

Suore di Sant'Anna

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The Provincial Superior

Turin, 20th March 2016

*"One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple". (Psalm 27:4)*

Dearest Sisters,

The Psalmist's words give us hope at a moment in which discouragement and sadness deeply touch our hearts for the loss of our Sisters in quick succession. About a week from the death of Sr. Amabile, **Sr. Pina** left us almost on tiptoe on **15th March at 7:40 p.m.** We are certain, however, that our dear Sister is already relishing the Lord's sweetness in the Sanctuary of heaven. He who looked upon her with mercy in this life, will not abandon her at the moment of her encounter with Him.

Sister Pina (Pelati Teresa) was born in Caorso (Piacenza) on 25th December 1921.

On 21st November 1940, she entered our Congregation at Turin – Mother House, where she celebrated the various events of her formative journey:

on 10th August 1941 she made her Vestition

on 10th August 1943 she made her First Vows in Carmagnola

and on 10th August 1949 she consecrated herself forever to the Lord through the Perpetual Profession.

In 1945, having obtained her Teacher's Diploma, Sr. Pina was sent to Zafferana Etnea (Catania); in this town she began her apostolate with the children of the elementary school.

In 1953, obedience summoned her to Altessano. This was a completely new reality from the previous one, but her passion for teaching and her love for children helped her to face every difficulty. A long period of 16 years enriched her life with new experiences and lasting friendships with the families and with those she met through her apostolate in the Parish.

In 1969, she was transferred to Bra Mendicità, wherein she could still put at the service of the children her teaching skills according to the spirit of a true Sister of St. Ann, called to be an educator wherever she may be.

In 1973 she was sent to Viù, and from 1974 to 1999 she carried out her apostolate in Chieri: 25 years during which Sr. Pina consolidated her personality, well prepared and animated by a great passion for what is good. The years in the school were very challenging: intense and passionate work, but also a vibrant time, full of interests in which her enormous load of human and spiritual gifts, joy and cordiality exploded. Exigent but always a motherly teacher, Sr. Pina, followed up the children with care. She helped them to uplift themselves through knowledge and to seek what is good, for themselves and for others, forming them to an awareness of their own dignity and abilities, with respect towards all.

After almost 30 years, in 1999, she returned to Altessano, where she re-bonded and strengthened relationships with her former students and their families, while she became more and more competent and focused as a teacher.

In 2002 she was in Vignale and the following year, 2003, in Moncalieri, where she remained for 10 years. After having concluded her mission as a teacher for more than 50 years, Sr. Pina carried out the service of portress and dedicated herself to those small services necessary for the smooth running of the house. Affectionate and docile towards her Superiors, deeply attached to our Religious Family, she made herself available for the demands of Community life, forming spiritually fruitful bonds of friendship.

In 2013, she requested to retire to Casa Betania, where she spent the last years of her life. A woman of small build, but full of vitality, Sr. Pina would not remain still for a moment, thus, one would meet her everywhere, sharing stories and jokes. Even when she was confined to bed due to a broken femur, she lavished kisses and caresses on all.

Despite her vitality, however, in recent months her health worsened, due to neurological problems that provoked disorientation, for which it was necessary to assist and follow her up constantly. Her death occurred as a result of severe respiratory and kidney failure. Sr. Pina was conscious until the end and just before breathing her last, she told the Sister who was assisting her: *"I am leaving, goodbye..."*; thus, she returned to the Father's house surrounded by the Sisters who had gathered in prayer around her bed.

The funeral Mass was held on 18th March in the Chapel of the Mother House, presided over by Fr. Sergio, Chaplain of the Community, concelebrated by a friend-priest from Moncalieri, who had spiritually guided Sr. Pina for many years. Present were her relatives, the Sisters of the Communities of the Mother House and other nearby Communities.

Sr. Francarita, who had lived with Sr. Pina in Moncalieri and in Casa Betania, gave her the final farewell:

"It is painful to bid you goodbye, but in the faith and deep friendship that bind us, it is also joyful. We have spent beautiful years together in Moncalieri; I had to be your Nurse for a long time... During moments of suffering, you entrusted yourself totally to the Lord without any complaint, rather, you used to express your feelings through a smile or a joke... and you knew a lot of jokes! You were not used to complaining about what could bring you discomfort of physical suffering, in spite of your loquacity which was well known. What edified me so much was your diligence in prayer, your adaptability and your availability for any kind of work, eager to make yourself useful in the Community, without ever making your tiredness a burden. Thank you for what you have been in Casa Betania, for the trust and great affection which you gave us until your last breath. Now that you are in the Kingdom of the blessed, ask the Lord for us the grace necessary to live with generosity and joy our daily service towards the elderly and sick Sisters. You will be well remembered and we shall pray for you... Thank you, Sr. Pina!"

Two teachers who had known Sr. Pina, also wanted to express their sentiments of gratitude:

"Goodbye Sr. Pina, the mere thought of you spontaneously brings a smile which fills the eyes and heart. How can we forget your jokes, your love for the children, your spontaneous curiosity, that energy and enthusiasm for life that you were always able to convey. I met you when you were already advanced in years, but you have taught me so much: faith in Providence, the importance of giving a smile, attention for those who are in need, together with the basic things: being a true and simple person in life who is not afraid to say what she thinks and to be what she is. I love you and I know that from up above you will continue to pray for all those whom you have loved".

Dearest Sr. Pina,

"My very personal "thanks" which I would like to express to you comes certainly from the heart, but it is also an obligation for all that you have been to St. Ann's School of Chieri. It has now been several years since you no longer live in Chieri and yet, how many persons, on meeting me, ask about you! Thank you, because you have been a whirlwind of ideas, work, passion for your students and their families. Thank you, because you were a guide and mentor for the teachers who worked with you. You always trusted us and made yourself totally available with great generosity! We used to be a "team". Thank you for your candid sense of humour and the joy which you spread around you. Thank you, because the poor have always been present in your life. But most of all, you have been a woman of prayer. You worked much, but you always entrusted yourself to Him. You said that your time with the Lord was yours alone and this was enough for you. Thank you, Sr. Pina".

At the end of the Liturgy, her mortal remains were transported to the Monumental Cemetery where she now rests together with our other Sisters.

Dearest Sisters, while we continue to offer suffrages for the soul of our dear Sr. Pina, let us remember in a particular way our Sisters of the Community of Casa Betania, so painfully tried by the reality of death. May the Lord make them feel His consoling presence and grant them the strength to face sufferings and trials, in the certainty that death is not the last word, but a door which introduces us into true life.

I greet you all with affection,


Sr. Gabriella Profita, Provincial Superior