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10122 TORINO

The Provincial Superior

**"And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself,  
that where I am you may be also".**

Jn 14:3

Dearest Sisters,

On Saturday, 15th May, the eve of the Lord's Ascension and on the day dedicated to Our Lady, who was loved by her with filial tenderness, our dearest Sr. Annairene "went to occupy the place" prepared for her. It was 9:10 a.m. when she died in the Infirmary of the Mother House after a period of long and painful suffering, caused by the diffused carcinoma of the abdomen and the liver, which she bore with inexplicable patience.

She had expressed her desire that a circular letter not be written because "after death we are all good". But I think it would be in keeping with our family spirit to share the experiences of every person's life about which God had said, "It was very good" (Gen 1:31) and to proclaim the mercy of the Lord who makes use of us "*weak instruments though we are*" (C.T. di Barolo) in order to manifest His paternal and maternal love towards every creature, especially the most unfortunate. We can count on the many testimonies, above all of the high school youth, to affirm that Sr. Annairene too, "*did much good to many people*", coherent with our charismatic foundation.

**SISTER ANNAIRENE (CECI Violetta)** was born on 10 January 1923 at Narni (Terni). Her Christian formation matured within the family and also within the ranks of the Catholic Action group. The Parish Priest recommended her entrance into the Novitiate with these words: "*... she has always maintained an exemplary moral and religious conduct, distinguishing herself not only among other young ladies of the Parish but also among the members of the Catholic Action group within which she has always served praiseworthy*".

The formation received gave her the "backbone" which was seen in her personal commitment and which supported her in her work as well as in her apostolic service towards the children and youth of the Parish. She was guided by a Spiritual Director who led her along the pathways of the Lord with attentive and exigent fatherliness. From this experience, came her unconditional esteem towards the Priests who would become always the object of her prayer and sacrifice. At a ripe age, she wrote a "novel" entitled "*My Son-Priest*" in which the plot revealed the beauty and the grace of the priestly ministry.

On her 24<sup>th</sup> Birthday - 10 January 1947 – she entered the Novitiate in Torino. On 10 August she made her Vestition, which was followed by the First Profession (10 August 1949) and the Perpetual Profession (10 August 1955).

In the meantime (1949) she obtained a diploma in order to be able to teach in the Kindergarten, a service which she carried out with passion in all the Communities where obedience sent her:

at Ala di Stura (1949); at Bra S. Antonino (1950); at San Nazzaro (1956); at Bra - Asilo S. Andrea (1958); at Carmagnola "Immacolata" (1961); at Castelfidardo (1966); at Gavorrano (1969); at Carmagnola - Asilo Ronco (1970); at Carmagnola "Immacolata" (1972), where she remained until 1998.

She dedicated herself to an array of children, trying to give the best of herself both from the educational point of view and from that of the moral and Christian values, with openness and sensitiveness to always involve the Families so that education might be organized, profound and efficacious.

One of her former students, who became a priest and now the Bishop of the Diocese of Acqui, Msgr. Pier Giorgio Micchiardi, upon receiving the news of the death of his “teacher” commented: *“Oh... my teacher. I remember her well and I will pray for her with a heart full of gratitude”*.

She dedicated herself full-time to the school apostolate and, with the same energy, to Parish activities, making herself part of the groups, or creating them if there were none, where children and youth might grow, deeply convinced of the value of associating with others. She founded also the group of the “Little Cenacles”, the aim of which was to pray and to offer sacrifices for priests.

According to her, a group does not level down its members, even though it has a shared project for the accomplishment of which each one supports the other. Being together forms the person to respect and to appreciate “the other”, considered as a resource and not as an obstacle to communion. This dimension presupposes that education be attentive to the “originality” of each person, especially when, during adolescence, one is in search of his/her own identity.

Sister Annairene was very attentive to this aspect in a particular way when, from 1998 to 2002, she was in Torino-Via Massena with the task of assisting the High School students.

She entered in full harmony with the Teachers and collaborated with them for the formation of the students. They appreciated very much the “Sister” who approached them, listened to them, advised them, scolded them also...

They turned to her with full trust narrating family problems, the fear of many questions, the emotions and delusions of their first love, the difficulty of believing and the joy of having encountered a “You” ...

Sister Annairene reached out to them also by writing some experiences of the “student group”: retreats, vacation time...

For them she also wrote “some little things” – as she used to say: stories, short meditations on the Way of the Cross, on Mary, the Church... On reading these writings, one can find many expressions of our Charismatic vocabulary: *“The Lord loves us immensely and wants us to be happy...”*; *“God does not want to lose the work of his hands...”*; *“The Lord will always be there to help us: call upon him always with faith, with love and humility, always convinced that by ourselves we are nothing, but with God we can do everything...”*.

The young ones understood her and responded to her constant “presence” among them. At the end of the Matriculation they wrote to her: *“Thanks to your example, we understood how important it is to believe and to love God. Each one of us is a gift to others and for this we need to respect and to love one another as you have always taught us. We are happy to have known you. We will never forget you!”*.

Because of worsening problems of health which made it difficult for her to walk, she was transferred to the Mother House, where she spent her last days in the Infirmary.

In prayer, which became the breath she drew each day, she expressed to the Lord even her suffering caused by her physical pain and the darkness, which at times and always more frequently, enveloped her soul. But during the last months, when her body was gripped by the metastasis, her soul was pacified and in peace she breathed her last.

On 17 May, in the Chapel of the Mother House, the funeral Mass was presided over by Fr. Sergio Boarino, one of the youth whose vocational response she had accompanied since his Seminary years. Then, her mortal remains were accompanied to the Monumental Cemetery of Turin where she was laid beside our other Sisters.

While we generously offer our suffrages for our dearest Sr. Annairene, let us ask her to continue to intercede for our Holy Father and for all the Priests during this year especially dedicated to them and, as she desired, for all those who are called to be “shepherds” of the people of God.

Faternally.

Mother Franceschina Milanese  
Provincial Superior