

SUORE DI SANT'ANNA

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La Superiora Provinciale

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*"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!" (Ps 118: 1).*

Dearest Sisters,

The Church, thus, sings in the liturgy of Easter, as if receiving from the lips of the Risen Christ these words of the Psalm. This Eastertide, on the 1st of May, while the whole Church was celebrating the beatification of John Paul II, at 3:25 p.m., our beloved Sr. Margherita left us to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Eternal Life. What better occasion could there be than this, to return to the Father's house, on the day dedicated to the Divine Mercy and on the first day of the month in which we honour our Mother in heaven?

Sister Margherita, (**Margherita CRISTINELLI**), also known as Sr. Gioachina, was born in Marcheno (Brescia), on the 28th of August 1930. She entered the Novitiate in Turin, on 9th September 1951 and in the Chapel of the Mother House celebrated the various stages of her Religious life:

10th August 1952: Vestition

10th August 1954: First Religious Profession

10th August 1960: Perpetual Vows.

After her initial formation, in 1954 she remained in the Mother House as assistant cook and in December of 1957 was transferred to Frassinello. A few years later, in 1959, she was sent to Carmagnola - San Bernardo and the following year, in 1960, to Sirolo where she was called to lend her service once again as cook. In 1962 she was in Vasciano with the same task, then in 1966 at Monterotondo. In 1969 she returned to Sirolo, and remained there until 1971, the year in which she was transferred to Acireale.

In 1973 she was in Narni Scalo, in 1975 in Roma – Via Giusti, and a year later, at Grotte di Castro.

In all these Communities, Sr. Margherita served as a cook and lent other services as needed. Jovial in character, she served the Sisters and the children of the Kindergarten with simplicity and great generosity.

In September 1980, Sr. Margherita was called by obedience to Ribolla where she remained for around twenty years. The Sisters who lived with her remember her as a person ready to say "yes" with availability and always with a smile on her lips. Yes, this was precisely the characteristic of Sr. Margherita, her smile, which she gave to everyone with a heart filled with joy, without reserve. Her work was often accompanied by singing, which enlivened her surroundings and helped her to endure fatigue with serenity.

During the long years of her stay in Ribolla she established a very beautiful relationship with the children of the Kindergarten whom she loved and every time she saw them running in the garden or heard them singing and shouting, she would look out of the window or the kitchen door, pause to look at them and then return serenely to her pots and pans, to prepare a delicious lunch for those little ones,

who in a way were also entrusted to her care.

Even the parents and the people of the place esteemed her for the amiability and simplicity of her character.

During her free time from work in the kitchen, she cultivated the garden and loved being in contact with nature.

Sr. Margherita was attached to her relatives and they never failed to make her feel their presence even through a simple telephone call, especially her niece who often made long visits to her aunt in Ribolla, and this made Sr. Margherita very happy.

In 1996 she was transferred to Narni and the following year, once again to Ribolla until 2004.

This was the year in which Sr. Margherita was transferred from the former South-Central Italian Province (ICM) to the Northern Italian Province (IS), because of her health which was increasingly worsening. The Sister was accepted into the Community of Pianezza. No longer able to do any type of service, the years spent in this Community were dedicated mainly to offering and prayer.

Struck with Parkinson's disease in a progressive and devastating form, dear Sr. Margherita had become more and more meek, helpless, docile and silent, but her blue and expressive eyes communicated!

The Sister Nurses took care of her with love and dedication, but the one who followed her up closely, giving her attention and help, was dear Sr. Ernesta.

Coming to the Mother House together with the whole Community of Pianezza, at the end of November last year, Sr. Margherita felt "at home", closer to the Founders and to Blessed Enrichetta.

Unfortunately, in early February, following an accidental fall, she was admitted to Gradenigo Hospital for a long period of time due to a fractured femur.

Considering the general conditions, the Sister, who was already in a wheelchair, had to undergo a minor surgery, which further debilitated her body. There in the hospital, Sr. Margherita captured the favour of the doctors and nurses, who esteemed and appreciated her for her gentleness that knew no shadow of complaint and they loved her!

Sr. Margherita left this earth on tiptoe to be reunited with Christ, the Lord of life. The funeral Mass was celebrated in the Chapel of the Mother House on the 3rd of May at 9:15 a.m. Present were the Sisters of the two Communities of the Mother House, some Sisters of the nearby Communities, the sister and niece of Sr. Margherita. After the Mass, her mortal remains were buried in the cemetery of Turin, next to our dearest Sr. Susanna.

Dearest Sisters, let us not tire of imploring the Divine mercy upon dear Sr. Margherita. Fixing our gaze on the face of the Risen Christ, let us make this confident prayer our own: Jesus, I trust in You! Let us pray, together with Sr. Margherita and the Sisters who have gone before us, entrusting to the Lord the needs of Mother General now visiting the communities of Brazil and the delicate situation of the Province.

In unity of faith and love towards the Risen Lord, I greet you fraternally.


Madre Franceschina Milanesio, Superiora Provinciale