

# FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES



The Magazine  
of Saint Rita of Cascia

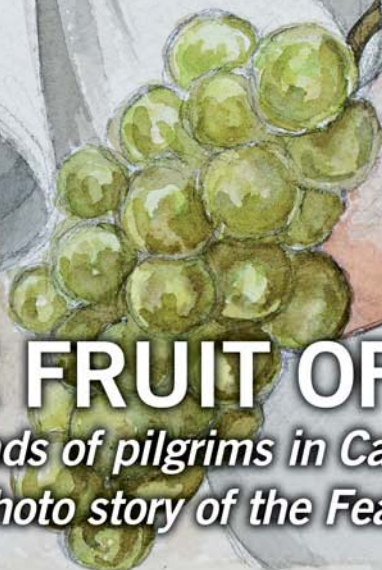
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OF SAINT RITA  
OF CASCIA

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## THE FRUIT OF RITA

*Thousands of pilgrims in Cascia  
in the photo story of the Feast of Saint Rita 2018*



## SUMMARY

### 3 Editorial The fruit

### 4 Celebrating Saint Rita: Photo story of the feast of Saint Rita 2018 Cling to what is good

### Fraternal twins

### 13 Feature - 80 years of the Beehive Maternal love crucified

### 26 Augustinians The populariser of St. Augustine

### 27 Dialogue with the Monastery Sr. Raimonda, rooted in the love of God

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## FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES



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On the cover: "Saint Rita", a painting by the Teresian Carmelite nuns of Tolentino and donated to the Saint Rita of Cascia Monastery. Photo by Giovanni Galardini.

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From left: Mother Chiara, Prioress of the Teresian Carmelite nuns of Tolentino, together with Mother Maria Monica, president of the federation of Augustinian monasteries of Italy, and the Prioress of the Monastery of Saint Rita in Cascia, Mother Maria Rosa



## The fruit

For about a year the Cascia family has grown. It has opened its arms to welcome the Teresian Carmelite nuns of Tolentino (Macerata) who were forced to leave their home, their monastery, which was seriously damaged by the earthquakes of 2016.

On October 15, 2017, the day of Saint Teresa of Jesus, the Carmelites donated the “Saint Rita” painting - made by one of their sisters - to the Augustinian nuns of the Monastery of Cascia, as thanks for the hospitality received. It is a gentle portrait of our Celestial Patroness, to which we have dedicated the cover of this very special issue of “From the Bees to the Roses”.

We also wanted to share with our readers what for us is a painting that is as delicate and fresh as our saint and, at the same time, full of meaning.

The painting shows: the rose, symbol par excellence of Rita, representing the life that dresses in splendour even in suffering (represented by the thorns); the bunch of grapes, referring to the miracle of the vine and to the Vine that is Christ, to whom Rita is united like the ripe fruit; the olive leaves, which represent the message of peace brought by the saint in the world; the inter-

twined hands, the same symbol of love reproduced on Rita's wedding ring, which remind us of the union between Jesus and Rita, between Jesus and ourselves. But it is the words written by the Carmelite Sisters that struck me most because they well explain the meaning of the work and, with it, the example of life left to us by Saint Rita:

*“From the union with Christ comes the fruit of Rita: a gratuitous love that goes as far as the gift of self, as an instrument of peace, more and more like the same love that she receives from Jesus Crucified and Risen”.*

What does that mean? That, like Rita, each of us can become fertile fruit if we join Christ, if we interweave our life with His, if we marry His suffering, if we love Him. Each of us can choose to become an instrument of peace, love, charity, true life in the hands of the Lord. And on the days of the Feast of Saint Rita, from May 20 to 22 here in Cascia, we see so much fruit! We see it in the hearts of the pilgrims who come, full of hope, to the “hill of hope” to pray to Rita, to imitate her, to be also the mature bunch of the Vine that is God.

Best wishes for a happy summer and a fruitful life.

# Cling to what is good

from the homily of Father Alejandro Moral Antón, Prior General of the Augustinian Order, pronounced on the occasion of the Solemn Eucharistic Concelebration of the Augustinian Family, at the Basilica of Cascia, on May 21, as part of the Feast of Saint Rita.

**T**he second reading, from the Letter of St. Paul the Apostle to the Romans, is one of the most beautiful readings from his letters. Here are some of its words: *"Brothers, charity has no fictions: abhor what is evil, cling to what is good ... do not repay anyone evil for evil... Forgive each other"*. Charity and forgiveness go

together, they are attached to each other like two sides of the same coin. But how often is forgiveness missing? We do not know to forgive, between parents and children, between brothers of the same family, in our communities ... The message of

together, they are attached to each other like two sides of the same coin. But how often is forgiveness missing? We do not know to forgive, between parents and children, between brothers of the same family, in our communities ... The message of forgiveness is one of the central points of the Gospel. Just think of Jesus on the cross who forgives his crucifiers *because they do not know what they are doing*. We constantly ask him in the "Our Father": *forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*. Jesus commands us to go and reconcile with our brother, before offering our gift on the altar of the Lord

(cf. Mt 5, 23-24). Forgiveness is the manifestation of Christianity that strikes most because in real life it is almost impossible to live, but it is indispensable for the true disciple of Christ. Forgiveness is the law of Christianity, because without forgiveness there cannot be love. Saint Rita never had doubts about the law of forgiveness: not only, therefore, did she sincerely forgive her husband's killers, but also, knowing their names, she never wanted to reveal them. This made her suffer so much because it pitted her against her husband's family. How many tears she shed and how many prayers she raised to the Lord that he protect her sons from the sin of hatred and revenge. But forgiveness has its root in our experience of God's mercy.

An element of the Gospel of St. John (15, 1-14) that I have wanted to mention is Jesus' discourse on bearing fruit: *"I appointed you to go and produce fruit and that your fruit should remain"* (Jn 15, 16). Here appears the dynamism of the existence of the Christian, of the apostle: I appointed you to go ... We must be animated by a holy disquiet: the disquiet of bringing everyone the gift of



Father Alejandro Moral.

***Rita never had doubts about the law of forgiveness***



## *Charity and forgiveness are attached to one another*

that remains is therefore what we have sown in human souls: love, knowledge, the gesture capable of touching the heart, the word that opens the soul to the joy of the Lord. So let us go and pray to the Lord to help us bear fruit, a fruit that remains like that of Saint Rita. Only in this way is the earth changed by *the valley of tears in God's garden*. Let us learn from Rita the words of the Gospel of John which will help us to feel part of God's being: *"God is love; whoever is in love abides in God and God abides in him"*. ■

## *We must be animated by a holy disquiet*

faith, of friendship with Christ. In truth, love, the friendship of God, has been given to us so that it can also reach others. And we

must bring a fruit that remains. The only thing that remains in eternity is the human soul, man created by God for eternity. The fruit

### WHAT DOES SAINT RITA TELL US TODAY?

As a mother, she invites couples to fidelity and to the Christian upbringing of their children. She recommends that parents give a good example, and therefore consistency in faith and witness. To the young, she addresses herself as a mother to her children, urging them to have hope in the future and to be generous in forgiveness, overcoming the logic of hatred and violence. To the sick, Saint Rita announces the Gospel of fortitude and serenity in carrying the daily cross, heavy, but redemptive, which brings them to the passion of Jesus for redemption of the world. To her fellow nuns and to all consecrated women, Rita recommends fidelity to the vocation, the joy of fraternal communion and the enthusiasm of the apostolate made with creative dynamism. And to all of us, she recalls the vocation to holiness. Because we are all called to holiness, not just Saint Rita. The Pope says: Jesus explained with simplicity what "being saints" is. And he did it when he left us the Beatitudes, which are the identity card of the Christian. So if any of us asks the question: how do you become a good Christian? The Pope's answer is simple: it is necessary to do, each in their position, in their state of life, what Jesus says in the discourse of the Beatitudes. We are called to show the face of Jesus in the daily life of family, work and society. This is what Saint Rita did and we are invited to do likewise.

*(from the homily of Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, pronounced during the Solemn Pontifical on May 22 in the churchyard of the Basilica of Cascia, as part of the Feast of Saint Rita)*



FROM THE BEES  
TO THE ROSES



# SAINT RITA INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Giuseppina Ceccaroni.

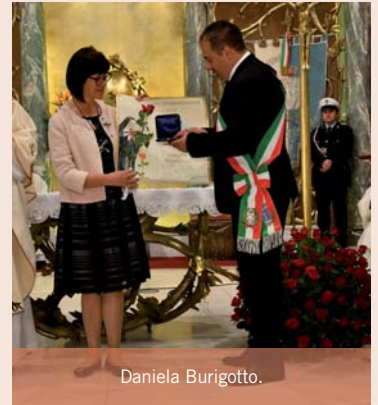


Emanuela Disarò.



Soňa Vancaková.

On May 20, at the Sanctuary of Cascia, journalist and TV2000 host Lucia Ascione presented the women who were honoured with the **Saint Rita International Recognition Award 2018**.



Daniela Burigotto.



The Women of Rita 2018 together with: (from left) Augustinian Provincial of Italy, Fr. Luciano De Michieli, General of the Augustinians, Fr. Alejandro Moral Antón, Mayor of Cascia, Mario De Carolis, Rector of the Basilica of Saint Rita, Fr. Bernardino Pinciaroli.

The prestigious recognition consists symbolically in a parchment, delivered the following day to the **“Women of Rita”**: women, that is, whose life is close in concrete experience to that of the saint of Cascia:

**Emanuela Disarò** and **Daniela Burigotto**, mothers respectively of Gloria Trevisan and Marco Gottardi, the two fiancés who died in the fire at the Grenfell Tower in London, for having embraced the cross looking for strength in the faith; **Soňa Vancaková**, for having struggled and believed in the value of the family to the full, translating her difficult family experience into concrete help in favour of other families in difficulty; **Giuseppina Ceccaroni**, for having faced the obstacles of life finding strength in her faith and for service to others.



FROM THE BEES  
TO THE ROSES

# TRANSIT OF SAINT RITA





Presided over by Msgr. Luigi Piccioli, the ceremony of the **Transit** of May 21 recalls **Rita's ascent to heaven**. In line with tradition, the celebrant went to the urn of the saint to incense it as a sign of veneration, and laid a bunch of roses in the name of all devotees.



The body of Saint Rita is kept in the urn inside the Basilica of Saint Rita in Cascia. **She was never buried** because it immediately became a destination for pilgrimage by the local inhabitants, who already considered this small, great woman a saint.



## THEY LIVE IN CHRIST

*To you, Lord, we humbly recommend these our dead because, as in their mortal life they have always been loved by You of immense love, so now, freed from all evil, may they enter by Your grace into eternal rest. Take them into your Paradise, where there is no more grief, no pain, no tears, but peace and joy with your Son and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Agostino Elvieri (Malo VI - Italy)  
 Angela Mundula (Sorso SS - Italy)  
 Arcangela Zortea (Canal San Bovo TN - Italy)  
 Domenico Gentile (Casalnuovo Monterotaro FG - Italy)  
 Elisa Farella (San Vito dei Normanni BR - Italy)  
 Emilio Sebastiani (Montottone FM - Italy)  
 Gaetano Sinisi (Montecchio Precalcino VI - Italy)  
 Giuliano Ferri (San Feliciano di Magione PG - Italy)  
 Giuseppa D'Antonii (Ragusa - Italy)

Ida Barzotti (Fermignano PU - Italy)  
 Lilia Rocca Marchioro (Solarolo di Goito MN - Italy)  
 M. Maddalena Mocellin (Solagna VI - Italy)  
 Maria Pede (Mississauga ON - Canada)  
 Maria Palmira Baccarelli (Santicolo BS - Italy)  
 Mario Bella (Monteleone di Spoleto PG - Italy)  
 Marisa Chiappini (Prato - Italy)  
 Marzia Lazzari (Morbegno SO - Italy)  
 Mirco Leodari (Isola Vicentina VI - Italy)  
 Pasqualina Manno (Lumezzane BS - Italy)  
 Pietro Giannettoni (Cervia RA - Italy)  
 Raffaele Moretti (Gubbio PG - Italy)  
 Rita Rizzi (Banchette TO - Italy)  
 Ros Di Stefano (Ragusa - Italy)  
 Rosanna Busnelli (Rome - Italy)  
 Salvatore Chessari (Rome - Italy)  
 Sebastiano Sedda (Orotelli NU - Italy)  
 Silvana Boccali (Ponte San Lorenzo di Narni TR - Italy)  
 Vincenzo Dembech (Orta Nova FG - Italy)  
 Vittoria Venier (Italy)



FROM THE BEES  
TO THE ROSES

# HISTORICAL PARADE







On the morning of May 22, Solemnity of Saint Rita of Cascia, the **Historical Parade** precedes the arrival of the **Procession** on the churchyard of the Basilica. The figures in fifteenth-century costumes recall some of the moments in the life of the saint.



Are you on a pilgrimage to Cascia? Post your souvenir photo from the Sanctuary on Instagram with the hashtag #SantaRita



The best chosen by the editorial staff will be shared on the official profile of the Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia @santaritadacascia





FROM THE BEES  
TO THE ROSES

CELEBRATING SAINT RITA



# PROCESSION



# Maternal love crucified

by Msgr. Giovanni Scanavino, OSA

Some dreams that concern the future of many children come true only with great imagination, the one suggested by a strong faith in the love of God. Just think of the great flowering of institutes of charity born in the nineteenth century in Italy through the work of great saints, from San Giovanni Bosco onwards. Many of these projects were then fuelled by a crucified maternal love, that is, the incredi-

Some dreams  
come true only  
with great  
imagination

ble love of a mother who does not turn away from anything, not even in front of a series of illnesses openly faced with the joy of giving everything, without the least lamentation. This is the case of our Beehive of Saint Rita in Cascia. This experience was born in the Saint Rita Monastery, out of compassion, when Mother Teresa welcomed the seven-year-old Edda Petrucci, who came to Cascia with her bleeding feet, after a long pilgrimage from Ascoli with her widowed mother. Someone could also interpret the idea of the Beehive as a rewarding experience for many



The Little Bees of Saint Rita pray before the body of Blessed Mother Fasce in the Lower Basilica of Cascia.

nuns, who until then had known only spiritual motherhood. The best, however, came soon, when Mother Teresa discovered the surprise of breast cancer and a series of physical ailments that made her

life heavier than her own weight. It was precisely in this phase that the Mother literally regenerated her children, offering them a love marked by the same cross of Christ. The Beehive was thus born

## THE BEEHIVE TODAY

assures its young guests (the Little Bees and the Wildflowers) all that is necessary to make them grow in serenity, guaranteeing their education, health care and psychological assistance, adequate nourishment and a home full of love.

## All that is needed to be in good health

The first goal of the Beehive, the one in which the roots are founded, is Welcome. For us, welcome means taking care of the young lives we have been entrusted, to look after, to completely embrace the Little Bee in all her needs. And among the needs we deal with are health care needs. In agreement with the families, the doctor in Cascia is assigned to the Little Bees, so all the medical emergencies are handled on the spot and are the responsibility of the Beehive (it would be unthinkable to send a sick Little Bee home to be examined by the family doctor). Besides emergencies, there are also routine visits such as optical, dermatological, endocrinological and dental. In short, all that is needed to be in good health. We really give important and substantial help to the Little Bees in first place, and then to their families. The most difficult part to support is dental treatment (tooth decay, extractions, equipment, etc.) because the costs are high and the local health authority performs only small treatments and with the well known delays. Generally speaking, we start with very serious situations that require lengthy interventions. Once the most serious case has been dealt with, other cases are analysed and support for treatment is restarted: this is not only economic, but also consists of accompanying them in the indications to be followed correctly, in good practices that will lead to the success of these interventions. And I assure you that with the little girls and teenagers it is not an easy task. Every two years we manage to activate 23 dental projects on average. Last year we completed three long and very difficult interventions costing 18,300 euros, and we gave the smile back to young Little Bees. This year, we started new 24-month care projects to help two more Little Bees, soon to be joined by two girls.

*(Violanda Lleshaj, director of the Beehive of Saint Rita)*







Little Bees (dressed in white) at the funeral procession for Mother Fasce.

She kept the tumour hidden as much as possible, beginning to call it “my treasure”

twice, first out of compassion and then through the true martyrdom of the Mother. She kept the tumour hidden as much as possible, beginning to call it “my treasure”, because it allowed her to imitate Rita also in the heroism of the stigma. This interpretation of the tumour as “her treasure” is curious, but it allowed her to transform the educational project into a real sacrifice of love: a gift lived without reserve, literally until the last drop of blood. The problem of the tumour was soon aggravated by other more annoying ailments that hindered sleep and normal walking. But everything served the Mother to exercise a “crucified” motherhood, the same crucified love of Jesus and of Saint Rita. I quote one of the most serious sources of Mother Teresa's life, that of Father Alipio

Vincenti, which I would like to be better known and read by all devotees: it is a slim booklet, but full of detailed and well-recounted infor-

mation: “One of the reasons for admiration and devotion to Saint Rita consisted in being the saint of the thorn, of the exceptional sharing of the suffering of Christ. Mother Teresa fully shared the spirit. In the private renewal of her vows, she wrote: 'How happy I would be if, like Him, my Spouse, I could shed my blood to the last drop for love of him!' This aspiration stemmed from the conviction that, as she wrote to her sister Carmelia, 'He who does not suffer does not love; the chosen souls must resemble Jesus Crucified'.” (A. Vincenti, Mother Maria Teresa Fasce, Augustinian



Mother Fasce with the sisters (work of Bonaduce, XX century).

## The flowers and the bees

### WHO I AM ...

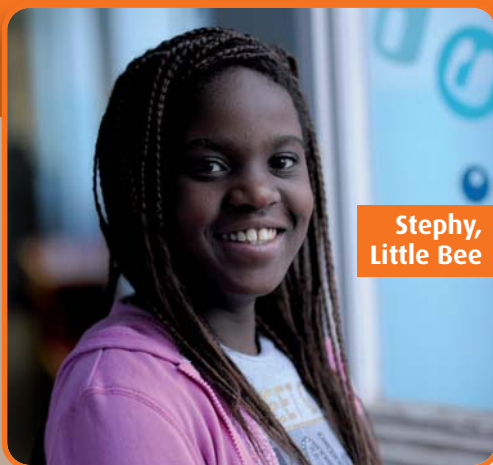
My name is Samuele and I am 9. I'm in class IV A in Cascia. I'm good at maths and motor sciences. I have an older brother, Domenico, that I get along with quite well, even if we sometimes fight.

### WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT THE BEEHIVE ...

Eh... The thing that I like most about the Beehive is playing. The game we play most often is football together with Michael, Andrea, Gabriele, Moreno and Niccolò. Finished playing, we start on homework and I'm in teacher Monica's group. If I come across any difficulty I ask her, and she always helps me. My report card is good, in fact in almost all subjects I have 8 and 9, except in English and Italian, where I have 7.5. In the Beehive I try to improve my report card so that mum is happy too.



**Samuele,  
Wildflower**



**Stephy,  
Little Bee**

### WHO I AM ...

My name is Stephy, I'm 9. I was born in Perugia but my parents come from Cote d'Ivoire. I was in Cote d'Ivoire when I was 3, I was with my grandmother and I cried every day because I missed my mum. For that reason, I came back with my parents. I'm in primary IV.

### WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT THE BEEHIVE ...

I really like being able to study together with my teacher Monica. Also, I really like the outdoor courtyard, which is a great space where we children can play, dance and do cartwheels. One of my greatest passions is dance, I go twice a week with my friends. I really love listening to music and singing.

Abbess, great promoter of the cult of St. Rita, page 83). "In addition to the terrible tumour, the Servant of God suffered from many other disorders, which rendered her life a 'continuous torture'." The extensive list

includes diabetes, heartache, a headache that has tormented her for many years, a strong burning in the lower limbs. The latter might seem a lesser evil, but the person concerned told Mother Rosato: "I suffered more

from the pains in the feet than from the tumour'." (ibid., page 88).

Everything served to increase affectionate love for her children, who understood well and reciprocated.





## PROCESSION



**Saint of impossible causes**, of the family and of forgiveness, Rita of Cascia teaches us that if we embrace our cross, if we rely on God, **anything can happen**, everything can change.



FROM THE BEES  
TO THE ROSES

# SOLEMN PONTIFICAL





## CELEBRATING SAINT RITA



Thousands of pilgrims placed their roses at the foot of the **statue of Saint Rita** which, having come in procession to the churchyard of the Basilica, was placed next to the altar.



After the Supplication, the **Solemn Pontifical** officially began, presided over by Card. Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints (photo below, first from the right).





FROM THE BEES  
TO THE ROSES

A close-up photograph of a bouquet of vibrant red roses with green leaves. The bouquet is held by a person whose hands are visible at the bottom. In the background, a crowd of people is blurred, suggesting a public event. A semi-transparent orange rectangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'BLESSING OF THE ROSES'.

## BLESSING OF THE ROSES





In closing, Card. Amato officiated the traditional ritual of the **Blessing of the Roses**, during which pilgrims raised their red roses - the symbol of Saint Rita - to the sky. The blessed roses are then kept in memory of the pilgrimage, or given to friends and relatives who are in need or poor health.



# Fraternal twins

Journey on discovery of the Twinning of Faith and Peace  
that united Cascia and Košice (Slovakia), on the occasion of the Feast of Saint Rita 2018

by Rita Gentili

It is said that fraternal twins are united by a special bond, which is based on being together forever, on belonging to a unity in which each, albeit in their uniqueness, is always close to the other. It is with this reflection in mind that I prepare to experience the journey that marks the beginning of the “Twinning of Faith and Peace” with Košice, a city in Slovakia towards which Cascia holds out its hand in the name of Saint Rita this year. The aim is to understand if this word, twinning, is adequate for al-

so explaining the bond which, every year, brings together the birthplace of Rita, my town, and another in the world to spread the Ritian message. The journey takes me into the Augustinian community present in Košice, made up of a few but energetic Augustinian fathers, around which a large group of lay people frequent the convent for the many activities that are organised here: premarital courses for young people, courses for couples in crisis and Italian language courses, to name just a few. The whole com-

munity, religious and secular, is in a ferment. This twinning is also the occasion for opening up to the faithful the new church dedicated to Saint Rita which will be consecrated two weeks later - in the presence of the Mother Prioress of the Saint Rita of Cascia Monastery, Sister Maria Rosa Bernardinis - and

***In the name of  
Saint Rita, we  
are all fraternal  
twins***



The twinning was the occasion for opening up to the faithful the new church dedicated to Saint Rita.





## THE TORCH OF PEACE

The symbolic act of the Twinning of Peace and Faith that is forged every year between Cascia and another town in the world in the name of Saint Rita is lighting of the Torch of Peace. "From the Easter candle," Father Bernardino Pinciaroli - Rector of the Basilica of Cascia - explained to the faithful gathered in the church of Košice, "the light of the risen Christ spreads, through the intercession of Saint Rita, for peace between us, in Slovakia and in the world". The torch was lit by Milan Lesňák, mayor of the Novà Ves district of the city - where the Augustinian convent and the church dedicated to Saint Rita stand - before handing it to the Mayor of Cascia, Mario De Carolis. From Košice, the torch then set off for Cascia, making a stop, in a sort of journey of faith and hope, in different towns between Umbria and Lazio: Orvieto, Todi, Collevalenza, Giano dell'Umbra, Massa Martana, Montefalco, Sant'Anatolia di Narco, Poggiodomo, Monteleone di Spoleto, Leonessa and Roccaporena. Accompanied and escorted by a relay of CONI Umbria runners, the torch reached Cascia on the evening of May 21, to illuminate the large votive tripod placed in the courtyard of the Basilica of Santa Rita. (RG)

to welcome the relic of the saint: a golden urn, in the shape of a luxuriant branch of roses and bunches of grapes where the sacred fragment is preserved in the petals of the largest rose.

The Prior of the convent of Košice, Father Juraj Pigula, describes the twinning as the fulfilment of a dream: "We dreamed of a convent and we had it; then the

church and now we also have this. The twinning is a seal on our history, a thanks to the community of Cascia and to Saint Rita, through which our dream has come true". A church that the Augustinians hope will become a place of pilgrimage from all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, a point of reference, the "temple of reconciliation", as Father Juraj calls it.

Because this new church rises in a city and in a country where Saint Rita is still little known, even if her story is increasingly attracting curiosity among the faithful, especially women.

Participation at the celebration of presentation of the relic to the faithful is remarkable. The church is overcrowded, some people follow the mass from the out-



Saint Rita,  
model of love.



## *I hang up a sign asking the faithful to leave a message*

side, women are certainly the majority, but there is no shortage of young couples and many children. The faithful participate in the Eucharistic celebration with great composure and, at the end, are to stay in line for a few hours to be able to kneel for a moment and pray before the relic. A sacred object in which Msgr. Renato

Boccardo, Archbishop of the Diocese of Spoleto-Norcia, also in Košice to seal the link with Cascia, invites the faithful to see “Rita who urges us to concentrate our attention on what is at the centre, on what is really important, on Jesus Christ”. By the time the last faithful leave the church it is dark.

It is on the last day of the

stay in Košice, after the lighting of the Torch of Peace that seals the link between the two towns, that I find the answer to my question. To better understand the sense of devotion to Saint Rita in this community, without the obstacle of a language that I do not know, I hang a sign at the entrance to the church, asking the



## PRAYER

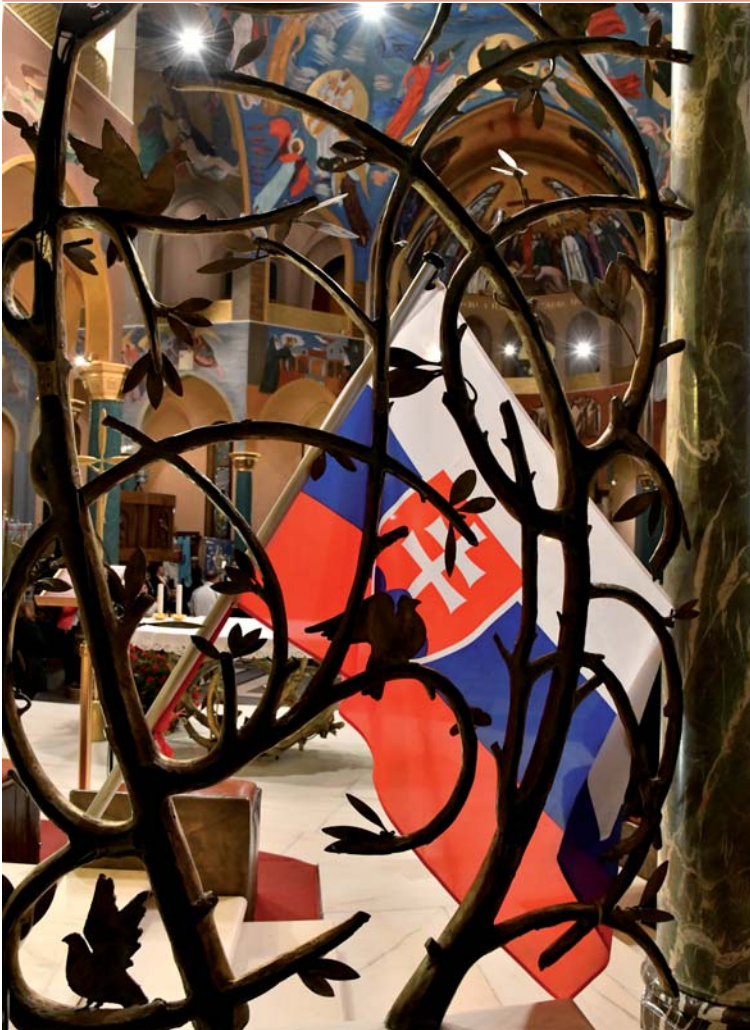
Augustine, our father and of all, brother to all contemporary, you, man of the tireless inner search, that has known well the luminous paths of God and experienced the tortuous ways of men, be our teacher of life and travelling companion. We are disoriented, lost, sick with inconsistency. Deceived every day by false and alienating goals, we too, like you, in exchange for God, love immense fables and endless lies (cf. Conf. 4, 8).

Father Augustine, come and collect us from our dispersions, come and lead us back "home", put us on a pilgrimage towards the inner depths of ourselves where, fortunately, the restlessness of our heart has no peace. We ask you the gift of the courage to take every day the way back in ourselves, in our inner person, where a Love beyond all expectations has been revealed, that in your heart was waiting for you and right in your heart came to meet you.

Prayer of Mother Alessandra Macajone OSA (1931-2005).

faithful to leave a written message explaining what Saint Rita means to them. During the last lunch together, with the help of the Augustinian fathers I translate every single message, discovering that here, as in Cascia and throughout the world, Saint Rita is above all an example to follow. A model of love, humility, forgiveness, sacrifice and acceptance. A source of inspiration in everyday life and marriage in particular. A source of strength for facing the difficulties of life. The living example that for Jesus nothing is impossible.

The mother from which a boy, in prison, takes the strength to forgive the mother who had abandoned him as a child. The wife who inspires another wife to forgive her unfaithful husband and to wish the new couple well. The saint to whom a woman asks, and obtains, not to suffer from the degenerative disease that forces her to painful back pain, in order to crown the dream of adopting a child. In these words, in these messages, in these testimonies, I find the answer to my question: yes, twinning is the right word to explain the link that Cascia has forged with Košice. Two communities that have just known one another and yet seem to have been united forever, each with its own specificity, but both belonging to that unity given by faith in the "little" woman of Cascia. Yes, in the name of Saint Rita, we are all fraternal twins. ■



# The populariser of St. Augustine

68th anniversary of priesthood for Father Remo Piccolomini,  
the religious who explained St. Augustine to ordinary people

by Father Giuseppe Caruso OSA

**A**t the Santa Monica College in Rome, March 25, 1950, was a day of celebration. Nine brothers of that community were ordained priests in the Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano: among these, Father Prospero Grech, now cardinal, Father Vincenzo Giovino, for many years parish priest in Palermo, and Father Remo Piccolomini, whose biographical story is deeply linked with the Augustinian presence in Cascia. To commemorate the beauti-

mainly spent in the study of the work and thought of Augustine, which took the form of a multiplicity of highly significant initiatives; among these, his engagement in management of the “New Augustinian Library”, that is the publishing enterprise that took up the task of offering the Italian public, first only on paper and then also on the web, the Latin text of the writings of the Bishop of Hippo and their translation. A precious fruit of the friendship of Fr. Remo with some distinguished professors such as Antonio Pieretti, Luigi Alici and Donatella Pagliacci (all present at the event!) was the



Father Remo Piccolomini (in the middle, leaning on the cane)  
on the day of his anniversary.

## *Fr. Remo's life was spent in the study of Augustine*

ful 68th anniversary of the priestly ordination, those who were and still are his companions on the journey of life gathered in Cascia around Fr. Remo on March 26; first and foremost his “family”, that is, the sisters of Cascia, who often had the opportunity to listen to his preaching, and the brothers, young and old, who came from different cities of Italy. As well as being dedicated to pastoral activity and, for some years, to running the “Umbra Augustinian Province” of which he was superior, Fr. Remo's life was

“Centre of Augustinian Studies of Perugia” which, since 1988, has proposed conferences aimed at a greater understanding and updating of the thought of Augustine. But we cannot and should not neglect Fr. Remo's divulgation activity: alongside the most demanding writings, which are addressed to scholars, he also produced a series of more manageable instruments, booklets suitable for the vast public, so that Augustine could be known and loved by everyone. There are thus many reasons for being grateful to Fr. Remo, which were well expressed during the day by the Provincial of the Augustinians of Italy, Fr. Luciano De Michieli, and by Fr. Giuseppe Pagano, who was active in organising the day. ■



# Sr. Raimonda, rooted in the love of God

edited by the Sisters

**A**nother “heavy-weight” of the infirmity left this earth at the end of April to reach the new life of Heaven: Sr. Raimonda Radicia.

In the last 14 months, two other Sisters have crossed the threshold of Heaven with her: Sister Francesca and Sister Antonietta. All three shared an infirmity so heavy as to leave them bedridden, but all three firm and rooted in the love of God and in love for their neighbours, to the point of being a prayerful “rearguard” of the Community: this is why they are considered “heavyweights” by all of us. We are made for Heaven and the journey is made by the stages of our life. When old age, infirmity, illnesses make us incapable of any activity, here is where the last stretch of the journey is offered and total, pure, full prayer so takes on meaning and this stage also becomes fruitful.

Sister Raimonda entered the Monastery 62 years ago, at the age of 22. She arrived from Sicily, from Gela, where she had breathed Augustinian spirituality from the Fathers of the Convent of Saint Augustine. From her land, she brought with her into the Monastery the passion, the ardour, the tenacity and the



Sister Raimonda Radicia.

***When I am weak, it is then that I am strong***

determination that accompanied her in every service that the Community asked of her.

“When I am weak, it is then that I am strong”, “I can do all things in him who gives me strength ...”, “I know who I believed”: we can define Sr. Raimonda's last years with these expressions of Saint Paul. Various ever more pressing pathologies had forced her to bed, but they had not extinguished in her heart the desire for community prayer; so the Augustinian nun seeks God, together with her Sisters, with one heart

and one soul. Sister Raimonda always placed her trust in the Lord with filial abandonment and never ceased to believe that her help came from Him because he had made heaven and earth.

There is a beautiful prayer in the Augustinian Ritual for the farewell of a deceased religious; so we want to remember our dear Sister who we greeted not with a farewell, but with “to God”:

*“Father of infinite goodness, admit our sister Raimonda to the full communion of your love ... Do not cover the faults to which living exposed her, but remember the hour when you called her for the exclusive service of your glory among the daughters of St. Augustine. Now she has reached the threshold of light: extinguish the thirst of infinity which you infused in her heart. Turn prayerful silence into a dialogue of love; in a happy consortium of saints, claustral solitude; in the fruits of life, the hidden operate. Her voice of praise spreads in the liturgy of the whole universe and expands itself in the immense gaze that forced it into a confined space. Purified by the fire of the Spirit, she contemplate for ever the face of your Son, which she dilates with spousal love”. Deo gratias! ■*

It is our  
task to let  
them grow  
serenely.

ESTROGENT

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Here, every day, the nuns and educators lovingly take care of our Little Bees. They are girls from 6-18 years of age with a difficult past behind them for whom, thanks also to your help, we ensure the warmth of a home and the education needed to build a better future.

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