



Dear Sisters,

Today, January 30, 2024, in the Beato Timoteo Community, Rome, at 6:30 AM, the Divine Master brought to completion the Paschal journey of our sister

**SR. M. GRAZIA – GRAZIA MARIA PAPPALARDO
born on August 17, 1974, in Catania (Italy).**

She was the second of three children: two brothers and her. The family can be characterized by a solid religiosity, also favored by the setting of the small town of Regalna, located at the foot of Mount Etna. On October 27 she received Baptism in the parish church of Maria SS.ma del Carmelo. The young Grazia Maria successfully completed a demanding course of study and obtained the diploma in Finance and Business and the title of environmental consultant. For some years she worked as a fiscal, administrative and environmental consultant. Her life as a Christian is characterized by her active and conscious participation in the Eucharistic liturgy and her thoughtful and enthusiastic commitment in the animation of the pastoral care for the diocesan youth. When she came to know the Sister Disciples, she discovered in their lifestyle the response to her discovered desire for the prayer of adoration, the need for recollection, and to nourish herself with the silence of adoration. Thus, when the moment came to undertake the journey of the religious life, it was with surprising simplicity that she made herself available to leave her secure position at work (cf *Presentation of Msgr. Barbaro Scionti, Pastor – Delegate of the Archbishop of Catania*).

She entered the Congregation on October 7, 2008, at Florence in the community of Fiesole. After the initial period of formation in Florence and the postulancy in Alba (CN) she began the novitiate in Rome on February 10, 2012. During the period of formation she frequented courses of theological formation in Fossano and, in Rome, the course of Theology of the Consecrated Life at the *Claretianum* and the three-year course of Liturgy at Sant'Anselmo. A surprise erupted in the life of Grazia Maria: in September of 2013 she experienced a sudden and severe nosebleed. Consequently, she was admitted to the Fatebenefratelli Hospital and underwent surgery for an extensive neuroblastoma. It was a complicated surgery that took place over several periods and sites (skull, face, neck...) completed by repeated cycles of chemo and especially radiotherapy in Pisa or in Milan, at the site of the metastasis.

Upon completion of the novitiate, a discernment in the Spirit was necessary regarding the acceptance of this young woman into the Congregation, despite the severity of her illness. Her great desire to consecrate her life to the Lord was taken into consideration. Referring to

the Word of God “*My soul rests in God alone, from whom comes my salvation*” (Ps 62:2) in her request she expressed: “*Despite the situation of the illness, the desire to consecrate my life to the Lord has never diminished, rather it has become stronger*” (March 31, 2014). The seriousness of her situation and the risk to her life led to allowing her to make the religious profession in the Fatebenefratelli Hospital, in Rome, on April 24, 2014, in the presence of the Superior General, Sr. M. Regina Cesarato, and two witnesses. “*Together we entrusted ourselves to the intercession of Mary Most Holy with total availability to fulfill the will of God, in whatever way it was manifested*”. Sr. M. Grazia, her religious name, during the period of temporary vows, in the moments in which her health slightly improved, fulfilled various services in the communities of Rome in via Portuense. The prayer of adoration, to which she always gave priority, her prayerful presence in the Church of Jesus Master often became a point of reference for the people from outside who entrusted themselves to her offering and to her prayer. In the same way, she was sought by many people for her patient listening and advice, which with the experience of suffering, had a therapeutic effect upon the people. At the completion of the period of temporary vows she was admitted to the perpetual profession following the favorable recommendation of the Provincial Superior, Sr. M. Provvidenza Raimondo. Sr. M. Micaela Monetti received her vows on the Solemnity of Pentecost, May 31, 2020, in the Church of Jesus the Divine Master. The context of the pandemic contributed to rendering the Rite recollected, devout and emotional.

In the last 4 years of her illness, Sr. M. Grazia also experienced the suffering of *epileptic crises* which made her clinical situation even more complicated: therapies for pain control, anti-epileptic therapy, visits to specialists, to the point of making every movement impossible. Sr. M. Grazia lived her illness with extraordinary lucidity, awareness and the total assumption of the Cross. The apostolate to which she was called by the Lord is the apostolate of suffering, a mission she accepted with extraordinary awareness, constantly seeking to correspond to the plan God had reserved for her, broadening her heart to many intentions, to the needs of the Congregation, of the Pauline Family, and of the Church. Her call to eternal life as we approach the celebration of the Centennial of foundation, in the context of the International Seminary on *The voice of woman in the ministries of the Church...* is a confirmation that God is pleased with the consummation of the offering of her life.

A video, that she had prepared as an Easter greeting in 2021, can be considered as her spiritual testament and a synthesis of the spirituality that animated and sustained her: “Hello! Happy Sunday, Happy Easter Sunday of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the beautiful thing is that we are all risen together with him! We are all alive with him! He has restored our life, but eternal life; nothing can ever frighten us again. Death, death is only a passage. He has done everything, he has saved us. Let us praise Jesus, the Father, the Holy Spirit for this infinite grace; let us truly seek to contemplate and become aware of its true meaning: it is stupendous; it is stupendous! Therefore let us live life to the fullest: giving thanks, loving, rejoicing, rejoicing with the others, with Mary, with Jesus, and in all of the difficulties and all of the sufferings in this pandemic we cling to Jesus Christ and to Mary and we try to remember these days, this moment, that everything is fulfilled! We believe in him, trust in him. Therefore, many, very many greetings for Happy Easter to those I know, to your

loved ones always in communion of prayer. An embrace and many thanks. Have a good day!”.

Her heart is filled with the presence of God that she also communicated in fraternal dialogue. On the anniversary of her profession, April 24, 2023, bringing together the memory of her first profession, she then pronounced these words: *Everything we do and live, everything for you only for you, only good, only love, only joy everything for you, everything for life, everything for joy, everything for love, everything in you, always in you, to live and to rejoice only in you, everything only for you! Help us, Jesus, source of our life, source of our joy, source of our being, source of our life! Everything for you, always for you, only for you, everything in you alone, for you without end, everything for you, **Jesus**.*

Yesterday, in the presence of many sisters, she received the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Thus, in special peace and surrender, Sr. M. Grazia prepared herself for the final passage, that of eternal life. While our communities in Italy raised the morning prayer, she was invited to the eternal praise in the Kingdom of Heaven. We give thanks to the Lord for the apostolic strength he granted to our sister, Sr. M. Grazia, who was presented to Jesus Master bringing all of our needs and the hope of new vocations!

S. H. Paolo Mancini

Il funerale verrà celebrato mercoledì 31 gennaio 2024, alle ore 15:00, nella Chiesa di Gesù Divino Maestro, Via Portuense, 741, Roma. La salma sarà tumulata nel cimitero di Ciampino (Roma).