

In the Father's House

*«As we have been united
in the profession of the faith,
so let us keep ourselves united
in suffrage and intercession».*
(Fr. Alberione)



At 4:30 AM, local time, on 3 December 2017, the first Sunday of Advent, at the community of Alba "Divine Providence", our brother priest

FATHER EUGENIO GIOVANNI FORNASARI
102 years, 91 of Pauline life, 84 of profession and 76 of priesthood

has received his eternal reward. With Father Fornasari, a multifaceted Pauline figure and definitely worthy of an in-depth biographical study, the dean of the Congregation and an important piece of Pauline history has left us. With his death, which occurred naturally in Alba in the infirmary of the Mother House, one of the last witnesses of the second generation of Paulines left us, which from that place so dear to us would spread to all over the world.

Eugenio was born in Pianello Val Tidone (Piacenza) on 16 July 1915 from Livio and Ermelinda Bozzi. His only brother would die in the Second World War, 28 February 1943, while being airborne on the Tunisian front. After attending elementary school in his birthplace, he entered the Mother House on 10 October 1926. In the following years, he completed his studies in high school; in the early months of 1932, he received the clerical clothing in Alba from Primo Maestro to enter, on 10 October of that same year, in the novitiate. He made his first religious profession, also in Alba and still in the hands of Father Alberione, on 28 October 1933 together with the future Pauline first missionaries: Father Attilio Cendron (Argentina and Colombia), Father Attilio Tempra (India, Philippines), Father Maggiorino Testi (Spain), Father Francesco Sirito (Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico), in addition to the future and second successor of Father Alberione, Father Raffaele Tonni. On 28 October 1936, he confirmed his perpetual vows, this time in the hands of Father Giaccardo. After college and the first three years of theology, in 1939 he was transferred to Rome in Via Grottaperfetta, where he was ordained a deacon (14 April 1941) and immediately after a priest (6 July 1941) by the laying on of hands of Mons. Luigi Traglia, Vice Administrator of Rome.

His intense apostolic activity began in October 1942 in Rome in the parish of Jesus Good Shepherd, then still under construction, which he himself would contribute to finish and which would become in the years of World War II the "House of Writers", with the presence, as well as his own, of Father Tommaso Dragone, Father Giuseppe Barbero and Father Giuseppe Pasquali. Right here, the young Father Eugenio lived the first ill-fated outcomes of the war of liberation, inaugurated with the Armistice of Cassibile on 8 September 1943, when violent conflicts within the Church surroundings, in the collective memory, were unleashed by the name of "Battle of Montagnola" (from the hill where our parish stands). Here, the German troops stationed south of Rome and the Roman coast, with the intention of taking possession of the capital, and the Italian grenadiers stationed at the Ostiense fort, lit the first fires of that struggle of Resistance which involved, as in a blaze, all of Northern Italy, and which would end almost two years later with the liberation from Nazi-fascism but leaving thousands of dead and wounded on the ground. On that tragic occasion, Father

Eugenio and the priests of the parish went to comfort and care for the many wounded and to bless the 154 dead, between soldiers and civilians, who rested in the ground around the “Montagnola”.

After the war, he began his academic studies, concluding with the baccalaureate in *utroque iure* (1947) and with licenses in canon law (1948) and civil law (1949), titles that would enable him to teach law for some years in the Pauline international theology school of Rome. Meanwhile, he lived his mission in Rome between the parish of the Good Shepherd (1948-1955) and the newly erected Shrine of the Queen of Apostles (1955-1958), of which he was the first Rector. In 1958, he was transferred to Cinisello Balsamo as Superior, where he remained for two terms, until 1964. In that year, he was transferred to Alba, where he remained for 53 years, that is, until the end of his life. Here he held several mandates: Prefect of studies, professor of literature and history in the classical Saint Paul high school, head of the Publishing Office of the Alba headquarters and, above all, one of the most fruitful writers of the Province of Italy. A particular study would be needed to list its more than ninety works, among which we can quote here just *The Great Promise of Fatima*, which first appeared in 1943 and republished until the 20th edition of 1996, and *An Obedient Prophet*, biography of Father Timoteo Giaccardo, written on the occasion of his beatification (22 October 1989). There are also numerous collaborations with all the Pauline magazines in Italy. From 2013, he had moved to Alba's infirmary due to a worsening of his health conditions.

Son of his own time, characterized by immense sacrifices but also by great apostolic opportunities in a Church that was preparing to meet the world in a renewed way through the conciliar assembly, a man with a strong and fiery character but altogether polite, Father Fornasari will be remembered by the many who knew him as an example of a true Pauline apostle, an absolutely original interpreter of our charism. Let us entrust his soul, now that he has left us, to the Divine Master through the intercession of the Queen of the Apostles, whom he loved so much in his life. May he, from heaven, intercede for the needs of our Congregation, especially for the apostolic ones, which call all the Paulines to continue to “tell God” to the people of today in the new context of communication.

Rome, 4 December 2017



Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio, ssp
Secretary General

The funeral will take place on Monday, 4 December 2017, at 3:00 PM at the Church of Saint Paul in Alba. After the function, his mortal remains will be buried in the city cemetery.

The circumscription superiors should inform their communities about the prescribed suffrages (Const. 65 and 65.1)