



# Press Release

---

## *DEATH NOTICE OF FR. GABRIELE AMORTH*

At the age of 91, Fr. Gabriele Amorth, a Pauline priest and exorcist of the Diocese of Rome, died today in Rome 16 September at 7.50 PM (local time). For several weeks, he had suffered from lung problems and was in the last weeks lovingly assisted by his confreres and by medical personnel.

### **Biography**

Born in Modena on 1 May 1925, Fr. Amorth was a well rounded religious of the Society of St Paul, a worthy son of its founder, Blessed James Alberione. At 22 years old and exactly five years after a private conversation with Fr. Alberione by whom Fr. Amorth himself was literally impressed, the young Gabriele entered the congregation at the “Casa Madre” of Alba on 25 August 1947. The conversation happened during the summer of 1942 when Gabriele was 17 years old. He was a highschool student who was discerning for his vocation. While he had already glimpses of the call, he had to wait for several years before responding to that call. Returning to Modena after 8 September 1943, in fact, he was among the main figures of the civilian resistance movement in Emilia that earned for himself a death sentence which he miraculously escaped. For this service to the country during the Nazi occupation, he had been awarded last 8 September the “Medaglia della liberazione” (“Medal of liberation”) by Paola Basilone, the Prefect of Rome, and Roberta Pinotti, the Defense Minister of Italy.

As he finished grammar school, after the World War II, he joined the Catholic Action and later the Fuci (Italian Catholic Federation of University Students), graduating with a degree in Law. Gifted with great intelligence and wit, he joined the ranks of the Christian Democrats where he met Giulio Andreotti and Alcide De Gasperi. In 1947, the young Andreotti, on the threshold of his unstoppable political rise and while recognizing Gabriele’s vestment, attempted to involve him in politics. But it was in vain. The young Gabriele declined. In fact, he has never given up the idea of becoming a religious someday. Consequently, he left the secular life and, after years of theological formation, was ordained a priest on 24 January 1954 by Bishop Ilario Roatta.

Fr. Amorth held numerous responsibilities in the Society of St Paul. Among other things, he was a formator for the young Pauline aspirants, professor in college, delegate of the Province of Italy, spiritual animator for the lay institutes of the Pauline Family, and

journalist. As a prolific writer, he was for many years the Director of the monthly magazine *Madre di Dio* and contributor to *Famiglia Cristiana*.

But the world came to know more of him after his appointment in 1985 as exorcist of the Diocese of Rome through Cardinal Poletti. Recalling this event, he wrote to his superiors: «I was in a private audience with the Cardinal, and the meeting ended with a conversation regarding Fr. Candido Amantini, a Passionist and famous exorcist at the Scala Santa in Rome, whom I knew personally. The cardinal expressed his concern about his health and his desire for someone who can help him. Then he brought out a sheet of paper and began to write my provisional appointment...».

In a short time, Fr. Amorth became known to the general public through the publication of several books which exposed the dark world of magic and the occult. Among these, we remember his first bestseller, *An Exorcist Tells His Story*. Through countless interviews and articles, he presented the reality of the ministry of the exorcist in the Church. He insisted on so many occasions the need for the bishops to appoint at least one exorcist in their dioceses to help them in the exorcism of the troubled and to provide counselling for those who are doubtful. With rare frankness and firm grounding on solid theological training, he did not fail to raise his voice when he in 2001 invited successfully the editors of the last *De exorcismis et supplicationibus quibusdam* (the official ritual book of exorcisms) to correct some errors. Not to be forgotten is the fact that, in 1990, together with Fr. Rene Cheneveau, he founded the *International Association of Exorcists* (*“Associazione internazionale degli exorcisti”*) to facilitate sharing and discussion among the priests who exercise this valuable ministry in the Church.

Fr. Amorth was also a historic collaborator of *Radio Maria*, a major catholic broadcaster in Italy, and, among others, for two years was behind the column *Dialoghi sull’aldilà* on the weekly Pauline magazine *Crederci*.

Fr. Gabriele, before becoming the combative exorcist that he was, had always been a man so gentle, warm and welcoming, despite the bluntness that characterized him. Aided by a natural sympathy though with an almost mocking tone towards those who visited him, he had always been able to defuse any situation, even the most distressing ones.

Among those who remember Fr. Amorth with deep affection and gratitude is Fr. Valdir José De Castro, the current Superior General of the Society of St Paul, who often visited him in his community at via Alessandro Severo in Rome. Included also are the many Pauline confreres, priests and laypeople who knew him and witnessed his long years of ministry. Finally, we can never forget the countless troubled people that often travelled from afar and whose paths to healing were sometimes extended across years but eventually benefitted from his ministry as he assisted them in their personal struggle against the Prince of Darkness. For them, he often offered his prayers.

We now entrust his soul to the Lord Jesus, the Divine Master, whom he served faithfully through all those years.

Rome, 16 September 2016

**Fr. Stefano Stimamiglio**

*Secretary General*

*Press Office of the General House of the Society of St. Paul*