

Suore di Sant'Anna

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The Provincial Superior

Turin, 20th July 2016

*"Flower of Carmel, tall vine blossom laden, splendour of heaven,
childbearing yet maiden.
Hail, Key and Gate of heaven,
may we too reach the glory with which you are crowned".
(Ancient Sequence to Our Lady of Carmel)*

Dearest Sisters,

On 16th July at 2:15 p.m. in the Community of "Stella Maris" Rome, Our Lady of Mount Carmel took with her to Heaven our dearest Sr. Catena after many months of illness. It is significant that precisely on the day consecrated to the Virgin Mary, our Sister was liberated from her many physical sufferings, not the least the impossibility to take in any kind of food including liquids, even water, at a time of great heat. In fact, recently, she could be fed only through intravenous drips.

Our Sister, who was given the name Maria at Baptism and at the Religious Vestition took the name of "Catena" (Our Lady of Chains), whose devotion is very diffused in her birthplace, concluded her earthly pilgrimage on a Saturday, coinciding precisely with the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The Superior General, called to "Stella Maris" a few hours before her death because of her worsened condition, prayed at her bedside the prayers proper to Our Lady of Carmel who promised her devotees to bring them to Paradise the Saturday after their death, and on that same Saturday, our Sister went to Heaven.

Sister Catena (Maugeri Maria) was born in Aci Sant'Antonio (Catania) on 24th November 1927.

On 22nd January 1959, she entered our Congregation, at Turin – Mother House, where she celebrated the various events of her formative journey:

on 10th August 1959 she made her Vestition

on 10th August 1961 she made her First Vows

on 8th September 1967 she consecrated herself forever to the Lord through the Perpetual

Profession.

As a young Professed Sister, in 1960 she was sent to Turin - Via Massena as Portress and the following year, she was transferred to Viù - Versino to lend her service as cook. In 1963, obedience called her to Druent with the same task and a few years later, in 1968, she was sent to Bra - Mendicità, again as cook. In 1969, she was in Ravi, then in 1970 in Narni Stazione and in 1973 in Acireale still as cook.

Here, she remained for about ten years where, aside from being a cook, she also served as Mistress of the boarders and was in-charge of the wardrobe.

Sr. Catena was a religious of profound convictions. Sr. Amata remembers her as *a person of prayer and interior life, always present at community activities. Behind a brusque appearance was hidden a great availability, she practiced fraternal charity with subtleness, often foreseeing the need or even the mere desires of the Sisters in what she did.*

In 1984 she was transferred to Castronovo where, lending her service in the kitchen, Sr. Catena did not allow herself to be taken up by excessive concern for the external or material works, but she had the ability to give the right value to things.

In 1994 she was sent again to Acireale, where she carried out various services. After three years, in 1997, she was in San Giovanni Gemini and in 1999 again in Acireale.

In 2001 she repeated her "Yes" once more to the Provincial Superior who proposed her transfer to the Community of Augusta School, again with the same task as cook.

Despite her strong desire to remain in her beloved land (Sicily) and not to be transferred to the “mainland” (as she used to call it, thinking of having to cross the Strait of Messina), in 2004 our dear Sister responded to obedience that called her to Castelfidardo where she served as Portress.

The years of her religious life were, thus, marked by frequent transfers, as if the Lord had wanted to strengthen her vocation and fortify her faith. In front of every call of obedience, Sr. Catena always responded with a generous “yes”, despite the trouble of having to start all over again every time.

In 2011 she was transferred to Rome - Viale Marconi because of her poor health. Sr. Catena, in fact was suffering from a severe kind of anemia for which it was necessary to admit her into the hospital to undergo frequent blood transfusions.

Sr. Josephine, who for more than a year had taken care of her in the Community of Viale Marconi, remembers her, thus: *“Sr. Catena was a person who was strict with herself, of few words; those who knew her well would recognize under her serious appearance an understanding and affectionate heart. She suffered much because of her illness and she entrusted herself to Our Lady of Chains to whom she was very devoted. She never tired of relating the stories of her apparitions and at night as soon as she was tucked into bed, she would always ask for her rosary. Now that she is in Heaven, may Our Lady crown her with eternal peace”*.

After many years spent in the Community of Viale Marconi, in March of 2015 she was incorporated into the Community of Stella Maris. Here, she was attended to with care and love, until Sister death came to conclude her earthly existence, so precious, and because of her worsening illness, so painful.

The funeral Mass, celebrated by Fr. Lubomir, was held on 18th July in the Chapel of the Community in the presence of the Superior General and some Sisters of the General Council, the Sisters of the Generalate Community and the two Communities of Viale Marconi.

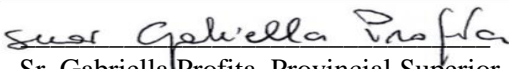
During his homily, the celebrant briefly commented on the “sign of Jonah” which Jesus spoke about in the Gospel, expressing the bitter realization that his contemporaries refused to recognize him, despite the signs. The same happens to us when we obstinately ask for signs to interpret our personal life and the seemingly incomprehensible events, without acknowledging that the death and resurrection of Jesus are the “Signs”, to approach our illness, death, our vocation and consecration.

At the end of the celebration Sr. Consuelita, Superior of the Community, addressed Sr. Catena with these words: *“Dearest Sr. Catena, I came to know you in the nearby Community and I remember you as silent and reserved, always with the rosary in your hand. At times in the evening, before going to bed accompanied by the Sister Nurses, you used to stop in the Community room to recite the poem of your childhood dedicated to your father. The Community used to give you an applause and you would go to your room happy and serene. I found you again here in Stella Maris, suffering but serene, and attentive to the Sisters who were around you. Lately, you suffered very much; we understood it through your laments which had the sound of a lullaby more than an expression of pain. To the Sister Nurses who asked you to pray for them, you would respond that they were your little angels. Dearest Sr. Catena, now that you are in the Father’s House, truly among the angels, please pray for this Community and for the entire Congregation: ask the Father to bless it with the gift of vocations. Thank you, Sr. Catena!*

After the celebration, her mortal remains were buried in the Cemetery of Prima Porta where she now rests beside our other Sisters.

Dearest Sisters, now that Sr. Catena has reached the fullness of life, beside the Risen Christ may she intercede for the blossoming of new vocations to our Institute. Let us entrust ourselves to her prayers and her protection, so that even from Paradise she may have that special gaze upon us. Let us implore all these through the intercession of our Patroness St. Ann in this month dedicated to her.

I greet you all with affection,


Sr. Gabriella Profita, Provincial Superior