

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)

In the night between 17 and 18 March 2018, when we have already entered the V Sunday of Lent, our brother priest

FATHER PIETRO PAOLO DI FIGLIA

84 years, 68 of Pauline life, 63 of profession and 30 of priesthood

surrendered his soul to God for his eternal reward.

Pietro (known and called in the Congregation by the name of profession "Paolo") was born on 16 February 1934 with his twin brother Paolo in Castellana Sicula, a village in the Madonie Park located about 100 kilometres from Palermo, in a large family of proven faith. In fact, ten children brighten up the family of Papa Orazio and Mama Vincenza, even if pain knocks early at the door with the premature death of two sisters at a very tender age. The father, who had his feet injured by freezing cold suffered during the First World War on the river Piave, owns a company that supplies sand and other building materials to the local building contractors and all the children, as soon as they were in post-school age, are involved in the company. The only exception was Giuseppe, who was lost during the Second World War in Bolzano following the roundups of the SS Nazi and probably deported to some concentration camp. An immense sorrow accepted by all with patient faith.

The young Pietro entered the Congregation in the community of Catania on 15 November 1949. He has not yet turned 16, but the awareness of his vocation, fostered by the spiritual accompaniment of his parish priest, is already clear. He preceded by one year the entry of his twin brother Paolo (known as "Brother Pietro"), now a member of the *San Paolo* community in Rome. In the parish our religious family was already known: during those years two young girls of the place entered among the Daughters of St. Paul. The idea of going to work as a missionary in the media fascinated him a lot, even if he left home facing some resistance from his father.

The Masters who had gradually followed him described him as sensitive and tenacious, with a spirit of initiative and a sense of responsibility; sometimes, however, he was impulsive and authoritarian, aspects of his character that, as the reports themselves attest, would be improved over time. He remained in Catania until 1953, completing his apostolate in compositions, propaganda and bookstores. On 19 March of that year, he entered the novitiate, which he completed between Rome and Ostia until 8 September 1954, the date on which he made his first profession as Disciple of the Divine Master assuming, as mentioned, the name of "Paolo". Immediately afterwards, he was transferred to Alba to continue his Pauline formation and take care of layout and paperback in the local

printing press. In 1957, he was transferred to Rome to complete his formation: here, after two more years spent in the press, he made his perpetual profession on 8 September 1959.

As a perpetual professed, we see his life as a missionary throughout Italy. He immediately responded in obedience to the Superiors, who moved him to the community of Vicenza, where he remained for nine years, until September 1968, lending his work to the local agency of the San Paolo Film, as well as to the press as Overseer. In 1968, he moved to Turin, where he was responsible for the book warehouse, a position that he would also perform in Alba (1975-1979). Long years in Bari followed (1979-1993), where in time Father Paolo was Director of the local library, as responsible for the administration of the magazine warehouse and as vocation animator. Here the decision to enter the ministerial priesthood matured, accepted by the Superiors, which would culminate on 23 May 1987 with the presbyteral ordination in his parish of origin. Then followed six years as Local Superior in Catania (1993-1999, an experience that would be repeated in the years 2006-2009), before returning to Alba with the important role of animator of the birthplace of Don Alberione (1999-2005). Finally, in 2009, he replaced for a few years the recently deceased Father Mauro Ferrero in the delicate task of chaplain of the *Regina Apostolorum* Hospital in Albano Laziale, before being transferred to the "Divin Maestro" House of Ariccia in 2016, with the task of animating the Pauline Family, the place where he surrendered his soul to God.

Over the years, Father Paolo showed an appreciated attachment to the Congregation, as shown by the range of apostolates carried out and the great willingness to change communities even in old age. If some of his attitudes sometimes seemed a little rough, they actually hid a great deal of reservation. For several days he showed various sufferings, which then ended in a fatal internal haemorrhage. To this son of Sicily, which has given so many vocations to the Society of Saint Paul, we now entrust the important journey for the renewal of the whole Congregation undertaken by the General Government.

Rome, 19 March 2018



Father Stefano Stimamiglio, ssp
Secretary General

The funeral will be celebrated on Tuesday 20 March 2018 at 10 AM at the Undercrypt of the "Maria Regina degli Apostoli" Sanctuary in Rome. Immediately after, the remains will be buried in the Laurentino Cemetery in Rome.

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