

**SISTERS OF ST. ANN**

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**10122 TORINO**

*The Provincial Superior*

20<sup>th</sup> December 2016

*"For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed,  
but my steadfast love shall not depart from you,  
and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,  
says the Lord, who has compassion on you".*

*(Is 54:10)*

Dearest Sisters,

The Community of Carmagnola - San Grato was preparing to celebrate the Praises of the Lord when it was shaken by the sudden death of Sr. Luisanna. The Sister was getting ready to pray Lauds with the Community, when she was seized by a sudden attack that left no time for any help: it was about 6.30 a.m. on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Until the night before, Sr. Luisanna had participated actively in praying the Vespers in the Community chapel, together with a good number of lay people, not showing any signs of particular discomfort.

The passage from Isaiah of today's liturgy helps us to discover the greatness of the Lord towards every soul redeemed by His blood: *"For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you"*. Trusting in the mercy of the Lord, we are certain that our Sister is already experiencing that *fullness of grace* reserved for His elected ones and is enjoying Life that has no end.

**Sr. Luisanna** (Giovanna Schiavino) was born in Verduno (Cuneo) on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1932.

On 21<sup>st</sup> November 1952 she entered our Congregation, in Turin - Mother House, where she celebrated the stages of her formative journey:

on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1953 – she was vested

on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1955 – she made her First Profession

on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1961 – she consecrated herself forever to the Lord through the Perpetual Profession.

Giovanna was the youngest of four daughters; she had not known her father, since he had died on the day she turned one year old; but despite this, the children lived serenely and peacefully under the loving care of their mother, who even in poverty, tried to provide for her children.

Sr. Luisanna, still small, was received in the orphanage of the Sisters of St. Ann in Bra where her vocation grew and matured. At the age of 20 she joined our Congregation. During the years of formation for religious life, she also obtained her Diploma for Teaching and in 1957, she began her mission in the Community of Reano as an Elementary School teacher which she carried out for 19 years. This long experience of apostolate as a young nun formed her personality and enriched her experience as an educator of children. An attentive teacher, always maternal and patient, she lavished on them the gifts of goodness and knowledge that the Lord had given her. Sr. Luisanna was also very active in the parish: she dedicated herself to catechesis and animated the various celebrations with hymns. She, always and everywhere, had been an exemplary Sister of St. Ann, a guardian and bestower of the charism of hospitality and mercy, giving witness to the goodness of God.

In 1976, she was entrusted with the service of Provincial Secretary in Turin - Mother House. Sr. Luisanna took up this role with a deep sense of responsibility, though feeling inadequate, believing she was not "capable". By obeying, she carried out this service accepting any sacrifice, always available to welcome the requests of the Sisters with sincere affection, as recalled by those who knew her and had shared some significant moments with her: *"Dear Sr. Luisanna, I lived with you for many years, shoulder to shoulder,*

*head to head, heart to heart... now wishing you goodbye I can only say "thank you" to you. Thank you because you taught me the simplicity of going to God through your words: "Jesus, Jesus, take charge!" Thank you for your hard work and serenity, for your docility and promptness of spirit; thank you for all that we will discover and contemplate in heaven. Goodbye" (Sr. Stefanina).*

This is echoed by the memories of those who have been with her in many places and shared different ministries with her:

*"I shared with Sr. Luisanna different activities and places in perfect harmony of ideals, work, apostolate, community life, holiday, leisure... In the School of Reano, on the hillside, in that beautiful Community..., I lived with her days filled with shared experiences. Her simplicity and humility made her affable and pleasant even when she was plagued by terrible headaches. Her speciality was being able to adapt herself to every person, to every situation. Our daily break was a brief walk along the avenue of the Castle to collect twigs and small branches to light the fireplace of the classrooms or to collect edible herbs which she knew well. We prayed the rosary and together, we felt that our Heavenly Mother was watching over us, our Community, our students and their families... Now I want to think of you like this, my dear Sister, as you intercede for us and obtain for us the gifts that you possessed: simplicity and the joyful ability to cooperate, to communicate, to share, to forgive... and we pray that you may enjoy forever the eternal Christmas and radiant Easter of Paradise" (Sr. Teresanna).*

In 1994 Sr. Luisanna was transferred to Carmagnola where she spent 22 years, seven years as Superior and Directress of the Kindergarten St. Ann's Immaculate and 15 years in the Community of San Grato commuting, for the first 5 years, between San Grato and the Novaresio Kindergarten of San Bernardo, of which she was the Directress. In 2007 she settled down permanently in Carmagnola - Borgo San Grato where she took up the service of welcoming groups. This type of apostolate pleased her very much because it made her feel at ease, meeting people who came weekly for prayer meetings or retreats and to whom Sr. Luisanna always gave testimony of availability, kindness and serenity, an aspect that particularly attracted those persons who had more opportunities to approach her, as evidenced by Antonia, the nurse who had been taking care of her for some time and to whom Sr. Luisanna felt attached by affection and gratitude:

*"Dearest Sr. Luisanna, smiling until the last moment, you went silently to meet your beloved Spouse, at the dawn of a day which no one ever imagined. Your smile, always constant on your face, your self-irony, your simplicity and natural tenderness, are the splendid treasures that you present before the Lord... Always ready to listen to others, you presented to Him their problems, saying before the tabernacle with spontaneous naturalness: "Jesus, you take charge, so I may not think about it anymore!" You left a great void in the hearts of those you loved, but it is also true that you filled with great significance each day that the Lord gave you; for this we thank You, our good God for having given her to us!*

*And also to you, dear Sr. Luisanna, today we all want to say thank you.... You taught us that life is love and that Love is life. Now that you live up there, smiling down on us, we are confident that you will continue to watch over us. We love you immensely, dear Sr. Luisanna and our Goodbye goes up with you to Heaven, goodbye to the "princess". It was thus, in fact, that you liked to call yourself, to emphasize the loving care and attention that your beloved Sisters reserved for you. All in all, it was not so far from the truth, because you were truly a "princess" in soul and heart with your exquisite kindness. So Goodbye beloved 'Princess of the Lord'".*

The funeral was held on 17<sup>th</sup> December in St. Michael's Parish Church of Carmagnola, packed with the faithful who, along with the nephews and nieces of Sr. Luisanna, the Sisters from Turin and nearby Communities and the Communities of Carmagnola, attended the Mass celebrated by the Parish Priest, Don Giovanni Manella.

At the beginning of the celebration Mother Franceschina, Superior of the Community, bid her last farewell:

*"Dearest Sr. Luisanna, many of us are here around you, to celebrate with you and for you, our faith in the Life that does not end and to give you our fraternal Christian embrace. We are here to express our profound gratitude to God for having had you as our sister, friend, a simple presence but of great and good company. It is gratitude for what we have received from you...; yes, we have learned many things from the way you did things, serene, good, sometimes even naive, your ready, witty remarks through which you never missed an opportunity to spread and build the "bun imur" (good tone) of the Community, as you always said... And to think that you never lacked tribulations and sufferings: from a young age you experienced the*

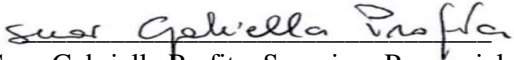
*separation from your family in the Boarding, and then the difficulty, as you often narrated, of carrying out the tasks which you felt were greater than yourself and then, especially in this last phase of your life, the ups and downs of your health. But everything served to prepare you for the final meeting with your Spouse, the Lord Jesus. Thank you Sr. Luisanna, now pray for us and intercede for all, for your nephews and nieces whom you loved so much and who are so fond of you, for the three parish communities of Carmagnola and for their priests whom you esteemed so much, for our Religious family, for our Mother Francesca, who as many of us Sisters know, had chosen you as her "spiritual secretary". Pray for the fidelity of all the Sisters and that our Congregation may not lack good and holy vocations".*

During the homily, even the Parish Priest stressed the simple faith of Sr. Luisanna, her ability to receive Jesus not only in the daily Eucharist, but also in the reality of everyday life, so that perhaps for her it was not a surprise to see the Lord calling her for the definitive encounter. After the Holy Mass, in accordance with the desire of the family members, her body was buried in the cemetery of Verduno, her hometown, where she now rests next to her parents and her sisters.

Dearest Sisters, Christian vigilance is the art of discerning the signs of the times, which means having the responsibility of personally paying attention to understanding where these signs make the human history we are living, coincide with the plan of God. We must learn to pay attention, to realize that the Lord saves, and to live and see in our life, in our work, how and when these signs occur. As we prepare for Christmas which is so near, let us offer our suffrages for the soul of our dear Sr. Luisanna.

Let us continue to remember in our prayer Mother Francesca and Sr. Marcia who are visiting our Sisters of the Province of South India.

I greet you all with affection,

  
Suor Gabriella Profita, Superiora Provinciale