

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 11:45 AM (local time) on Sunday, 26 December 2021, our confrere died in the Community of Alba *Casa Madre* due to severe anemia and urinary tract infection

FATHER ANTONIO LUIGI CASTELLI

90 years, 78 of Pauline life, 64 of priesthood

Father Antonio was born in Guanzate (Como) on 23 September 1931, in a family with two brothers and two sisters, from parents Angelo and Teresa Croci. He entered the community of Alba on 4 November 1943. He began the Novitiate on 8 September 1948, and – on the same date – made his First Profession the following year and Perpetual Profession in 1955. He was ordained a priest on 7 July 1957.

He began his apostolic journey as Master of the young in Bari in 1958, where he remained until 1967, when, after a year in Modena, he was transferred to Cinisello Balsamo (Milan) with the same assignment. In 1973, he was appointed Superior of the Cinisello Balsamo community and in 1976, he was appointed teacher and vocational animator.

In 1981, he was transferred to the house of Ariccia (Rome) as Delegate of the Superior General, in contact with Father Giovanni Roatta, thanks to whom he deepened the Pauline spirituality and grew in love for the Founder. In 1990, he was appointed National Director of the Pauline Cooperators. In 1993, he received the appointment of Delegate of the *Annunziatine*, a position that he will carry out for two terms. At the end of his second term, in 2005, he was elected Delegate of the Superior General for the Generalate, and in 2007, he returned to the Province of Italy, assigned to the Primo Maestro community of Rome with the task of spiritual animation. In 2015, he moved to Cinisello Balsamo, engaged in the editorial and pastoral ministry. In 2021, with his health becoming increasingly precarious, he was welcomed in the infirmary of the Mother House in Alba where he will remain until his departure for Heaven.

Father Antonio was a striking figure of a Pauline priest. In his long service, he knew how to wisely accompany and guide people entrusted to him. Always open and far-sighted, with extensive, expansive views, he exercised a certain fascination on the young people whom he followed with seriousness and love.

For many years, he was in charge of the *Maria Santissima Annunziata* Institute. A sister writes: «A humble man, available, raised at the school of Don Alberione resulting to being very sober, straightforward, he did not like to dwell on futile speeches but immediately went to the heart of the problem, helping to discern. There are many young confreres and we *Annunziatine* who have received his enlightened and simple guidance. Many of us cherish him as a dear father». As a true Pauline, he aimed at the depth of the spiritual life, both personal and of the group, of the *Maria Santissima Annunziata* Institute:

«With his example and his words he transmitted to us his love for the Founder, for the Pauline Family. He helped us to mature by making us fully aware of the gift of our vocation. We *Annunziatine* always owe a big thank you to Don Antonio».

By nature reserved and shy, he was basically timid and simple in relationships. He did not indulge in great displays of affection and esteem, but he did not fail to demonstrate, in a discreet way, his understanding and closeness. Although apparently he did not show a strong and decisive temper, he has carried out with generosity and to the maximum of his ability all the tasks that have been required of him over the years, sometimes surpassing himself and his nature.

Father Antonio was a humble, discreet, generous person. He was a good priest, a righteous person, a good figure. As a Pauline priest he lived with intensity his affection for the Founder (he was visibly moved – recalls an *Annunziata* – when he recounted personal experiences lived with Don Alberione) and the Pauline charism.

The Superior General, Fr Valdir José De Castro, in 2017 sent him the message for the 60th anniversary of his priestly ordination, and recalling the service of animation he had carried out within the Pauline communities and the Pauline Family, he concluded: «I thank you for so much good sown and for what you still live today with simplicity, bringing everything to the altar for the good of the Congregation and the Pauline Family».

May the Lord welcome this dear brother of ours who has served him faithfully and give him the joy of contemplating his face of love. Let us pray that he may intercede for holy vocations in the Pauline Family.

Rome, 27 December 2021

Father Vito Spagnolo, ssp

The funeral will be celebrated on Tuesday, 28 December, at 10.00 AM, in the Tempio San Paolo of Alba. The body will then be transferred and buried in the cemetery of Guanzate (Como).

The Superiors of Circumscriptions are to inform their communities for the suffrages prescribed (Const. 65 and 65.1).