

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 4.15 pm on Wednesday, 13 December 2017, in the community of Rome "Timoteo Giacardo", after having undergone two operations at the femur our priest confrere

FR GIACOMO TOMMASO SARRA
***Aged 97 years, 73 years of Pauline life, 68 years of profession
and 60 years of priesthood***

returned to the Father's house. Fr Giacomo was in the community of Catania for the last 20 years and on 2 December he had a fall in the Chapel. The same evening he was operated upon and after spending few days in the hospital he was brought to Rome in the morning of 13 December for convalescence. In the afternoon of the same day he surrendered his life to God.

He was born on 4 April 1920 at Capizzi (Messina), a small town in Sicilia. He lived a very simple life together with his mother Carmela and father Giuseppe and four brothers who worked hard and who had great faith. On account of the 2nd World War, young Giacomo left his place to join the military. The day of armistice between Italy and the allied nations (8 September 1943) he was at Monferrato (Piemont). Having decided to desert the military, he took refuge at a parish but to avoid being caught by the "Republicans" (the fascists were called such) he left for Alba as his cousin was in our community. In that way Giacomo came to know St Paul's. In fact it appears to be very strange, as was narrated by him several times, that he was helped by a lady on the way few kilometres before Alba, where he was asked if he was a soldier. At his positive reply the lady advised him not to proceed on the road but to go to Alba crossing the field to avoid being arrested in spite of having a pass.

Arriving at the house, he was received by Fr Timoteo Giacardo, who after few days asked him what was he able to do. His reply was very concrete as he was a barber and shoemaker. On account of this he was put with Brother Andrea Borello. He developed a very good rapport with him, working at the shoe shop and listening to his simple testimonies: one can be a Pauline apostle also by being a shoemaker, which looked very strange for him. After having lived a year in the community as a guest, Giacomo decided to become an Aspirant: this was on 20 July 1944. After four years, he left for his Novitiate at Albano Laziale, where on 8 September 1949, he made his first religious profession. Then in Rome on 8 September 1953 he made his perpetual profession and was ordained a priest on 25 January 1957.

In that same year he left for his native place, where he began a long stretch of time in the community of Catania (1957–1982). First he taught the Aspirants, then he was made the Master of aspirants and at the end he found himself in the account department of San Paolo Films. His next departure was to Florence and there too he was assigned in the sector of San Paolo Films (1982-1988). Then from Florence to Pescara (1988-1989) as the Delegate of the Provincial Superior. His last transfer was again back to Catania as the Bursar of the house. Besides,

being the Bursar, he made himself available for many small community services, above all in taking care of the garden.

For many years he dedicated himself to the Sunday ministry in St Aloysius Parish, Catania, accompanying spiritually many people and establishing beautiful and deep rapport with people around. In fact, the joyful and welcoming character of Fr Giacomo made him and others to smile with a poetry or a song composed by his himself and also made him very friendly and very much wanted by all those who came in contact with him.

He, an active observer of persons and ready to help them in thousand ways, took every moment of life lightly. He had composed a “sonnet” for the 80th anniversary of Famiglia Cristiana and sent to Fr Antonio Sciortino, the then Director, who published it in no 3 of 2012: «Hi, eighty year old, greetings. In the silence of the fireplace, where the good is accomplished, I greet you, sincere and caring, glad to spread the truth in abundance! Today is your Birthday, humble as the king of king, you were born. Now you are great. The heavens want you to oppose the evil and you arrest the evil...».

It was this year that Fr Giacomo celebrated his 60th ordination anniversary. One day celebrating the event with his confreres who has great admiration for him, above all in these last years of his life. Also were present the Sister Disciples in the community with whom he had a very good rapport. For that occasion, there came a message from the Superior General filled of gratitude: «I thank you for the good that you have sworn in Pauline life, for that which you bore witness with joy and simplicity, an authentic sign of those who follow the Master and live in communion with the confreres. May the Lord bless you and may you continue to sow his Word and nourish his people with the Eucharistic bread!».

Before few hours of the operation on 2 December, he celebrated the first vespers of the first Sunday of Advent along with the Superior of the Community of Catania, Fr Agatino Gugliara, and received the anointing of the sick and the gift of reconciliation. In that way he prepared himself for heaven in prayer, as he was doing every day for many hours.

Let us entrust our brother Fr Giacomo to the goodness of the Divine Master. Together with our blessed Alberione and Giaccardo and Br Borello he can now live in the eternal love of God, a love which he lived with joy for 97 years, the eldest one in the congregation.

Rome, 14 December 2017

Fr Domenico Soliman, ssp

The funeral service will take place on Friday, 15 December, at 3 pm in the community chapel of Catania. The mortal remains of Fr Giacomo will be laid to rest in the common cemetery where the Sister Disciples and our confreres are also buried.

The Circumscription superiors may kindly inform their communities for the prescribed suffrages for the diseased (Cost. 65 – 65.1).