideals, aspirations, desires in my heart – with his call to be totally dedicated to his person – to his service, has offered with the Perpetual Adoration, apostolate and specific mission, entrusted to me in the name of the Church - **the unique possibility to grasp onto his same omnipotence to the benefit of the priests and of all humanity. This power is more powerful than the atomic one!** We just have to be aware of it! This was my discovery with “his grace”!

This brief vocational history explains the life of Sr. M. Leonarda, her particular attention to spiritual work. Inner work and prayer occupied a central place in her person. She had developed the commendable habit of noting the movements of the Spirit that advised her, operating in her through the Word of God, the Word of the Founder, of Mother Scholastica and also through circulars or communications within the Institute. They were for her the voice of the Spirit to which she paid particular attention and wrote down consequent reflections. Thus, a wealth of annotations and writings was generated, certainly important and to be evaluated in their time. Particularly in her life as a Sister Disciple she developed a special sensitivity of prayer, offering, support especially for the priests and brothers of the Society of St. Paul.

Furthermore, she affirms that in her interior journey, a particular breakthrough came about in a precise historical moment: « Since October 1981, when I signed the famous ‘contract/cambiale’ suggested by our Founder, gradually the apostolic anxiety, especially in relation to the Pauline Family in general and for the various realities, grew enormously and became the source of my joys and of my inner torments: to tell the truth, with great abundance of these than of those! This is partly my card of interior acknowledgement» (To Sr. M. Giovanna Colombo, sup. prov.).

A note from Mother Scholastica, which she shared with joy, was a guideline for her life: «Good Sr. M. Leonarda, if your ambition is to become a saint, always say yes to everything the Divine Master asks, know how to enjoy it and love everyone like Jesus. We being as Nothing, let us enjoy as if we did not exist. Love Jesus and keep Him as your Everything, always humbly keep yourself at his disposal. By disappearing, you will be reborn in the Spirit because it is He who must prevail. Forgetting the good done is wisdom, it shows humility and trust in God. Love is the master in religious service and the better you practice the better you love. Your affectionate Sister Scholastica, 03/25/1978”.

Her long earthly existence already knew various health disorders, especially cardiac ones. On 25 March, on the seventieth anniversary of her religious profession, she was consoled with the gift of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. She moved on to eternal life with the lamp of faith burning with love and faith. Sr. M. Leonarda, speak to the Heavenly Father about the youth and the young people in formation in the Pauline Family and invoke for them perseverance!

S. H. Paolo Mancini