

## SUORE DI SANT'ANNA

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**10122 TORINO**

Turin, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021

*"I shall see the goodness of the Lord  
in the land of the living"*

Dearest Sisters,

On the great day when the Church was celebrating the feast of St. Francis, the poor, humble man of Assisi, our simple Sr. Clotilde was going through her passage to eternity, accompanied by the prayer and affection of many Sisters.

**Sister M. Clotilde** (Agostina Gorgerino) was born in Chieri (TO) on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1924, to a family in which she was educated with religious values, right from her childhood. In this environment, she was able to grow in a journey of faith till she decided, at the age of 22 years, to consecrate herself to the Lord. So, *on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1946, she entered our Congregation, in the Mother House - Turin, where she began her formative itinerary. The following year, on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1947, she made her Vestition, and in January 1949, her First Profession; she then continued the stages of her formative journey until 1955, when she consecrated her life definitively to the Lord, through the Perpetual Profession.*

Immediately after her First Profession in 1949, she was sent to Via Massena, Turin, as a student and then the following year, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1950, temporarily to Narni, as an elementary school teacher. In fact, a few years later, having obtained her Teachers' Training Certificate in 1953, she was sent to Via Massena, Turin, where she remained for eight years. She was then transferred to Chieri in 1961, where she carried out the educational mission as a teacher for several years. Unfortunately, serious health conditions forced her to be hospitalized for a long period, first in Villa Elio San Remo and subsequently in Santa Corona.

In 1969, after having recovered, she was sent by obedience again to Chieri, where she remained until 1976, when she was transferred, with the task of primary school teacher, to the Mother House in Turin which would be the Community in which she would spend the rest of her life, in the apostolic and community mission. In the Mother House, she followed up generations of children for over twenty years.

Her mission as a teacher certainly marked the life of Sr. Clotilde and that of those who met her. Thus writes one of her former students: *"I learnt of the passing away of my beloved teacher, my first schoolteacher. I remember very clearly those days, almost forty years ago. Sr. Clotilde, who patiently taught us weights and measures, history, geography, who decisively scolded and kept thirty children at bay.*

*I always used to think of her, because she left in me the good that only those who do their job with passion can pass on. I strongly wanted my children to go to the same school I had attended, and I was lucky that my dear teacher also came to know my family".*

The same picture of Sr. Clotilde is preserved by the teachers of the Mother House, who in those years shared her educational passion and from whom they were able to draw those teachings

that every beginner in the teaching profession treasures. Thus, a teacher, recalling the years lived with Sr. Clotilde, remembers with nostalgia: *“I write these words with a little sadness and nostalgia thinking about the years of my youth of which dearest Sr. Clotilde was a part.*

*There was no lack of reproaches towards my first mistakes as a young teacher, but that advice... served to make grow in me the joy of creativity and the art of knowledge. I am happy to have met her on the path of my life and I thank her for helping me understand that teaching is a beautiful adventure!”.*

Even Sr. Clotilde’s nephews and nieces gave us a beautiful testimony of her: *“With the simplicity of her humble origins and the politeness acquired during her long teaching experience, Sr. Clotilde always welcomed with joy each one of us, nieces and nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews when we met her in the moments of happiness and suffering of our life. She loved us very much and was a sure point of reference, a spiritual guide ready to comfort us and spur us on towards the future, reminding us not to forget our roots and affection for our loved ones, calling us to prayer and never to abandon the Christian values that she had learnt as a child at the ‘Gorgerino Farmhouse’”.*

Day by day, with simplicity, Sr. Clotilde lived obedience in silence, without noise, without clamour, with the gracefulness and smile of one who has learned in life, to face the challenges of faith and those of everyday life, holding on firmly to hope and finding peace. She spent many years in the school, as a guide to generations of teachers, an example for families and pupils, until the completion of her mission in the school, which took place in 1996.

However, this did not mean that Sr. Clotilde stopped offering her availability for the service of the Community she loved so much. After her retirement from her apostolate in the school, until 2010, she carried out the service of receptionist in the Mother House, which was another way of being in contact with people - no less delicate and precious. When her advancing age made this task difficult, Sr. Clotilde withdrew herself with simplicity, dedicating herself to prayer, offering the long days of inactivity to Our Lady, whom she particularly loved.

Meanwhile, her advancing age and lack of strength made it necessary, in **2013**, to move her to **Casa Betania**, so that she could be better assisted in her needs. In fact, until the end of August 2020, Sr. Clotilde had not manifested any particular health problems other than those related to old age. She spent her days in her room, always with the rosary in her hand, entrusting to Our Lady the needs of the Institute and those of the Superiors for whom she constantly prayed.

Though she appeared to be of a reserved, silent nature, nevertheless, she felt linked to the Community and to its life, and she tried as much as possible, to be present for the common acts which she did not want to give up, and this continued until the day she was hospitalized, at Amedeo di Savoia, Turin.

Unfortunately, she too, like so many of our Sisters of Casa Betania, had fallen ill with Covid, which had left her with serious respiratory consequences. Despite the assiduous care of the Sister Nurses, Sr. Clotilde was not able to recover her health. Thus, on 8<sup>th</sup> August, she was hospitalized, and was diagnosed with heart failure together with pulmonary problems, which forced her remain in hospital for a long period of time. However, during her hospitalization other problems emerged, including severe internal bleeding for which not even transfusions were sufficient.

Despite Sr. Clotilde’s great desire to return home, her critical condition did not permit her to do so. With the passing of days her condition got worse, and on 4<sup>th</sup> October, she suffered a cardiac arrest which resulted in her death.

Her body was taken to the Chapel of the Mother House where the funeral service was held on 7<sup>th</sup> October, attended by the Sisters of the neighbouring Communities. During the Eucharistic celebration, at which were present also her brother, nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, Sr. Josephine Ratinam addressed these affectionate words with emotion to Sr. Clotilde:

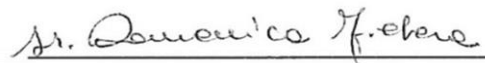
*“Dear Sr. Clotilde, we like to remember your serene and welcoming smile and the time of your illness which you faced every day with the awareness that life does not belong to us and that every moment could be the last.*

*And today we are here around you, to express to you all our affection by celebrating the Eucharist that you loved so much, giving thanks for the gift that you have been for each of us until the end.*

*Dearest Sister Clotilde, now that you are in Heaven... remember all of us who are still on the way there”.*

At the end of the funeral service, Sr. Clotilde’s mortal remains were taken to the Cemetery of Turin, where she now rests with so many of our Sisters, awaiting the resurrection.

Dearest Sisters, Sr. Clotilde’s life was a gift, which she handed over to the Lord through the Institute which she loved so much. Let us continue to pray for her, while we ask her to intercede for us before the Father, for the many needs of our Religious Family.



Sr. Domenica Fichera, Provincial Superior