

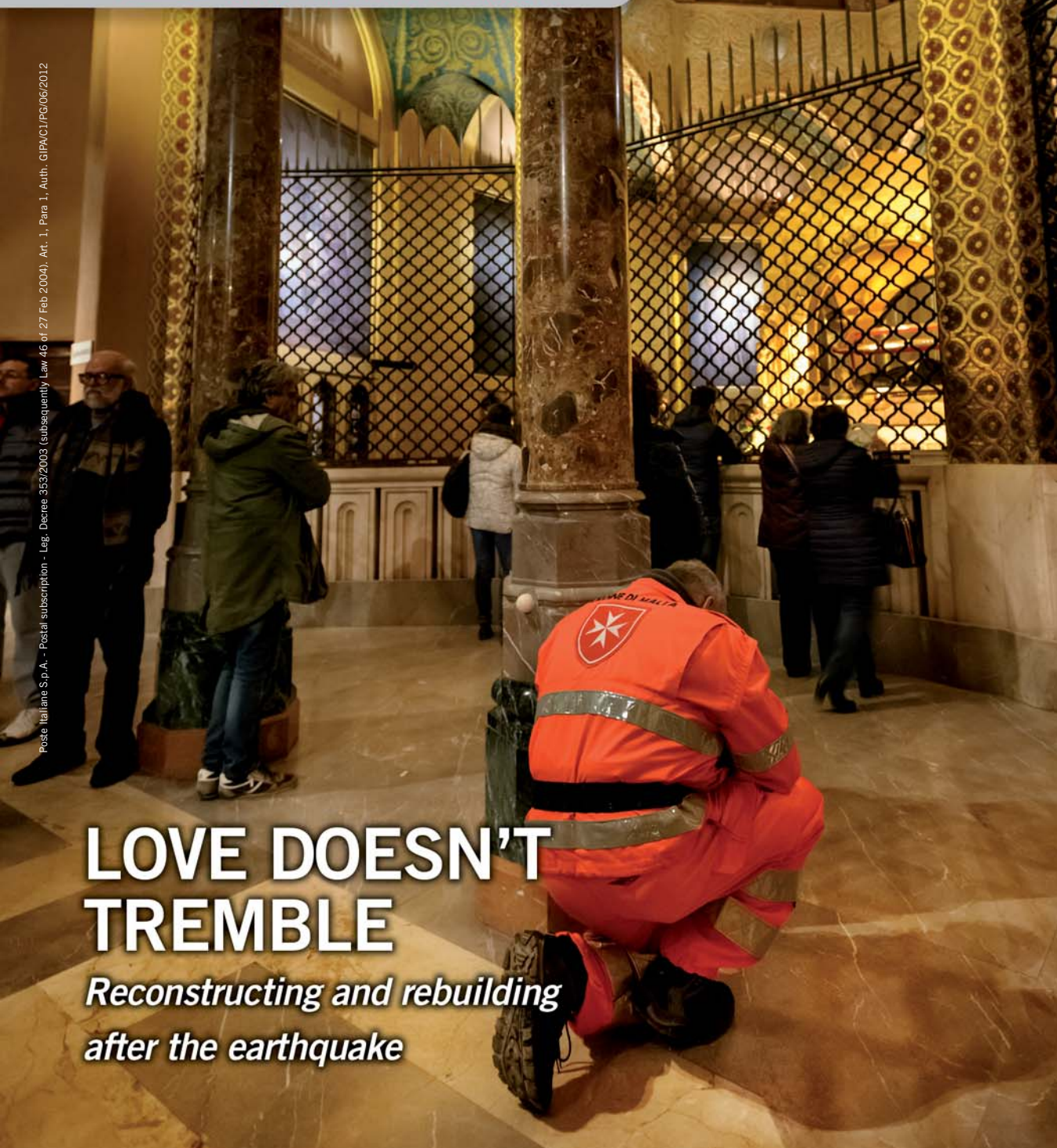
FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES



The Magazine
of Saint Rita of Cascia

BIMONTHLY
OF THE AUGUSTINIAN
MONASTERY
OF SAINT RITA
OF CASCIA

NO. 1 JAN-FEB 2017



LOVE DOESN'T TREMBLE

*Reconstructing and rebuilding
after the earthquake*

SUMMARY

- 3 *Editorial*
Essentials
- 4 **Love doesn't tremble**
- 10 *Saint Rita Foundation*
Healing the wounds of the soul
- 13 *Featuring Mother Fasce*
The good Mother of Cascia
"Mother Fasce was predestined for this mission"
- 17 *Cascia events*
The doors of hope reopened
- 20 *Primary Pious Union*
In Coccaglio, a church built for Rita
- 22 *Around the World*
A special prayer from Głebinów
- 24 *Dialogue with the Monastery*
The time for returning to living

SUPPORT FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES

To continue spreading the hope of Rita's message, help us to support "From the Bees to the Roses", the voice of Saint Rita worldwide. Even just a small donation through:

- **Bank:**

IBAN IT68Y0542839240000000001781
BIC/SWIFT: BLOPIT22

- **Post Office:**

postal a/c 5058 - payable to the Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia specifying "Subscription".

Thank you for what are able to do!

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER

If you wish to receive the prayers of St. Rita or know more in real time about the charitable works of the St. Rita Monastery, send an e-mail with your name and surname to newsletter@santaritadacascia.org

FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES

Bimonthly of the Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia
No. January-February 2017



Auth. Court of Spoleto No. 9 of 26.06.1954. ROC Registry No. 2460
Italian edition: Year XCIV English edition: Year LVI
French edition: Year LV Spanish edition: Year XLV
German edition: Year XLV Portuguese edition: Year IV

Cover: Volunteer of the Italian Relief Corps of the Order of Malta, on the day of reopening of the Basilica of Saint Rita. Photo by Giovanni Galardini.

Executive Director

Pasquale Grossi

Editorial Committee

Sr. M. Giacomina Stuani (editorial director)

Monica Guarriello (editor-in-chief)

Fr. Bernardino Pinciarioli, Fr. Giuseppe Caruso, Roger Bergonzoli

Registered office

Monastery of Saint Rita, viale Santa Rita 13 - 06043 Cascia (PG)
tel. + 39 0743 76221 - fax + 39 0743 76786

Operational headquarters

via delle Fornaci 38 - 00165 Rome
tel. + 39 06 39674099 - fax + 39 06 39637399
www.santaritadacascia.org/dalleapiallerose
redazione@santaritadacascia.org

Thanks to

Sr. M. Natalina Todeschini, Sr. Maria Rosa Bernardinis, Valentina Fabbri, Marta Ferraro, Alessandra Paoloni, Cristina Siccardi

Photos

Giovanni Galardini, Monica Guarriello, Tito Castellucci, Angela Calcagno, PPU Coccaglio, Parish of St. Urbana in Głebinów; Fotolia.com: © mavoimages

Graphic Design and Layout

Bruno Apostoli graphic designer - www.brunoapostoli.it



MONASTERO
SANTA RITA
DA CASCIA
Comunità agostiniana

monastero@santaritadacascia.org

www.santaritadacascia.org

If you wish to make an offer to the Monastery of Saint Rita in Cascia to ask for a subscription, prayers, Masses, for the charitable works of the monastery, for graces received and for devotion, you can do so through:

bank: IBAN IT68Y0542839240000000001781
BIC/SWIFT: BLOPIT22

post office: a/c 5058 – payable to Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia to make a postal transfer:
IBAN IT85R0760103000000000005058

credit card: www.santaritadacascia.org/donazioni

FOR SWITZERLAND

Post office: a/c 69-8517-0
payable to: Augustinian Monastery of Saint Rita
06043 Cascia PG - Italy
IBAN CH8309000000690085170

FOR GERMANY

Post office: a/c 14421706
Payable to: Superior of the Monastery of Saint Rita
06043 Cascia PG - Italy
IBAN DE11600100700014421706

Printed in January 2017 by Litografodi srl on behalf of Tau Editrice srl, Via Umbria 148, 06059 Todi (PG).



MISTO
Carta da fonti gestite
in maniera responsabile
FSC® C111553

The From the Bees to the Roses magazine is printed on environmentally-friendly FSC-certified paper

Essentials

Dear friends of Saint Rita, preparation of this issue of From the Bees to the Roses suffered as a result of the daily earthquakes that have plagued Central Italy and, therefore, also Cascia. Because of the physical and psychological consequences we went through in those terrible days, all work, including on this magazine, has suffered a setback, change of programme and consequent delays in production and delivery. That's why this issue of From the Bees to the Roses reaches you so late, and we apologise for the inconvenience and thank you from our hearts for the support, understanding, love and charity you have not failed to show us, right from the very first hours of those difficult days.

Let me recall the words of the Mother Abbess, Sister Maria Natalina Todeschini, on the occasion of the Mass celebrated on December 15 for the return of our Community to the monastery: "Tonight we celebrate the gift of life. We nuns said many times: despite what happened in Norcia and Cascia, none of us is dead, our saints have protected us. I think that it's our duty to thank the Lord and our saints for the gift of life. We spent 42 days outside the monastery but let me tell you the truth ... leaving was a painful and difficult decision. I was under pressure from the outside telling me: 'Make sure the nuns are safe, that is your responsibility'. That weighed on me, and in the end we took the shared decision to leave". Then the Mother Abbess continued, by directly addressing the citizens of Cascia: "We did not want to leave you, we never left you, we have always prayed so much for you".

"This earthquake was a test. See how much love it aroused, how much good the Lord places in our hearts, and this is the great grace that we have received. The earthquake taught us to be more essential:



To celebrate All Augustinian Saints Day on November 13, the nuns of the Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia passed through the Holy Door of the Hermitage of Lecceto (Siena), where they lived for a just over a month in the days after the earthquake of October 30.

sometimes we are too attached to earthly things and this does not help us. We need to live more united to God, believe that God always loves us, in spite of the tests. We must appreciate all this affection, our volunteers, all supporters. How many sacrifices. These tests unite us to one another. Now we must move forward with hope, you and us together. We open up our hearts, we welcome the Lord. May the way be fruitful in the hope of the love of the Lord".

Love doesn't tremble

Reconstructing and rebuilding after the earthquake

by Monica Guarriello



Damaged bell tower of the church in Avendita

Rita wanted to make this trip so much, to make the most of the long All Saints weekend. She arranged it with her husband and all she has to do now is enjoy what seems will be a beautiful day, bearing in mind that in the small neighbourhood of Ocosce, as in the whole of the Valnerina, the cold weather comes suddenly to silence autumn. Today is Sunday, 30 October 2016 and at 7:30 everyone is already awake and refreshed, thanks to the transition from summer to winter time. There are just ten minutes to go.

Maria is accustomed to the early morning company of Sister Antonia, she's waiting for her as she prepares breakfast for the nuns in the kitchen of the Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia. Together they share gossip and coffee with milk. Not far away, in front of the Basilica entrance, Aurelio the sacristan is organising with some colleagues to rid the square of the Basilica of some work tools. Patrizia has been sleeping in the car with the family since October 26. Exhausted from the emotional tension, she decided to return to her home yesterday. But she slept in her clothes because she well remembered the cold in her bones when she had to abandon her house in a hurry after the two earthquakes of October 26.

At 7:38 on October 30, Alessandra has run up a ten-minute delay. She had spent the night at her mother's house because her relatives insisted. So, at 7.38, Alessandra leaves to take a shower at her house,



Of the 36 neighbourhoods of Cascia, Avendita was the one most affected by the earthquake.

*The earthquake hits
things, homes,
thoughts and people*

but her granddaughter holds her back at the door. She's two minutes late and Alessandra still doesn't know that this small delay will save her life because her home is literally reduced to rubble, as she was to tell me. Just two minutes and the strongest earthquake since the one in Irpinia in 1980 hits things, homes, thoughts and people. But no one suspected anything, because you can't predict an earthquake. It hits you suddenly from behind and you can't see it until it shakes your bones and you pray that the roof will not fall on you, while the walls scream dust, the furniture opens up, and plates and glasses ... everything is smashed before

"My daughter kept me in bed," says Ilaria in tears while looking for strength, "otherwise, as usual, I would have prepared breakfast and she would have been on the couch watching cartoons and the chandelier would have fallen on her" (crying).

"Having found the tranquillity of the people who are close to you and seeing that

You do nothing while waiting to die or for it to end: one of the two things will happen



A displaced family in front of its motor caravan in the Leone XIII car park in Cascia.

your eyes and your feet don't keep you standing. But even if you could, fear blocks your body, your voice chokes and you wait and wait, you do nothing while waiting to die or for it to end: one of the two things will happen, but you don't know which.

"Mum, this wind is making everything fall ... why is there such a strong wind?", 4-year-old Mattia asks his mother. And Maira, the mother, tells me: how do you explain the earthquake to a child? How do you get rid of the fear of sleeping under a roof surrounded by four walls that might collapse?

they're unharmed," says Loriana, who lives in the hamlet of Borgo Cerreto, "you start worrying about everything else ... But you have no information, the telephone doesn't work, the television doesn't work, there's no real perception of what has happened around you." And in the end you have to recover everything that's needed to keep going; you have to go back to your home, that place that suddenly is no longer yours, because you can only enter with the firemen, and only for a few minutes. "When you go back in, you feel like a thief," says Ilaria. "You hurry to take everything you



After the earthquake, the Leone XIII car park in Cascia, which normally welcomes pilgrim coaches, was used as a place of initial reception for displaced citizens.

CASCIA, AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

On 24 August 2016, a 5.9 magnitude earthquake hit central Italy, including the town of Amatrice, causing 299 deaths, numerous injuries and damage throughout the territory. On October 26 and 30, new earthquakes shook the border between Umbria and Marche, which had already been hard hit. On October 30, a violent magnitude 6.5 shock with its epicentre near Norcia (5 km from Cascia) caused serious damage to buildings and the collapse of many of them; there were no deaths, but the number of displaced persons grew enormously.

In Cascia and its 36 neighbourhoods, with a total of 3,300 inhabitants, eight out of ten houses suffered damage and were closed awaiting technical inspection. Subsequently, cracks of varying degrees were found in more than half of the buildings affected. Most of the inhabitants were displaced. Those who could went to live with friends and relatives, but in a first phase all the others ended up sleeping in the indoor sports arena, in marquees, in caravans and motor caravans, some even in Perugia. Following an agreement with the Umbria Region, habitable hotel facilities housed the displaced, while two housing modules were organised for those who asked not to spend the winter in a hotel for emotional or personal reasons.

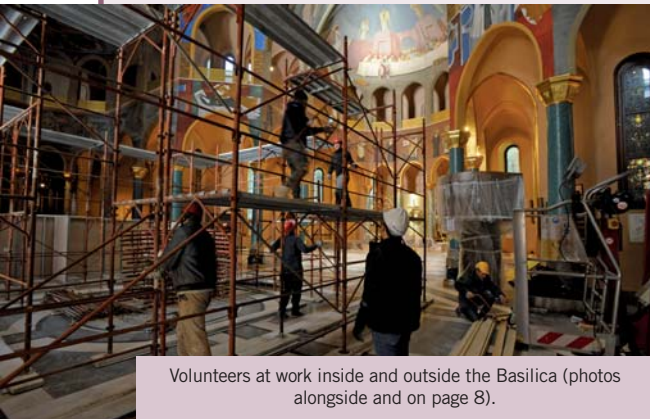
Reconstruction is being done through a tax credit mechanism, by which the individual citizen chooses technicians and companies from the *white list* (the list of companies and professionals not subject to mafia infiltration) which, in turn, will be paid through a bank directly by the State on the basis of the costs incurred.

come across and try to do it quickly because you are afraid that another shock will hit." Patrizia looks at the tapes put round her building which is now in the 'red zone': "It is as if it was no longer my house," she says, "and when I went to look at what I had taken, they were all useless things." A few moments to think and you put your life in a black bag. "It's horrible," Maurizia tells me. "You think 'it's a rubbish bag, my things can't be in there'. I took away photos of my dad, swimming costumes. I didn't realise it when I was doing it, but I think that in those moments your mind goes to the things you love. I mean, you don't think of the sweater, you first think of taking away affection, what makes house a home."

From afar, Cascia looks intact, says Aurelio, but when you come close you see the damage. It's like a person who seems "normal", but inside there's great suffering. Yes, that's how it is. But we have the strength to start again. And everyone tried to start again immediately, to react, to not think about it, to find a way to look forward, to not collapse like rubble. Devotees from all over Italy and the world have been close to the nuns, fathers and citizens from the very beginning, like one big family, with their phone calls, e-mails, letters, even in person. Many sent donations in goods and money to support the reconstruction. An avalanche of solidarity that has symbolically stopped the earth, reinforcing hearts. Alessandra, who lost her

VOLUNTEERS, TOGETHER FOR SAINT RITA

Over fifty volunteers have helped to "restart" the Sanctuary of Saint Rita. Every time there has been a need, the citizens of Cascia and from various parts of Italy have gathered together for Saint Rita, answering the call of the Augustinian Family of Cascia with generosity and professionalism. Rome, Palestrina, Albano, Rieti, Avigliano Umbro, Bolzano and Livorno are some of the home tomes of our volunteers. "Seven of us came here," says Rosario Karion, mayor of Trentinara (Salerno) who, with his team, wears the "Cilento in flight" sweater, referring to a project of his town which,



Volunteers at work inside and outside the Basilica (photos alongside and on page 8).

work before the end of winter. Outside, however, works will take longer: they will start first on the cladding of the dome coating, which resisted well (a new cover was recently installed), then move on to the rest of the roof covering. In the Monastery, the new area (where the nuns live) did not suffer serious damage and was quickly rectified. However, the old part (which extends around the pilgrims' itinerary) suffered structural and costly damage. Notwithstanding the serious difficulties, professionals and volunteers are at work to reopen the monastery to pilgrims as soon as possible.

starting in June 2017, will allow tourists and enthusiasts to fly at a height of more than 100 metres over a stretch of the breathtaking panorama of the Gulf of Salerno. "What we can manage to do in Cascia," continues the mayor, "we'll do with great love." The Trentinara group was part of the forty people who distinguished themselves on 10 and 11 December 2016 for having mounted the scaffolding needed for works in the Basilica (we remind readers that the Basilica is open to visitors and devotees who wish to pray before the body of the saint). The dome, which has already been made safe by firemen, is the area most affected area by the works: internal scaffolding has been used to restore the painted vaults (work on which had been completed just before the earthquake). The aim for the internal area is to finish the





FATHER BERNARDINO: STAY BESIDE US

"I had already been in Cascia for a few days to take on the task of Rector of the Basilica of Saint Rita," says Father Bernardino Pinciaroli, appointed rector of the Augustinian Province of Italy shortly before the earthquakes hit central Italy. "After the strong 'quake of October 30, everything stopped: pilgrims stopped coming, except for a few brave Lebanese, Brazilians, British and Belgians. Now things are returning to normal: the Basilica is open to visitors, as well as the urn of Saint Rita. Holy Masses are being celebrated in the Lower Basilica and in the nuns' Chapel. The beautiful experience that has accompanied this very ugly moment for all has been the great solidarity of many, from all parts of Italy (many of them my former parishioners and friends in Bologna and Milan) and the world, the great work of the firemen, Civil Protection, Caritas and the Misericordie. In need, we have seen Christian spirit work. What can be done? Not interrupt this outpouring of solidarity (as Augustinians we have made available for the displaced a house in the Monastery: the "Saint Rita" House of Spiritual Exercises). Stay beside us, if you can, pray for us and come on pilgrimage to Cascia."



Father Bernardino visiting the displaced people in the marquee in Avendita, Cascia.

CASCIA'S HOTELS START UP AGAIN

"The technicians of the Civil Protection declared Hotel Monte Meraviglia unfit," says owner Magrelli Damocles "due to level B damage ... So the intervention is not decisive in terms of stability, but of restructuring ... the internal and external bases, plants and furnishings will have to be redone. Basically, we have to renew the hotel." Hope and all efforts will be concentrated on "reopening at least at Easter. Not only for my business. Cascia needs to get back to normal".

Magrelli continues: "The habitable structures on the other hand are housing the displaced. In my other hotel, La Corte, we are housing about 100 people of Cascia who do not have the possibility of returning to their houses."

"Now the Monastery Saint Rita has reached an agreement with the Region to house the displaced in the 'Saint Rita' House of Spiritual Exercises," says Pietro del Rio, Manager of Hotel delle Rose "lent" to the management of the nuns' House of Spiritual Exercises. "Here, there are 46 elderly people, whom we also take care of at the moral level."

Hotel delle Rose, which was closed immediately after the earthquake of October 30, reported no structural damage, said Del Rio, although "it suffered greatly economically speaking. We have been losing business since the end of August. Now we have to get down to being busy. From April 1, we will reopen, that's for sure." All accommodation facilities are picking up, but one in particular suffered the worst damage – Hotel Cursula - Ristorante La Locanda Giustini: "We live here," says Gianfranco Giustini, founder of the family that lived in the hotel and that now, during the day, remains next to his Cursula in a mobile compartment received as a gift from "friends in Dorgali in the province of Nuoro. They brought it because they saw that we had had a hotel and a house and now we no longer have either (suffering breaks his voice)."

"On October 30, we had 41 guests," adds his son Giampiero coming to his aid, before Gianfranco continues: "My wife and some girls were preparing breakfast. Suddenly, the storm arrived. I have felt earthquakes since 1962, but never like this one: bad, strong, loud. Everything was falling. People were screaming outside, crying. We hugged one another and thought it was all over."

"The water pipes broke," interjects Giampiero. "There was so much smoke. We looked for the fire but it was the dust. For the next hour there were 45 earthquakes ... This hotel is composed of two structures that move in a different manner: one built in 1982 using reinforced concrete that held very well, and one in 1962 using tuff with reinforced steel layers. The tuff structure has level E damage and needs to be demolished. We also need to rebuild companies, this is the first action."

All efforts will be concentrated on reopening at Easter

house with everything that was in it, tells me she has everything: "In a week I have always dressed like this ... I no longer had anything. I got my strength from the solidarity of the people I met thanks to Saint Rita and the Augustinian fathers; now I sleep at their place to a very warm welcome and in

the midst of so much bad luck I have been lucky because a lot of people love me, I have everything and more, and if I can do something for others I'll do it." It's love that stops you, gives you stability. It's love that stops you from trembling (and finally frees the tears from your eyes). ■



FONDAZIONE
SANTA RITA
DA CASCIA onlus
Fiore di carità

Healing the wounds of the soul

by Violanda Uleshaj,
Director of the Beehive of Saint Rita

The start of this school year was particularly difficult for the Beehive. Yet we had developed a good curriculum, which is currently struggling to get under way. The earth has been trembling since August 24 and the earthquake of October 30 hit our territory hard which, proven by the continuous shocks, is seeking to pick itself up slowly, slowly. Our home, the Beehive, has also been damaged, fortunately not structurally, but much “small” damage still requires a significant economic effort (workers are replacing par-

***Our territory is seeking
to pick itself up
slowly, slowly***

titions, plasterboard and various other damaged finishes). In addition to those suffered by buildings, however, there are the wounds of the community. Most of the families of our guests and our staff has (or has had) their homes become uninhabitable: people have been sleeping in tents, in cars and, ultimately, in hotels that have reached an agreement with Umbria Region. We all ex-



Little Bees camped in the Beehive's refectory during post-earthquake works on the dormitory floor.

perienced a moment of disorientation about what had to be done immediately afterwards. A first response was to help the territory, by “going out” of our walls. Together with the Abbess and the Monastery of Saint Rita Community, following the path of Charity of Blessed Mother Teresa Fasce, we in the Beehive have tried to stay close to the population and especially to children. For this reason, three teachers have been working in the marquee of Cascia, following around 60 children of various ages (including some Wildflowers). It is an activity on and for the territory, with the aim of restoring confidence to families, allowing the Wildflower project to restart. Our Little

***Union helps lower
levels of anxiety***



Our task will be to heal the wounds of the soul

Bees, also displaced (some in the family, others in tents or with relatives), have returned with the reopening of schools. The return to the Beehive home was emotional, especially seeing them all together encouraging one another. Fear takes the upper hand but union helps lower levels of anxiety. Emotions follow each other and their movement is like that of the earthquake: they leave wounds in the soul. Here, our post-emergency task will be to heal the wounds of the soul. We will do this through the new music therapy laboratory and a space for sharing emotions – “The inside room”. We will do this by deploying all our

SCHOOLS, THE POST-EARTHQUAKE SITUATION

All schools in Cascia (3,300 inhabitants including 36 neighbourhoods), with the exception of the nursery school, have suffered damage caused by the various earthquakes. Currently (19 December 2016), the primary schools are housed in a prefabricated building, while the senior secondary schools have been transferred to Roccaporena. The junior secondary schools have been transferred to the nursery school building (the only one fit for use), except for the biggest classroom which has been kept for the nursery school. It has still not been possible to reinstate extended school hours. This situation will remain until the other expected modules are ready to be added to the already existing prefabricated modules. Once the modules are ready, they will be used for the junior secondary and primary schools, whereas for the secondary schools it is hoped that by February, the original building will again be ready to welcome students from the Valnerina. As for our young Beehive guests, the situation is as follows: at the Technical Institute in Norcia, 7 Little Bees will take classes in the prefabricated modules; another 5 Little Bees (from both the scientific high school and the Omnicomprehensive Institute of Cascia) are part of the group transferred to Roccaporena; the remaining Little Bees and Wildflowers studying in junior secondary and primary schools will take turns in the nursery school building and consequently will work in turns in the Beehive: the Wildflowers are our guests in the morning and the Little Bees return to school in the afternoon. (MG)

energy, trying to resume as soon as possible the thread of our curriculum and of everyday life. Because the earth will continue to tremble as will our legs, but our hearts will be steadfast. Firm in the faith, the closeness and the affection of those who support us. ■

A bequest, a gift of love

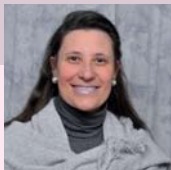
Remembering
who is most vulnerable
in your will can change someone's life
for ever

Allocating even a small bequest to the Monastery of Saint Rita of Cascia means leaving a sign of your generosity in time.

Thanks to bequests, we can support the Beehive of Saint Rita, a hope for all Little Bees, the children who will inherit your love.

Write to us at monastero@santaritadacascia.org and you will receive information on how to help the children in difficulty that need you.





CRISTINA'S INTRODUCTION

by Cristina Siccardi, Church biographer and historian

The good Mother of Cascia

Only an intelligent, courageous, far-sighted, stubborn and above all woman rich in faith like Blessed Teresa Fasce could have managed to translate into reality what until it happened could only have been a beautiful dream, namely spread devotion to Saint Rita of Cascia throughout the world (before her, devotion to the saint of the impossible was local), and make the citadel of Rita a beating heart of spirituality, then a pole of attraction for millions of pilgrims. If Cascia has become an essential stopping point for many believers and if Saint Rita is invoked by countless wives and mothers, the reason lies in the initiatives undertaken and developed by Mother Teresa Fasce. The Sanctuary, Beehive, House of the Pilgrim, Seminary, House of Spiritual Exercises and Hospital are the fruit of her tree, which the holy Augustinian nun always left fed by divine Grace.

If the everyday sins that man, unfortunately, cannot renounce procure much internal disorder and external to the person, the good Mother of Cascia shows our contemporary confused world her everyday life, made up of virtue, continual Christian perfection and approach to the Holy Trinity. This allowed her many blessings for the implementation of projects that she advocated. She lived by faith and divine Providence, never lying down in the face of adversity. She would do so again today. She wrote mountains of letters seeking help: because if she and her sisters lived in holy poverty, misery was expected neither for the Glory of God, nor for the good of others.



DID YOU KNOW ...

The Basilica of Saint Rita, desired by Blessed Fasce for welcoming pilgrims, was built entirely with the offerings of devotees to Rita. Mother Fasce, in particular, launched a real fundraising campaign from the pages of "From the Bees to the Roses". In 1931, after about 5 years of collecting, with just appeals in the magazine, the sum of one million four hundred thousand lire was reached.

Sister Maria Teresa Fasce was beatified by Pope St. John Paul II on 12 October 1997. As is the praxis for all "aspiring" saints and blessed, a process took place before reaching this wonderful day in order to establish with certainty the actual heroism of Mother Fasce in exercising virtues. The Augustinian scholar who was given the task of responding to doubts and objections from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, was Father Alipio Vincenti, who lived in the Community of the Augustinian Fathers of Cascia next to his beloved Saint Rita and Blessed Teresa ...

Father, who was Sister Teresa Fasce? The question can have many answers. The first comes to us from historiography and is that she was "predestined" (in reference to the 1968 book by Father Athanasius Angelini, "Predestined", *ed.*), an enlightened promoter of devotion to Saint Rita. An even more significant connotation comes from the appellation by which she is usually mentioned: "The Mother", indicating the role that her wisdom, her goodness, her prestige, her moral strength and her authoritativeness procured for her, so much so that she was Abbess of the Monastery for 27 years.

What made Fasce blessed? According to a classic principle: good is obtained with the positivity of all components. The more evangelical answer is: to have lived the Beatitudes, to have wisely harmonised

"Mother Fasce was predestined for this mission"

Father Alipio Vincenti is interviewed by Rita Gentile

the needs of the contemplative life and of active life. An example that highlights the generosity, courage and faith of the Mother is the foundation of the Beehive (the project for welcoming girls from difficult family situations, *ed.*).

What role did Fasce play in promoting devotion to Saint Rita? The first biographer considered her being "predestined" for this mission as the characterising element of her life. However, it is not easy to pin-

cepting them and carrying them forward. The best known example is the construction of the new church (the Basilica of Saint Rita, *ed.*), which ran into many difficulties and brought out the organisational ability, diplomacy, tenacity and confidence in Providence of the blessed. The impact of Fasce in promoting devotion to Saint Rita manifests itself especially in Cascia with the attraction of many more pilgrims and the dissemination of knowledge of

The impact of Fasce in promoting devotion to Saint Rita manifests itself especially in Cascia

point the concrete role she played. Some seem convinced that devotion to Saint Rita is almost non-existent in the world, which is definitely false. Others attribute to her ideas that were suggested by others or even that came to light after her death. But she had the merit of ac-

her through the newsletter that she founded (namely: "From the Bees to the Roses" which today, in order to come increasingly closer to people, has become a real magazine in Italian, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and German and diffused throughout the world, *ed.*).

Fasce also played a key role in development of the town of Cascia. What remains today of her work at that time? Looking at the panorama of Cascia, one has an immediate perception of the awesome impact of Ritian works. Most are not

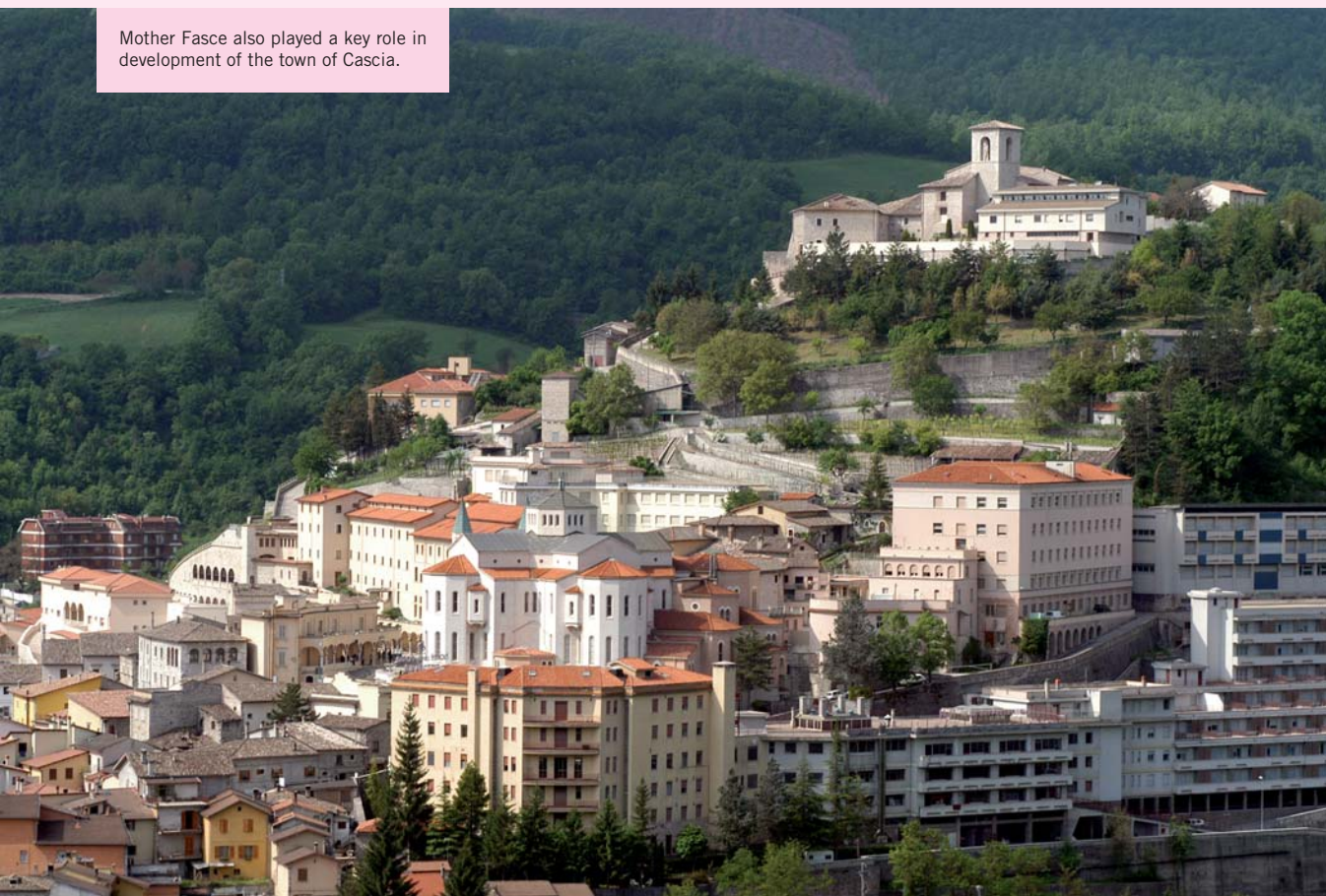
the result of the direct activities of the blessed, but they are a result of the new vitality that she was able to imprint on the environment.

Is there is something special that particularly impressed you about this woman? More than any

aspect of her personality, I am struck by the harmonious overall composition: prudent and courageous, authoritative but not authoritarian, benevolent but amiably demanding, humble but firm. The most underlined feature of her personality is the strength demonstrated in serenely and silently, even joyfully, enduring tremendous physical suffering (including

Prudent and courageous, authoritative but not authoritarian

Mother Fasce also played a key role in development of the town of Cascia.



W O R D O F A M O T H E R

Who does not suffer does not love.



The tapestry with the portrait of Mother Fasce, displayed in St. Peter's Square on the day of her beatification.

breast cancer, *ed.*) and coping with difficult situations.

What can you tell us about the image of the Infant Jesus of Prague imprinted on the lid of the case in which Fasce's body lay and which was noted during the process of beatification? On the day the body of the Blessed was exhumed, I was not in Cascia. On my return, I met a Dutch Augustinian priest, Fr. Ross, who, still excited told me: "vidimus mirabilia hodie" (today we have seen wonderful things). He was referring to the fact that when the case was opened, the image of the Infant of Prague appeared on the lid, in the part towards the body. Those present, who were also present when the case was closed, asserted that no image of the Infant of Prague, whose mother was notoriously devout, had been placed on it.

THE WITNESS OF THE PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION OF MOTHER FASCE

Texts no. 14:

Assunta Bigotti in Giustini, landlady of Cascia, 59 years. She lived in the janitor's quarters of the Monastery of Saint Rita from 1909 to 1941, in charge of the guest quarters, mail and other positions of trust.

"On the occasion of her serious illness (breast cancer) I heard from the sisters who came from Genoa that she tried to hide her illness and on their insistence agreed to surgery, done in the Convent itself awake while the doctor was operating (removal of a breast, which is not something light); she answered the prayers recited by Sister M. Jacinta who held her head. The surgeon who operated, who claimed to be a non-believer, was amazed by so much strength of mind ..."



The doors of hope reopened

After the earthquake of October that brought the Valnerina to its knees, the Basilica of Saint Rita in Cascia reopened its doors on 4 December 2016 to allow devotees to continue to pray before the body of the saint.



Hope. Desire of rebirth. An entire population picks itself up after the terrible earthquakes – culminating with that of 30 October 2016 – which grounded the inhabitants of Valnerina, forcing them to lose everything and start over again.



Hope started right from the Basilica of Saint Rita, which was reopened on December 4 last year after being made safe by firemen, to allow everyone to continue praying next to "their" saint.



Accompanied by the Rector of the Basilica, Augustinian Father Bernardino Pinciarioli, Msgr. Renato Boccoardo, Archbishop of Spoleto-Norcia, opened the doors of the Basilica in the presence of representatives of civil and religious institutions. And while the monastery is not yet ready to be visited by pilgrims, "normality" is slowly returning to the Basilica.



All through winter, volunteers, skilled workers and professionals have worked together tirelessly to give devotees back the place where the body of one of the most popular saints in the world is conserved, the home of every pilgrim.

Ensuring safety was only the first of a series of operations in which technicians intervened on the entire Sanctuary complex under frost and snow, with temperatures well below zero, starting with restoration of the frescoes (carried out for the second time, because the frescoes had already been restored just before the earthquake) and renovation of the imposing octagonal dome of the Basilica, so that everything is ready to welcome the pilgrims in summer.



The Nuns and Fathers of the Augustinian Family of Cascia await you at the Sanctuary of Saint Rita for prayer, sharing, greeting or even just a hug and to celebrate this special year that marks the 20th anniversary of the beatification of Mother Teresa Fasce.



edited by Marta Ferraro

In Coccaglio, a church built for Rita



The church was enriched with a bell tower containing five bronze bells, offered by a benefactor.

With the intention of offering thanks to Saint Rita after a miraculous healing attributed to her, one devotee had the idea of building a chapel in the space next to his house bearing the name of the Saint of Cascia. That was in 2008. Before long, however, from a personal desire, this intention became a project of the entire community of Coccaglio, a town near Brescia.

As a prayer group independent from the Monastery of Cascia, over time each of its affiliates contributed the resources at their disposal for this purpose: money, time and skills. Very quickly, thanks to the spirit of strength shown by the group, united in prayer and strong devotion to the saint of the Valnerina, the idea of building a small chapel was trans-

formed into a project to build a real church, constructed by private individuals but donated to the Curia. Now that works have been completed, the group bears all expenses for keeping it at the disposal of the town.

At the beginning, the Coccaglio group, which was already very large, was not aware of the existence of the Saint Rita Primary Pious. Cirillo Olmi, accompanied by his wife, had travelled to Cascia to buy a statue of Saint Rita to be placed in the new church after construction had finished but it was only in 2011 that, having learned of the existence of the PPU, he proposed that the group should join it. Today, there are more than 200 members in Coccaglio.

On September 24 last year, a new and exciting element was added to the story: the church was enriched with a bell tower containing five bronze bells, offered by a benefactor. The ceremony was presided over by Augustinian Ludovico Maria Centra, spiritual father general of the PPU, who went to Coccaglio carrying a relic of the saint, a belt that had belonged to her. The relic remained in the Brescian town for two weeks and was on display for the

reverence of thousands of pilgrims who had come from neighbouring towns.

The Saint Rita Primary Pious Union has officially been active in Coccaglio since 2013 and collaborates generously with the activities of the Monastery of Cascia. Furthermore, the town is organising a big feast on the day dedicated to Saint Rita. On May 22 each year, as in Cascia, Coccaglio also schedules a procession in which the statue of the saint is carried on the shoulders of male members of the group, and decked with fragrant roses, one of the main symbols of the Ritian tradition, before reaching the altar at the beginning of Mass, which is celebrated each year by a different bishop.

This year, with the presence of the bell tower, the bells will also ring in Coccaglio, as in Cascia, during the night between May 21 and 22, in remembrance of the transit of Saint Rita from this earth to heaven and to keep alive the memory of the first pilgrimage of the people from neighbouring districts of Cascia who went to pay homage to their fellow citizen. The Coccaglio group also travels to Cascia twice a year, organising two fixed pil-



The Saint Rita Primary Pious Union has officially been active in Coccaglio since 2013

grimaces: one in September and one in April, in order to benefit from the mystical air of the hills of Valnerina and return home charged with new energy, ready to face the challenges of life with an extra boost, thanks to the teachings of the rich life of Saint Rita of Cascia, and supported by moments of collective prayer that the group organises every Tuesday in the church that was built thanks to their tenacity and fervent faith (MF).

GENERAL MEETING OF THE PPU POSTPONED UNTIL OCTOBER

Dear friends, the General Meeting of the Saint Rita Primary Pious Union has been moved from April to October, due to the consequences of the earthquake. This year, therefore, the appointment (open to all, including non-members) will be in Cascia on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 October 2017. The theme is "God obeys the obedient" and will guide us in prayer and reflection. This will be also the occasion to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the PPU. The schedule is as follows:

Saturday, October 21

- 10:00 - Conference in the Hall of Peace with Don Angelo Longo
- 11:30 - Meeting of PPU leaders with the nuns
- 15:00 - Visit to the urn
- 17:00 - Torchlight procession with the Ritian statue of Campofranco (starting from the statue donated by Lebanon)
- 21:45 - Adoration with the nuns and new affiliations (each group will bring a vase of earth from their land, which will be offered to Saint Rita as a sign of vicinity to the land of Cascia). For worship, we have asked the nuns for the relic of the heart of Mother Teresa Fasce, given that this year marks the 20th anniversary of her beatification; at the end of adoration, we will recite together the prayer to the Blessed Fasce.

Sunday, October 22

- 09:15 - Penitential Liturgy at the Penitentiary
- 10:00 - Appointment in the hall of Peace with group uniforms and banners
- 10:30 - Holy Mass
- Photos and greetings

NB – for the leaders present: appointment on Friday, October 20, at 21:00, in Hotel delle Rose for the programming meeting for year 2018.

For hotel accommodation and meals, each participant will make their own arrangements.
Info: Information Office of the Sanctuary tel. +39 074375091 e-mail
infobasilica@santaritadacascia.org

A special prayer from Głębinów

Testimony from Poland, by Paulina Muszyńska

My name is Paulina Muszyn'ska. I live in the small tourist village of *Głębinów* (located in the south-west of Poland) in which the neo-Gothic church of St. Urbana is situated. Our current parish priest is Father Przemysław Sen', and it is thanks to his efforts that our parish possesses relics of Saint Rita. We are very grateful to him.

The saint's relics – comprising pieces of the tunic worn by saint for burial – were brought to the parish church on 22 May 2015 by the Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Opole *Rudolf Pierskała*. The relics were received from the Augustinian sisters of Cascia, through the mediation of the Augustinian brothers of Krakow. This sign of the presence of Saint Rita is contained in a silver reliquary, emblazoned with engraved roses. It is located on the right side of the church, at the side of the lateral altar dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

At 18:00 on the 22nd day of each month, the novena is celebrated in honour of Saint Rita, during which requests of the faithful are read out. Prayer is crowned by the Eucharist with the homily and



The Church of St. Urbana which houses the relics of St. Rita

Our parish has published a special prayer in honour of Saint Rita



The parish has published a special prayer in honour of the saint.

dedication of roses. The celebration ends with the kissing of the relic. Our parish has also published a special prayer book in honour of St. Rita. It contains a series of prayers for the intercession of St. Rita, a Novena to be recited before vespers on May 22, and songs and information about worship and our town.

The following is the first prayer read out by our parish priest (the author is Ms Anna Connect) *"Dear friends, through the intercession of*



The Bishop, during the celebration that brought the relics to the Parish.

saint Rita, my autistic 5-year-old son is beginning to return to us! For the first time, he has said "mamma" and is slowly adding other syllables which so far he has not uttered. He is starting to eat and this had been a huge problem. He looks us in the eyes and establishes contact with us.

On the 22nd of each month, the Novena dedicated to Saint Rita ends with the kissing of her relic.



Moreover, he is responding to his name! So many tiny miracles have happened to us in just 3 months since we gave him up to the care of Saint Rita. After years without progress, we are witnessing so many positive changes! Unfortunately, his condition makes it impossible to participate in the Mass of intercession but we were allowed to pray before the relics of the miracle of the Saint ... Saint Rita, thanks for graces received! Pray for my son and continue to intercede for him! On Sunday, November 22, I once again offered you my heart and prayers. I beg you to remember Olafek in your prayers"

I am happy that in my church on the banks of the lake there are also relics of Saint Rita. This is a great gift. Her holiness makes people stronger.

In the future, I hope to visit Cascia and Roccaporena. I pray this will happen soon and I hope to be able to take part in a Novena in honour of Saint Rita.

SMILING AT LIFE

Send photos of your children to monastero@saintritadecascia.org, with the consent of both parents for publication. Photos with incomplete or illegible consent will not be considered.

1



2



3



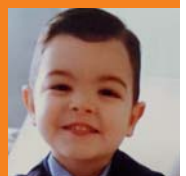
4



5



6



1. Alice Deriu (Bauladu OR - Italy)
2. Andréa Layousse (Dakar - Senegal)
3. Clelia Abela (Gela CL Italy)
4. Léa-Marie Layousse (Dakar - Senegal)
5. Rita Guadalupe (San Luis Potosi - Mexico)
6. Tommaso Piredda (Cagliari - Italy)

The time for returning to living



by Sister M. Giacomina Stuani and the whole Community

This reflection was born in the days of forced *exile* to the Hermitage of Lecceto, due to the earthquakes which, between August and October, also affected Cascia and our Monastery. It was a real exodus of 40 days, a historic exodus for the town of Cascia. There are no memories over the centuries of the Monastery of Saint Rita having ever been closed and the Nuns having been transferred.

It happened on November 2, the day when 20 of us left for the Augustinian Monastery in Lecceto, Siena, another two for the Monastery of Montefalco, and some for their families of origin.

However, a small group remained in Cascia, next to the Monastery, in the convent of our Augustinian Brothers: three sisters, a “garrison” to oversee the home-Monastery and ensure continuity – above all spiritual – next to Saint Rita. In an e-mail to the Augustinian community of Cascia updating the situation, the Provincial Prior wrote: “Providence has wanted our monastery and most of the structures of

the nuns to remain in good condition and so four of our brothers along with three nuns are now living in our convent. With them there are also three girls with the most needs, along with a lady who is taking care of them. They have been joined by two collaborators who are working for the nuns but are virtually handymen and they are a consolation and real support for all. This group works, eats and prays in faith together. It’s like a community ... of a new generation.”

Leaving is a bit like dying, goes a poem by Edmond Haracourt. And so it was also for us, on that November 2, even though we knew that there would be a return home, although it was not quantifiable at the time. As the poet writes: “*Leaving is a bit like dying with respect to what we love because we leave a bit of ourselves in every place at every moment. It is a subtle and definitive pain like the last line of a poem. Leaving is a bit like dying with respect to what we love. We leave as if for fun before the extreme trip and in every goodbye we sow a bit of our soul.*”

It was a very difficult and painful decision, but taken together in unity and harmony with the entire Community. The two strong earthquakes of August 24 and October 26 and the most tremendous one of October 30, accompanied by hundreds of shocks and a dense earthquake swarm, produced splits and cracks not only in buildings, but our hearts, our minds, our souls were also shaken and somehow wounded. However, unlike other monasteries in Umbria and Marche, the Lord left ours standing, albeit damaged. How many times we asked ourselves why, but the answer is part of the mystery of love with which the Lord loves us. Yes, it is a response of love even in the midst of the desolation, the destruction, the precariousness of a today that is insecure and a tomorrow that appears to be without certainties. Many monastic communities had their monasteries destroyed, or made almost totally uninhabitable, and they were welcomed by other communities. Here is the testimony of the Poor Clares of

It is an opportune time for returning to living a more evangelical life

San Severino Marche: "The powerful earthquakes that we have experienced have opened, in us and in our people, deep wounds that we entrust to your prayer. There are certainly countless external wounds: the earth rent asunder, houses damaged and those that have collapsed, churches destroyed, the terrible scenario of desolation and destruction that we are seeing in these days. There are many internal wounds caused by the continuous earthquakes that make us live in fear, uncertainty and tension ... there are personal wounds, that sense of loss and helplessness that everyone carries within themselves, and community wounds, the pain of no longer having spaces for meeting and prayer, the suffering of seeing the destruction and closure of those places closest to

Get up, come and don't be afraid

Dearest friend,

this invitation comes from Friend Jesus ...

Don't worry, the suggestion is just to spend a few days in friendship, in prayer, in listening and reflection on the Word, in silence and meditation, in communion with other friends who like you are on the path towards Beauty, Freedom, towards Belonging as daughters of God, and with we Augustinian nuns ...

It is not an alternative holiday, but in Him you can find rest and refreshment ...

We are waiting for you!

**Women's Vocational Guidance
Course from 7 (evening)
to 12 (morning) August 2017**



For information:

Monastery of Saint Rita

06043 Cascia PG

tel. +39 0743 76221

e-mail: monastero@santaritadacascia.org

the heart. But, along with our people, we can also experience each day how the wounds become *openings of hope and grace*, through the Presence and the Word of the Risen Lord that sustain and protect us. In this way, the tragedy of the earthquake can also become a valuable opportunity for living the communion with Christ crucified and risen, for growing in fraternal life, for responding more fully to our vocation."

We too have experienced these wounds, experienced the same fears as people ... It is a time of suffering, but very precious, it is an opportune time for reflecting and returning to living a more evangelical, more real, more essential, more sober life, a poor life with the poor, caring for the needy in body and spirit; for returning to the heart of our spirituality, from where it started with our Father Saint Augustine: *"Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and one soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in com-*

mon. ... They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... " (see Acts of the Apostles 4:32; 2,42-47).

In every event of our lives, whether big or small, ordinary or extraordinary, God speaks to us, loves us, wants to teach us something and we are honing the ears of the heart to listen to Him, the eyes of the heart to see Him, the docility to let ourselves be taught by all that is daily.

"And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him ... " (1 Kings 19,11-13). We are also reminded by Scripture: God is not in the earthquake, is

WHAT HAPPENED IN BRIEF

OCTOBER 30 The massive earthquake that plagued central Italy also causes serious damage to the people of Cascia, the Monastery and the Basilica of Saint Rita, which is immediately closed to check for damage.

NOVEMBER 2 To protect the oldest sisters and those with health problems, much of the community is moved to the Hermitage of Lecceto and, for the first time in history, the Monastery of Saint Rita is closed. Some nuns remain in Cascia, guests at the home of the Augustinian Fathers, the Convent of St. Augustine and Saint Rita, which has not been damaged.

NOVEMBER 4 Work ends on securing the body of Saint Rita, which remains in the Basilica. Home for devotees all over the world, the securing of the Basilica of Cascia has maximum priority compared with other areas of the Sanctuary, including the Monastery.

DECEMBER 4 Having secured damaged parts, the doors of the Basilica of Saint Rita are finally reopened to pilgrims and to hope of quickly returning to normal, "giving back" the saint to all devotees.

DECEMBER 14 After more than a month, after the necessary checks, the nuns finally come back home (they live in the new part of the monastery, which suffered minor damage, while the old part has been seriously compromised).

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.

Alessandro D'Addio (Capua CE - Italy)
 Don Amedeo Messedaglia (Goito MN - Italy)
 Angelina Gaeta (Bologna - Italy)
 Antonietta Cirulli (Cerignola FG - Italy)
 Assuntina Atzeri (Cagliari - Italy)
 Carmela Villanova Amico (Palermo - Italy)
 Carolina Corti Frigerio (Erba CO - Italy)
 Costantino Trivisonno and Giovanna Boccia (Isernia - Italy)

Cristina Tremolaterra (Naples - Italy)
 Elisa De Pau (Tortoli OG - Italy)
 Enrichetta Verzola (Castelmassa RO - Italy)
 Francesco Valente (Trani BT - Italy)
 Giuseppe Paoletti (Cascia PG - Italy)
 Giuseppina Melis (San Gavino Monreale CA - Italy)
 Isa Negro (Prunetto CN - Italy)
 Letizia Langellotti (Montalto di Castro VT - Italy)
 Luigi Battistini (Savignano sul Rubicone FC - Italy)
 Sr. Maria Orsola Cadei (Figlie dell'Immacolata Concezione di Buenos Aires, Milan - Italy)
 Mario Paoletti (Cascia PG - Italy)
 Michele Tansella (Rutigliano BA - Italy)
 Ninive Colombo (Rome - Italy)
 Ruggero Todeschini (Montecchio Precalcino VI - Italy)
 Teresa Ridolfi (Rivera, Ticino - Switzerland)



The new wing of the Monastery (where the nuns live) suffered no serious cracks, and those that occurred have been taken care of. However, the old part has suffered very serious structural damage.

not in the impetuous wind, is not in the fire. God is beside us, always, with his love of the Father, like the rustle of a light breeze. "The earthquake does not kill," said the Bishop of Rieti in his homily at the funeral of the victims of Amatrice, reminding us that God created everything beautiful, everything real, everything good. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea ... God is within her, she will not fall ...". Let us repeat these words of the psalm often.

We take advantage of these pages to thank all those who have supported us in the weeks of the earthquakes. You have been so many and marvellous, friends, acquaintances, devotees of Saint Rita and also those who are not known to us, giving us affection, closeness, prayer and material help. You have amazed and moved us, you have been a caress of God, a balm on our "rubble". Our THANKS is a prayer to God and we ask Him to reward you with blessings, graces and consolations according to the desires of your heart.

A warm embrace.

It is our
task to let
them grow
serenely.

ESTROGENT

SUPPORT THE INITIATIVES OF SAINT RITA'S BEEHIVE WITH A DONATION.

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.

**POSTAL BANK ACCOUNT NO. 1010759072
INDICATING "ALVEARE" (BEEHIVE) AS THE REASON
BANK ACCOUNT IBAN IT270200821703000102136901
BIC/SWIFT: UNCRITM1J35
INDICATING "ALVEARE" (BEEHIVE) AS THE REASON**



alveare
DI SANTA RITA

TEL. +39 0743 76201
alveare@santaritadacascia.org
www.santaritadacascia.org/alveare