

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)



On the morning of 10th April, Good Friday, our brother from the Community Timothy Giaccardo of Rome died at the Umberto I Hospital due to bronchopneumonia

FATHER GINO GIUSEPPE SPOLETINI

86 years, 73 of Pauline life, 65 of profession, 58 of priesthood

An affable and serene person, simple in the way of putting himself and at the same time attentive to those in front of him. Father Gino knew how to joke, a human trait that is not insignificant for those who, like him, have been forming aspirants for fifteen years, first in the community of Vicenza and then in Rome. His way of being among young people was that of those who know how to involve others, especially when it comes to the Pauline mission, because he was the first himself to be passionate about it. His attention to young people in formation was also attention to the families of origin, to the situations they lived, for which he was caring and hospitable. He also dedicated a book to them, the result of a training course: *L'autoeducazione nella pedagogia di oggi* (1986).

To these traits must be added his passion for Rome, the city that he carried in his heart and that he knew very well. We cannot forget the love for the *Roma* football team, because he was a true fan of it, so much so that his juniorate teacher, Father Tomatis, wrote in the report after the third year of profession: «Good character: cheerful ... A little bit attached to sport», that is, to football.

We can say that his true art was the ability to build relationships, and not only with young people. When asked to become the assistant parish priest in the *Regina degli Apostoli* parish, his main commitment became the accompaniment of engaged couples towards marriage. He was loved precisely for his simplicity and familiarity and a few words were enough for him to weave a dialogue, which for some became a real spiritual journey. Even when he was Superior, he knew how to build the right climate for the community to walk together.

Father Gino was born on 1st January 1934, in Bellegra, a hilly village near Subiaco, the place from which the Benedictine movement arose. The day after his birth, his parents, Domenico and Elvira Riccardi, took him to the parish for Baptism. He was the sixth of seven children.

He entered the Congregation in Rome on 1st October 1946, just after the Second World War, and remained there for a few years, until, on 7th September 1953, he entered the novitiate in Albano Laziale. Always in this community, he made his first religious profession on 8th September 1954 and took the name of Giuseppe.

He lived the period of juniorate in Rome, where he professed his vows perpetually (8 September 1958), was ordained deacon (7 May 1961) and, finally, ordained priest by Mons. Ettore Cunial on 2nd July 1961.

Then in 1962, he left for Bari, where we find him engaged in typography as head until 1966. Here he will return there as community superior for another six years (1974-1980). But it is in Vicenza, where he moved in 1966, that Father

Gino began a long period as a formator of aspirants: first in the Venetian city (until 1974) and, subsequently, in Rome (1980-1986).

In 1986, he left for Alba, where he was appointed for two terms as Superior of the “Periodici” community. Subsequently he was again Superior, this time of the community of Rome *San Paolo*, and again for two periods (1993-1996 and 2007-2008). The presence of Father Gino in the parish will instead be marked in two moments: from 1992 to 1993 and from 1996 to 2007.

After these commitments, a long phase of deterioration of health began for him. Due to the worsening of his physical condition, in 2017 he was transferred to the “Timoteo Giaccardo” community, the infirmary of Rome. On 10th April, Father Gino did not overcome an acute form of bronchopneumonia, which caused his death but which, according to health professionals, is not attributable to the Covid-19 coronavirus.

We now bid farewell to our brother, who reached eternal life on Good Friday, the day on which the Church celebrates the death of the Son of God. It is the words of the Hymn of the Liturgy of Lauds that remind us of what Jesus lived for us: «*To gather peoples in the covenant of love, you stretch out your arms on the wood of the cross*». We can say that Father Gino truly opened his arms to anyone and that the gift of simplicity, woven from the dimension of joy, was his concrete way through which he loved and lived the Pauline mission.

May the Risen Lord welcome him into his arms, in communion with our brothers and sisters who are already in Heaven.

Rome, 11 April 2020

Father Domenico Soliman, ssp

Father Gino's body will be transferred on Monday, 13th April from the Umberto I hospital in Rome to the parish church of Bellegra (Rome). The following day he will be buried in the local cemetery.

Circumscription Superiors inform their communities of the prescribed suffrages (Const. 65 and 65.1).