

Suore di Sant'Anna

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The Provincial Superior

Turin, 28th April 2017

*"O Mercy of God, we call on You
not only for ourselves but for all human creatures".*

(from the Exercise of the Devotion to the Mercy of God, willed and propagated by our Foundress)

Dearest Sisters,

On the eve of the Feast of Divine Mercy, after having celebrated the First Vespers of the Second Sunday of Easter with the Community, our dearest Sr. Provvidenza left us to enter into the loving embrace of the Merciful Father. If death represents the drama of detachment from affections, the resurrection affirms the hope that our every pain touches the heart of Christ, wherein dwells the Father, *the lover of life*. Today let us especially pray to Him that He may have mercy on our dear Sister, so that, like the Apostle Thomas, contemplating His face, she may also be able to say, *"My Lord and my God."*

Sister Provvidenza (Battini Rosa) was born in Coli (Piacenza) on 21st June 1923.

On 8th September 1941 she entered our Congregation, in Turin - Mother House, where she celebrated the stages of her formative journey:

on 10th August 1942 – she made her Vestition

on 10th August 1944 – she made her First Profession at Pollone (Biella)

on 10th August 1950 – she consecrated herself forever to the Lord through the Perpetual Profession.

Serene obedience characterized the existence of Sr. Provvidenza, always attentive to the passage of God in her life through human mediations. After her First Profession, in 1945 she was sent to Acireale as a cook, where she remained for 23 years.

A Sister who lived with her during those years remembers that Sr. Provvidenza in her work as a cook put in all her enthusiasm and youthful creativity, spurring also the Sisters beside her to give their best in the service entrusted to them; but so much passion for her work did not prevent her from living with punctuality and fervour the commitments of religious life, both in her lively presence in community life, as well as in taking care of her spiritual life.

In 1968 she was transferred to Sangemini, where she was compelled to stay for only a few months; in fact, for health reasons, she was sent to Ravi and the following year, in 1969, to Altessano where she carried out various services.

In 1973 she was assigned to the Mother House with the task of sacristan and laundress, where she remained for more than thirty years.

Sr. Noemi recalls the industriousness and precision of Sr. Provvidenza, her expressions of solicitude and care for the Sisters: *"she cared for everyone with love, and consequently, with attention, care, solicitude without measuring the time and effort so that everything would be "beautiful"! She was for me a sign of "providence" on the part of our good Daddy when, encountering me, she used to say with conviction, "Jesus loves you, He loves you very much." This certainty of faith became like a caress that gave me courage, especially in particularly difficult moments and helped me to decentralize myself to say, in turn, 'Jesus loves you' through acts of love and gratuitous service."*

Those long years in the Mother House, which she loved so much, also permitted her to have a close proximity to the life of the Church, which she realized through participation in ecclesial movements, in meetings of the Diocese, in all the initiatives promoted by the Congregation. But above all she saw in each one of them an opportunity for prayer, to implore, to intercede.

In 2012, when her health conditions were getting worse, she was transferred to Casa Betania, where she spent the last few years of her life in a precarious situation, often with long periods of hospitalization for problems connected with chronic bronchitis that became more acute over the years; nevertheless, Sr. Provvidenza did not miss her pilgrimages to the Chapel, perhaps on “tiptoe”, fearing that the Sisters would prevent her from going there to avoid the drafts to which it was subjected.

Continuous prayer, little services till her strength permitted it, filled the days of Sr. Provvidenza. Little by little, though, her forces declined, compelling her to stay in bed, while her cardiovascular problems worsened, so that during these last days the dear Sister was able to breathe only with the help of oxygen. Thus, after a slow decline, she ceased to live at 20.00 hrs. on 22nd April 2017, encircled by the presence and prayer of the Sisters who had been with her for several days.

The funeral Mass was celebrated by Don Sergio, Chaplain of the Community, in the presence of Sr. Provvidenza’s family members, the Provincial Superior, the Sisters of the two Communities of the Mother House and of the neighbouring Communities. Mother Francesca, who was visiting the communities of the North, was also present, and at the end of the celebration, she addressed a message to the communities present, recalling the spirit of prayer, the sense of belonging to the Institute, witnessed by love towards the superiors and the tireless service that characterized Sr. Provvidenza’s life, inviting each Sister to treasure this teaching of hers. Even Sr. Francarita and Sr. Marieta, Superior of Casa Betania, echoed this testimony, recalling:

“If this Chapel could speak, how many things it would narrate of your hard work, your care and tireless dedication, so that it could always be the most beautiful place in the house, the most tidy because as you used to say, “the house of the Lord must be kept well”.

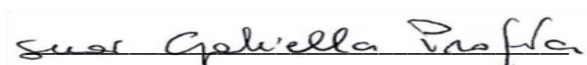
And then, after having carefully settled it, you would get up early in the morning in order to be able to pray with serenity. And when, during the last few years, your health declined and you were forced to let go much of your work, the choir loft of this chapel became the goal of your silent “pilgrimages.” ... Unfortunately, little by little, these moments in the chapel were no longer possible. These last 15 days when you had to lie motionless in bed, was a great suffering for you, but you went through them with constant prayer, offering everything to the Lord. To every gesture of attention from all those who came to see you, you would reply with a “THANK YOU”, a handshake, a smile, a serene look. Thank you Sr. Provvidenza, pray for us and for your dear nieces and nephews and continue to intercede for everyone.”

After the Mass, her body was accompanied to the Monumental Cemetery of Turin, where she now rests.

Dearest Sisters, we have not seen the Risen Christ, but we have received and transmit the testimony of the Paschal faith through which we receive the fruits of New Life. Let us ask for this rebirth for our Sister, while we continue to pray for her soul.

In the proximity of the month dedicated to the Virgin Mary, we entrust to her intercession beside the Risen Lord, our beloved Mother Francesca so that her visit to our Italian Province may give us new impetus and vigour so that we too may rise to new life.

I greet you all with affection,


Sr. Gabriella Profita, Provincial Superior