

# FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES



The Magazine  
of Saint Rita of Cascia

BIMONTHLY  
OF THE AUGUSTINIAN  
MONASTERY  
OF SAINT RITA  
OF CASCIA

NO. 3 MAY - JUN 2018

## SMALL, GREAT RITA

*The Saint of Cascia narrated  
through the testimony of her women*

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**Thank you, Sister Antonietta**

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## FROM THE BEES TO THE ROSES

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On the cover: The women of the PPU of Caltabellotta (Agrigento) in procession in Cascia, during a national meeting in March 2018. Photo by Massimo Chappini.

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## Small and great

**N**othing is impossible for God. Rita of Cascia knew it well and comes to visit us from time to time to remind us even today. We realise this firsthand, in our community of Augustinian religious, and we experience it through your testimonies that come to us from every corner of the Earth. Testimonials such as that of a woman and mother - whose name, like that of our Great Celestial Patroness, is Rita - and who wrote to us from Reggio Calabria.

"I am a devotee of our beloved Saint Rita," she writes in her e-mail. "I write so that my testimony can be made public in the 'From the Bees to the Roses' magazine in order that all the miracles that Rita continues to work be made known".

"Like almost every year, I go to Cascia to honour and pray before the urn of Santa Rita. This year again, I felt the interior need to return to Cascia, this time accompanied by my son". It was July 27, 2017.

"On August 10 at 7:55, just before finishing his shift, my son - who is a fireman - was called to help put out a fire that had broken out in a house with an elderly woman inside. In a fire brigade car, sirens blaring and at high speed to try to arrive as soon as possible to save this person, he headed off with other colleagues to the fire. After a few kilometres, the car flipped over

on a bend and after having cartwheeled a number of times came to rest on the edge of a ravine, with its wheels in the air and the interior completely crushed, practically non-existent. Colleagues who were following him immediately thought the worst considering the conditions of the car and believed there was nothing that could be done for my son. I am sure that it was then that Saint Rita came to his rescue: she had decided to protect him and save his life and that is what she did because, after a few moments, my son managed to get out of that tangle of sheet metal on his own, without even a scratch. Witnesses and colleagues who had been following him hailed it as a miracle. The next night, Santa Rita appeared in my son's dream as a demonstration of her love".

This story is just like our dear saint. Small and great at the same time.

"Small" in the sense of simple and natural, almost making her extraordinariness, her greatness, seem ordinary. This is a testimony of a very heartfelt grace, like many of those that you send us, and we thank each one of you from the bottom of our heart, because together we are witnesses of the Lord's Infinite Love, witnesses of the fact that everything - for all of us - can always happen.

Happy feast of Saint Rita of Cascia!

# “Love your children and leave them free”

Testimonies of Emanuela Disarò and Daniela Burigotto,  
Women of Rita 2018

by Alessia Nicoletti

“**L**ove your children and leave them free”, says Daniela and she is echoed by Emanuela: “Listen to them and be aware that only feelings and values really matter”. Daniela Burigotto and Emanuela Disarò are respectively the mothers of Marco Gottardi and Gloria Trevisan, two young people of 28 and 27 who lost their lives on June 14, 2017 in the fire at the Grenfell Tower in London, where they were building their lives. Daniela and Emanuela have been united first by the love of their children and then by the pain of their loss, then, but the teaching they leave is a lesson of life, between the darkness and the light of exis-

people because of the fire triggered by a short circuit on the fourth floor: a tragedy, not without responsibility - which is now the subject of a judicial inquiry - amid conjectures about the use of low-quality and highly flammable materials in order to save a few pounds. In this way, the dreams of Gloria and Marco were shattered and with them also the lives of their families and friends. For everyone, they exist in thoughts as a single person: they are always spoken of in the plural, because they are together, two similar souls indissoluble in love. Daniela tells me she was born to be a moth-

## *Marco and Gloria lost their lives in the fire at the Grenfell Tower*

tence, which transmits courage, humanity and peace. Daniela and Emanuela, like Saint Rita, embraced their cross on earth, trusting in prayer and in God to find the strength to look forward and towards their neighbour. Gloria and Marco, who on that night stayed in telephone contact with their parents until the end, were found embracing each other in their flat on the 23rd floor of that building where they had found happiness and hope and then, sadly, also death. Always together, united by love.

That night extinguished the lives of 79



The two friends Marco and Gloria, respectively children of Daniela and Emanuela.

## SAINT RITA INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD

### EMANUELA DISARÒ

From Camposampiero (Padova), Emanuela is the mother of Gloria Trevisan, the 27-year-old girl who lost her life on the 23rd floor of the Grenfell Tower in London on June 14, 2017, along with her 28-year-old boyfriend Marco Gottardi. It took five months to recover all the victims' bodies: 79 people.

On May 21, 2018, at the Basilica of Saint Rita of Cascia, Emanuela Disarò will receive the Saint Rita International Recognition Award for having embraced the cross, placing herself in God's hands and seeking in Him to overcome the loss of her daughter.



Emanuela with her daughter Gloria Trevisan.

er and her desire came true with Marco, her and her husband's only child: "Ours was a relationship of beautiful love that existed even before it was born. Marco had a kindness of mind of other times, he was determined, discerning, not attached to material things and he never took advantage of situations: he gave us so much satisfaction and I wish for all mothers to have the happiness of such a child". Emanuela talks to me about Gloria as a balanced and judicious girl: "She loved studying, drawing, friendships. We had lengthy chats. I taught both Gloria and her brother respect and she also had a keen sense of goodness, honesty and responsibility. But for me it was normal, I realised later from the image that has come to me from others of her extraordinary inner beauty which I am proud of. In what happened then, she showed a courage that exceeded all expectations: I still ask myself how at that moment she managed to think of others, urging them to be strong, to take care of one of her cousins who was close to her heart". The two young people grow up in an atmosphere of love and serenity, up to

university, the University Institute of Architecture of Venice, where they met in 2014 and then graduated in architecture with full marks. Then, the departure for London, the city where Marco and Gloria were to seek affirmation and autonomy. Satisfaction came immediately with a job for both and a

### *Like Saint Rita, they embraced their cross*

place to live. A real dream, but destined to be broken. "That night was terrible," recalls Daniela. "Emanuela informed us, we were going to leave for the holidays and we would be back for the return of the couple, to celebrate Marco's birthday. We had just thanked the Lord, we were happy and we then found ourselves in a circle of hell, as I call it. Marco kept calm because he did not want us to worry. The fault is of man, of greed". "Gloria's last phone call," says Emanuela, "lasted over 20 minutes, we

## SUPPORT THE NEW HOSPITAL

**Help us to give back a hospital** to the town of Cascia and the entire Valnerina. Today, the nearest hospital is about an hour away, along narrow roads and mountain bends.

The **nuns of the Monastery of Saint Rita** have placed a building at the disposal of the local area, but we have to convert it into the hospital, with specific renovations and equipment. The project is big and important, but with the help of everyone, even the smallest, we can do it.

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specifying “Nuovo Ospedale” (New Hospital) as the reason.



opened our hearts and we recited three Hail Marys, then she left me saying: ‘I have to be with Marco ... I don't want you to hear’. There was no despair in her voice but awareness and acceptance and I think there was a divine intervention in this. During those moments I think even I had a non-earthly force not to scream”. Daniela manages to escape from her hell thanks to the love around her, to the prayers that strengthen her faith and to the dreams in which she meets Marco. “I understood that

***We opened our hearts  
and recited three  
Hail Marys***

he was alive in me and this gave rise to the desire to share, remember the couple and transform tragedy into hope, first with the children of the town through the illustrated fairytale about the life of Marco and Gloria



## SAINT RITA INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD

### DANIELA BURIGOTTO

She lives in San Stino di Livenza (Venice) and is the mother of Marco Gottardi, the 28-year-old boy who died on June 14, 2017 on the 23rd floor in the fire at the Grenfell Tower in London, along with his girlfriend Gloria Trevisan and 77 other victims.

On Monday May 21, 2018, at the Basilica of Santa Rita in Cascia, Daniela Burigotto will receive the Saint Rita International Recognition Award for having embraced the cross, putting herself in God's hands and seeking in Him to overcome the loss of her child, also through the GrenfellLove, foundation, set up by the Gottardi Burigotto family to support young people with scholarships.



Daniela next to son Marco and husband Giannino Gottardi.

and then with the GrenfellLove foundation that we have set up thanks to many friends of the two young people". The non-profit organisation works to encourage the education of young people, providing scholarships in schools attended by Marco and Gloria, focusing on protection of the territory, the environment and the safety of buildings. Today Daniela hopes that "they are in the light of a beautiful world and the serenity that I have reached makes me think that this is so, that the two young people are architects of souls, so that everyone feels touched by their story". Emanuela's path after the nightmare is a bit different, as she tells me: "I greatly admire Daniela and Giannino for what they are doing in the name of the couple. I closed up and sought comfort first in medicine, then in books, in dreams that gave me answers, in others who had lost their children. Little by little this helped me to overcome isolation and I

*One evening I found a rosary in my hand and I prayed*

hope to be able to recover fully in order to help other people". Also for her, prayer is decisive: "The evening was the hardest moment, but one evening, after burying the couple, I found a rosary in my hand, given to me by a friend of Marco and Gloria, and I prayed. In the morning, it was the first time I had slept, because I always woke up at the same time, at 4:00, the time of Gloria's last call. The next evening I prayed again and on the third I replaced the rosary with medicines". Emanuela leaves me saying: "Gloria and Marco are on a parallel journey, but one day we will go back to walking together. This is my salvation".

# “Family, the place to come back to with joy”

Soňa Vancaková, Woman of Rita 2018, interviewed by Rita Gentili

**S**oňa, you have struggled a lot to reach conjugal serenity. What helped you endure the unhappiness you felt? In solitude and difficulty, the presence of children and friends helped me. The greatest help, however, was my relationship with God, which gave me the strength to persevere.

**Your family was about to break up: what kept you together?** Our marriage was full of love, but accompanied by my husband's aggressiveness and hot temper. This was humiliating for me, the children were scared and hurt. This was compounded by my husband's total dedication to work. The children and prayer kept us together ... We learned that the Augustini-

dedicate themselves to common interests, or if they do not laugh together.

**And what advice for getting out of it?** Just the two of them spending 2-3 hours a week on their own, going out for dinner, a walk, talking about themselves, the joys and the sorrows of the week. And it helps a lot to take care together of the sick, the weak, the abandoned ...

**What do you mean by the word “family”?** The family is the place where people of different ages live, coming from different backgrounds, with different temperaments, defects, traditions. This is why it is difficult to create a harmonious family. The family is the environment in which we can accept one an-

*The family is the environment in which we can accept one another*

other, where I can say what I think, where I can laugh and cry. It's an environment I come back to with joy, where I feel safe.

**After the marital crisis, you created the “Il faro della Speranza” [The Lighthouse of Hope] association. How did the idea come about?** My husband had the initial idea. In those days I helped many poor people individually and he advised me to do it in a more professional way. We have helped more than 250 families, single mothers with children and abused women. Because I have experienced difficult moments in my marriage, I know what these women are experiencing, how they feel. My desire was to show them the path of reconciliation, to get them out of the darkness, to transform resignation



Together with husband Kamil, Soňa now guides couples on their marital journey.

ans had organised a Novena for Saint Rita and we tried to go there together.

**With your husband, you help young people build their future together. What are the reasons that most often put couples in crisis?** The lack of open communication between spouses, not accepting the other with their defects, not forgiving. If the spouses do not have time to be alone, if they do not



## SAINT RITA INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD

### SOŇA VANCAKOVÁ

Soňa is from Košice (Slovakia), Cascia's twin town this year, where he is wife and mother of five children. As can happen to many, Soňa goes through moments of family crisis and, when everything seems lost, meets Saint Rita, whom she relies on. After recovering her marriage, Soňa has continued to spread the Ritian cult for 20 years, supporting spouses who enter into crisis. Today, she is director of the Majak Nadeje [The Lighthouse of Hope] association which helps disadvantaged families. On Monday May 21, 2018, at the Basilica of Saint Rita in Cascia, Soňa Vancaková will receive the Saint Rita International Recognition Award for having struggled and believed fully in the value of the family and for translating her personal experience into concrete and daily help in favour of other families in difficulty.



The Prior of the Augustinian Community of Košice, Father Juraj Pígula (left), together with Soňa and her husband Kamil.

into hope and to find the meaning of life.

**Based on your experience, what drives women abused by their partners to justify violence as a gesture of forgiveness?** Those who have not experienced violence do not know what it means. The woman is afraid for her life and for that of the children. The husband often threatens the woman and the children, also threatens to take the children, money, the house away from the woman. These are the reasons why the abused woman is silent. Men often apologise after violence, promise change, but

***“Forgiveness” does not mean “tolerating violence”, never***

history repeats itself. It is very important to try to forgive, but “forgiveness” does not mean “tolerating violence”, never. With God's help, we can succeed in wishing the good of the other, in no longer remembering the insults. But this does not mean allowing them to hurt us again. ■

### IN A WORD

edited by  
Fr. Vittorino Grossi OSA

**“[Christ] in the days of his earthly life ... even though he was the Son, nevertheless learned obedience from the things he suffered”**  
(Letter to the Hebrews 5, 7-9)

The word obedience (from the Latin ob audire) has the meaning of paying attention to what lies before you, that is, the life that flows. We are called to listen to it, it is the school from which we learn to live as Jesus lived. Life must be embraced, otherwise, if abandoned, all its bonds crumble: God, your affections. Saint Rita learned from Jesus Crucified to embrace her humble life, we thank her and with love we learn to follow her way: that of the Lord Jesus.

# “Clinging to the crucifix, I found strength”

Testimony of Giuseppina Ceccaroni,  
Woman of Rita 2018

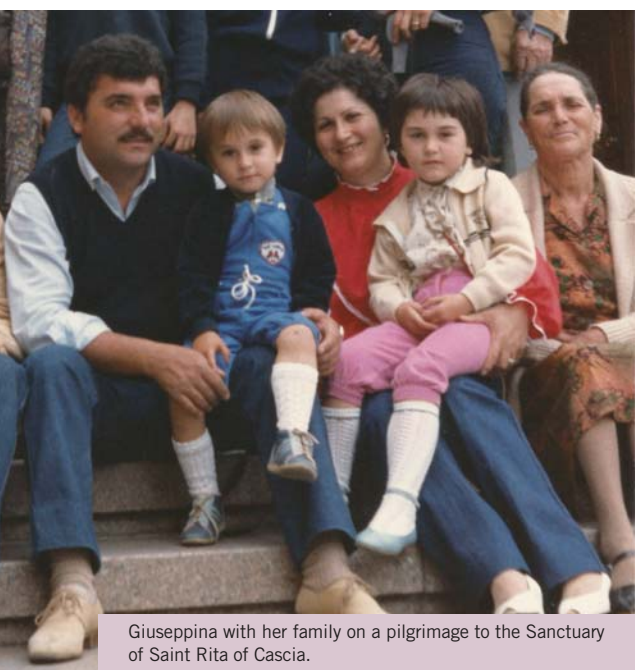
by Marta Ferraro

**G**iuseppina is a simple woman who has shown her vocation in everyday life. Her life is a continuous giving to others. Giuseppina has always worked, both as a seamstress and in the fields. Like Rita, Giuseppina was also daughter and fiancée, bride and mother, then daughter-in-law and widow and, like Rita, she always accepted, with love and through love for the crucifix, all the trials that life has offered her. Born in Montefalco, in the province of Perugia, on July 28, 1953, she does not want to get married, but “because you had to do, otherwise you remained a spinster”, she agrees to marry Abenino, a good and kind boy from the nearby village of Gualdo Cattaneo. Immedi-

ately afterwards, however, the pretty and young Giuseppina finds herself living alone with her now elderly in-laws, while her husband lives in Lombardy, in Gallarate, where he works on the railways. The husband manages to come home from time to time, while she waits for him working in the fields to please the in-laws who, in reality, have never completely accepted the choice of their only son to marry a modest girl dedicated to the church. Giuseppina's in-laws, people of good but simple feelings, are more interested in their properties and making their estates yield than in prayers, which is what interests the bride that Abenino has chosen for himself. Their marriage gives fruit to two children: Francesca

## *The man dies due to a terrible accident*

and Pierluigi. Giuseppina brings them up by transmitting Christian principles to them. However, the grandparents, who have always been very affectionate with their grandchildren, do not agree with the education that Giuseppina gives them, since they do not fully understand the faith that Giuseppina nurtures towards God. After a few years, Abenino manages to be transferred to Terni to be close to his family finally, but shortly after his return the man suddenly dies due to a terrible accident with a tractor. “That was one of the best moments of our marriage, he was back, we had fixed up the house and he wanted another child. We had decided to go to Cascia



Giuseppina with her family on a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Saint Rita of Cascia.

## SAINT RITA INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AWARD

### GIUSEPPINA CECCARONI

Living in Gualdo Cattaneo (Perugia), Giuseppina is a widow and mother of two children. She dedicates her heart and soul to all her family, trying to compensate for the absence of her husband, a railway worker in Gallarate (Varese) with work in the fields. She takes care of her in-laws, despite misunderstandings, and she will also take care of the parish priest until his death. The unconditional faith that Giuseppina has in God nourishes her work and that extraordinary normality made up of daily help to others.

On Monday May 21, 2018, at the Basilica of Santa Rita in Cascia, Giuseppina Ceccaroni will receive the Saint Rita International Recognition Award for having faced the difficulties of life, finding strength in her faith, and for her daily work aimed at serving others.



### *Her life is a continuous giving to others*

to thank Santa Rita, but, just the day before leaving, Abenino had the accident". Giuseppina is now alone with her two still young children in the house of her in-laws, taking care of them like a daughter until their last breath. Just when it seems that the worst is behind her, a harder trial appears on the horizon.

"I clung to the crucifix and from there I found the strength to go on. My spiritual father helped me overcome that moment and when he, old and sick, needed help, I opened the doors of my house. He died here in my house, after having looked after him to the end, as I did with my in-laws and my mother and they died with all the sacraments and in the grace of God," says the woman. Saint Rita has always been an example of life for Giuseppina, she who had known the story of the saint when she was very young when she went with her

parents to Cascia to find her brother who was studying in the fathers' college. In the most difficult moments of life, Giuseppina has always given her a thought and Saint Rita has always responded to her by pointing to the crucifix, the only true way of hope and strength. ■



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# FEAST OF SAINT RITA 2018

WE AWAIT YOU AT THE  
SANCTUARY OF CASCIA,  
FROM MAY 20 TO 22

## MAY 20

### Hall of Peace

**21:00 - Presentation of the Saint Rita International Recognition Award 2018**, conferred on the "Women of Rita": women, that is, whose life is close in actual experience to that of the saint of Cascia.

Lucia Ascione, host of TV2000, presents the winners of the 2018 edition of the award: 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 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 for other families in need; Giuseppina Ceccaroni, for having faced the obstacles of life finding strength in her faith and for service to others.

## MAY 21

### Basilica of Saint Rita

**16:30 - Solemn Eucharistic Concelebration of the Augustinian Family**, presided over by Father Alejandro Moral Antón, Prior General of the Augustinian Order.

**17:30 - Conferral of the Saint Rita International Recognition Award 2018**. Father Moral hands over the parchment symbol of the prestigious award to the chosen women of Rita.

**18:30 - Solemn Celebration of the Transit of Saint Rita**

### Piazza Garibaldi

**20:45 - Welcoming of the Banners** of Valnerina Municipalities. Followed by the parade of lights: all those present go with the lights to the square of the Basilica of Saint Rita, creating a trail of light in memory of the first "procession" of

the people of Cascia on the day of the death of Saint Rita, when a multitude of people went to pay her homage. The **Torch of Peace** closes the parade.

### Square of the Basilica of Saint Rita

**21:30 - Arrival of the Torch of Peace**, symbol of the 60th **Twinning of Faith and Peace** which this year unites Cascia with Košice (Slovakia), in the name of Saint Rita.

## MAY 22, SOLEMNITY OF SAINT RITA OF CASCIA

### Hall of Peace

**5:00 - Morning Holy Mass**. Masses will also be celebrated at 6:00, 7:00, 8:00 and 9:00.

### Square of the Basilica of Santa Rita

**10:00 - Arrival of the Historical Parade** in fifteenth-century costumes and of the **Procession** carrying the statue of Saint Rita. Leaving at 08:00 am from the hometown of Rita, the people of Roccaporena arrive at the foot of Cascia (09:00), where they join the Historical Parade and the part of the Cascian procession carrying the famous statue of the saint.

**11:00 - Supplication to Saint Rita** followed by the **Solemn Pontifical**, celebrated by Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Closed with the traditional ritual of the **Blessing of the Roses** (12:30).

### Basilica of Saint Rita

**18:00 - Eucharistic Concelebration for the Benefactors of the Sanctuary**, presided over by the Rector of the Basilica of Saint Rita, Fr. Bernardino Pinciaroli, and animated by the choir of the Augustinian nuns.



# A mother with the veil

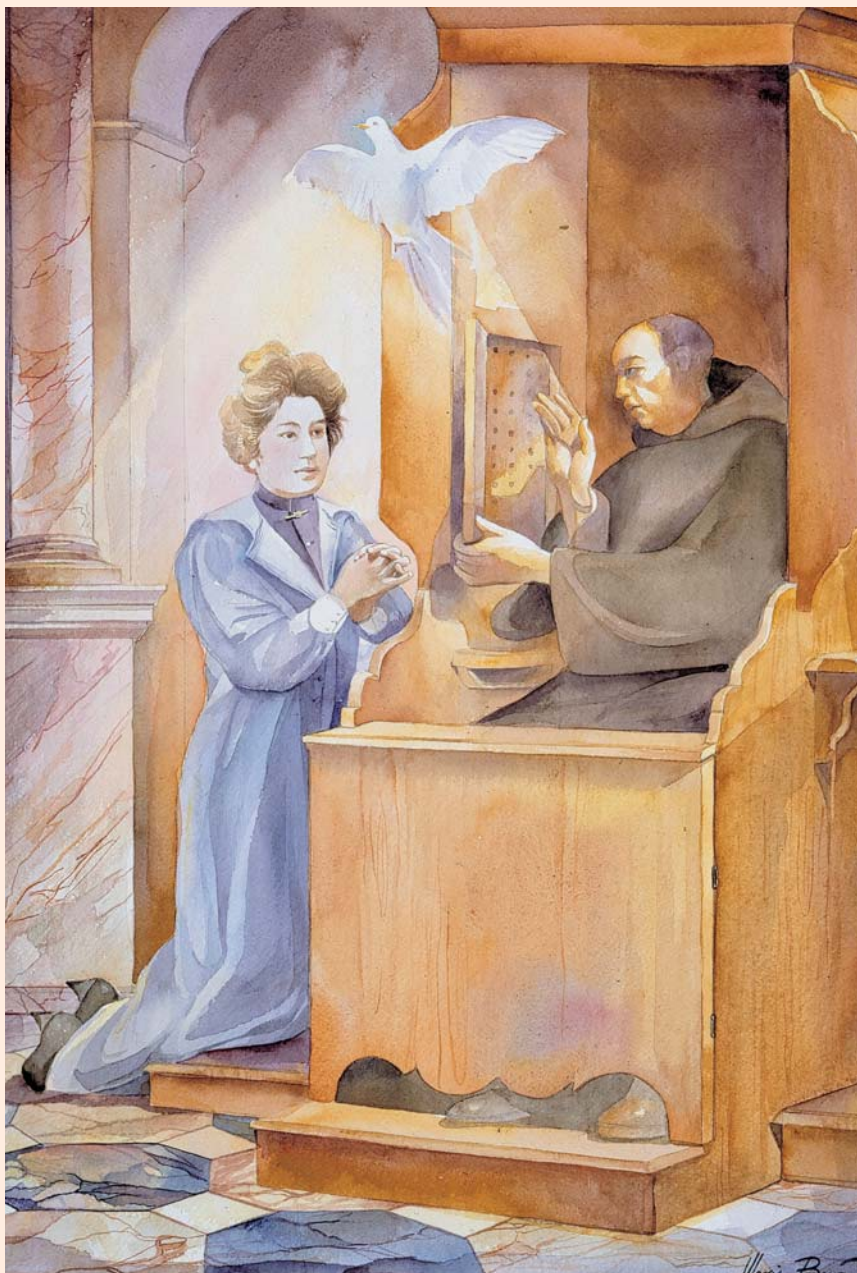
by Mgr. Giovanni Scanavino OSA

**M**other Teresa Fasce came to Cascia in 1906 with the precise intention of imitating Saint Rita. Through the parish life of the Consolation of Genoa and her spiritual guide, Augustinian Father Ferriello, she had followed the process of canonisation of Saint Rita in 1900 step by step.

She was deeply in love with Saint Rita. Above all, she had been struck by Rita's motherhood, as she had managed to bring her two sons to eternal life, educating them to martyrdom in a period of great violence. She had built the work of pacification that Rita had exercised among the families of Cascia after the murder of her husband. She often thought back to her miraculous entry into the monastery, accompanied by her three patron saints (St. John the Baptist, St. Augustine and St. Nicholas of Tolentino), and then to that stigmatisation of the thorn of the Crucifix which had consecrated her as a true mystical bride of Jesus crucified and risen.

Every detail of the Ritian experience, brought to light by the process of canonisation, was

**Mother Fasce was deeply in love with Saint Rita**



Maria Teresa Fasce with the Spiritual Father (work by Bonaduce, XX cen.).

## 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.

## Theatre, for enhancing diversity

This is the second year in which we have undertaken a theatrical path with the Little Bees. I would like to explain the reasons that led us to this choice.

Theatre allows the Little Bees to express their inclinations through emotions, in a path of discovery of themselves and their relationship with the Other. It allows them to open up to others and teaches them empathy, understanding. It gives satisfactions that help to gain self-confidence and strengthens self-esteem. Working in a group offers the opportunity to get to know each other and spend time in a more relaxing and peaceful way. It helps in pursuing a common goal. For those who are involved in theatre, it allows them to embark on a path of interior research, aimed at encouraging constructive management of their emotions, a greater awareness of their way of being, on the discovery of precious forces for supporting and facing difficult situations, contrasting sentiments and strong emotions, and taking flight with safer and stronger wings. In short, it is a school of humanity, one learns to enhance diversity.

Last year we started with creative writing and valued the work of the Little Bees. The final show traced the way to go; the enthusiasm and the gratifications experienced by the Little Bees generated interest in this form of expression to the extent that it was decided to get straight to work on the next performance. Since October 2017, Little Bees and educators have been meeting once a week to read, rehearse, create ... This year, the theatre workshop is done internally without the guidance of experienced people, but we hope to avail ourselves in the future of professionals who would give our experience the added value that we want to convey. The story has been chosen and we are waiting for you at the Open Doors to be able to transmit new emotions!

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







Mother Maria Teresa Fasce.

dreamed of and lived interiorly by the young Marietta. Only in this way can one explain her future choices, which faithfully reproduce the “via crucis” of Rita.

Mother of the nuns and Little Bees. Inspired by the Rule of St. Augustine, Mother Fasce had begun to be the true mother of all the Sisters of the Monastery: this was her novitiate. She had immediately tried to “be loved more than feared”, “obeyed and loved like a mother” - as Augustine expresses himself in the Rule.

Thus, when the first Little Bee appeared, she proved more than ready to welcome her and embrace her like a daughter. The same affection, the same tenderness. The veil did not stop her from showing her-

self as a mother like Rita; the evening always ended with prayer and a motherly kiss. Can a Sister really be a mother? All those who knew her confirm that the answer is 'yes'. Indeed, it is precisely the maternal heart of the Fasce that has transformed a monastic community into a fraternity of love and a college into a family full of affection. When love is born of the Heart of Christ, there is not the slightest shadow. You live only for love. St. Augustine said with great authority: “Let it be in us the root of God's love:

The ring of the Solemn Profession of Mother Fasce.

from this root only good can be born.

Therefore, love and do what you want!”.

True love increases creativity. There was a need to feed everyone, nuns and girls, in times of famine and war.

Fear causes trembling, not love. It was enough to ask for some dispensation and the most robust nuns in the company of the girls began to leave the monastery to ask for food, the famous alms for the poor. So there was also food for the poor of Cascia, who became children too, when the fathers and elder brothers were at the front.

The war period in Cascia shortened the distance between the

The evening  
always ended with  
prayer and a  
motherly kiss.  
Can a Sister really  
be a mother?



## The flowers and the bees

### WHO I AM ...

My name is Andrea, I'm 10 and I'm in primary V. I was born and live in Cascia. I have been attending the Beehive since primary I, from Monday to Friday until about 18:30, then mum or dad pick me up and I go home to my older brother.



Andrea,  
Wildflower

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

I'm happy here in Beehive, I like to do my homework together with my friends, with the help of the educator. I have a lot of fun at lunch time, the food is great. When we're together, we children play, we talk about school and we swap stickers. I've found a lot of peace of mind in the Beehive, there are many people who care about me and I thank them for everything they've taught me.



Emanuela,  
Little Bee

### WHO I AM ...

My name is Emanuela, I'm 17. I am a very determined girl. In my future I see many beautiful things and so I can't wait to know them. Once I leave the Beehive, I'll go to university to study child psychology.

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

In addition to being a place full of faith, the Beehive is a place full of knowledge, feelings and is the place where strong emotions dwell. The Beehive has now become my first home. I came here as a child, I was 7. For me the word home has a very deep meaning, it means family. Home is the welcoming of thoughts, contact, love, sharing and especially collaboration. Here each of us finds the place to express their potential.

monastery and the town. Always through the maternal heart of Mother Fasce, who meditated the Gospel and opened the doors without fear.

Every so often it takes a time of difficulty and misery, like that of the recent earthquake. Even today won-

ders have been seen: the heart expands and the House of Spiritual Exercises becomes the Welcoming House (today, it has given way to what will be the New Hospital of Cascia, ed.); the vocational Welcoming House becomes a new enclosed

monastery for sixteen beautiful souls of Tolentino. Forward on this road: when charity is not cooled, new wonders are seen, thanks to Saint Rita and Mother Fasce; previously also thanks to Blessed Simon and the great Augustine!

# *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](mailto:monastero@santaritadacascia.org) and you will receive information on how to help the children in difficulty that need you.







by Marta Ferraro

The national meeting of the Primary Pious Union of Saint Rita took place in Cascia on March 17 and 18. The theme chosen for this edition was “Love with the measure of Divine Love”. Borrowing some writings from St. Augustine and Blessed Maria Teresa Fasce, Sister Giacomina offered a teaching moment for the 800 members from all over Italy. In her speech, the religious reiterated what Divine Love is and how it freely grants itself with infinite mercy to Christians. “All men love, but what is to be traced is the root of love. Pure love is based, like that of God, on charity,” stressed the Augustinian nun. A love lived according to human rules may vanish, the charita-

# A large family gathered in the name of Saint Rita



ble one leaves its fruits and in this regard Sister Giacomina presented Olga – one of the first Little Bees hosted by

the Monastery of Saint Rita as part of the Beehive project – to the audience. With her presence, the now 80-year-old woman bore witness to the legacy of Blessed Fasce, founder of the work of charity, who lived by loving her neighbour intensely.

“Send a kiss to your grandfather or send a small kiss to Our Lady. This invitation was addressed to all of us as children, and these were our first encounters with love and faith,” said Father Ludovico, ecclesiastical assistant of the PPU during his homily, translating love,





ta at the centre of their lives.

Mario Cusumano, head of the Caltabellotta PPU, who this year realised his desire to bring his parish's statue of Saint Rita in procession to Cascia, said: "We are a group of 150 people and we are very united. We meet to recite the Fifteen Thursdays and to pray every 22nd of the month. We never hesitate, however, to prepare a

its expressions and the places in which it manifests itself into the practicality of daily gestures. "The first place in which we experience it is the family, then we meet it in the parish, in the neighbourhood, in associations," he added. The PPU itself is experienced by its members as a great family that has chosen to put the example of Saint Ri-





sweet and eat it all together". "We came here to ask for the grace to continue like this, like a family," echoed an associate.

Women, who with their tenacity have managed to involve their husbands in this path, are fundamental for the Sicilian group. "I had just arrived in the church of Maria Santissima d'Itria and what struck me was seeing so many men gathered in



prayer," said the priest, Don Antonio Corda. Gina is one of those women who found in Rita's example the strength and consolation to face her task: to care for her disabled daughter: "I'm not angry with life. I don't see why I should be. Everyone has a mission. Teachers, for example, teach. I have been entrusted with this task. I ask of Saint Rita much strength to continue doing what I do,





she will take care of the rest. Saints, like parents, love all their children, but they cannot give graces to everyone. My child is a precious gift and this is enough”.

Braving the snow, the women of Caltabellotta brought the statue of Saint Rita in procession and out of devotion they did so barefoot,



wearing the typical Augustinian habit. Just like in a family, the collaboration of all groups was fundamental. Everyone played their part so that the organisational machine worked at its best: those of Avellino and Coccaglio donated roses for decoration of the statue, the Enna PPU animated the Eucharistic Adoration, while that of Reggio Calabria did the same for the Way of the Thorn prayer. All brought their banner, as a sign of belonging and closeness to the ideals which the PPU promotes. Meanwhile, the family has expanded with the affiliation of two other groups: Celano (L'Aquila) and Galliano nel Lazio (Rome).

# Rita brings peace at her first feast

by Mauro Papalini, Augustinian historian



Urn of Saint Rita (Basilica of Saint Rita in Cascia).

**W**ith two Papal briefs - of October 2, 1627 and February 4, 1628 - Urban VIII officially beatified the Blessed Rita: subsequently her feast could be celebrated solemnly. On May 22, 1628, in Cascia, the feast of the new blessed was celebrated with all honours. The Municipality assigned 300 scudi (a great sum!) for the costs and the town gates were decorated with great pomp. On the afternoon of the eve, May 21, the bells of all the churches in Cascia and of the 40 villas in the territory rang together at length; it is said that very many people came. At the moment of the first Vespers, all the secular and regular clergy were ready, but suddenly a dispute broke out over who was to preside over the

ceremonies: the secular clergy wanted to preside because it was a municipal feast, the Augustinian friars claimed that it was up to them because Rita was an Augustinian. Heated words began to fly, ending up in insults. Frightened, all the nuns gathered around the body of their sister, begging her to make peace. At that point, the Blessed Rita moved her head and a hand towards the people just as priests and friars in liturgical dress had resorted to violence. The hundreds of people gathered round clearly saw this movement of the body. The clergy, frightened

***Blessed Rita moved  
her head and a hand***



## 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. Amen.*

Alfia Lo Faro (Orange - Australia)  
 Andrea Marinelli (Rome - Italy)  
 Anna Appolloni (Dueville VI - Italy)  
 Anna Maria Longhi (Ancona - Italy)  
 Antonietta Vardanega (Possagno TV - Italy)  
 Antonina Grassia (Randazzo CT - Italy)  
 Antonio Cecchini (Canino VT - Italy)  
 Carla Nera (Subiaco RM - Italy)  
 Caterina Benincasa (Milan - Italy)  
 Elena Ruggiero D'Agosto (Moio della Civitella SA - Italy)

Fortunatina Iavarone (Bari - Italy)  
 Gabriele Sbarro (Casarano LE - Italy)  
 Gina Corso (Palermo - Italy)  
 Giovanni Battista Costadone (Gambolò PV - Italy)  
 Giuseppe Ancona (Rutigliano BA - Italy)  
 Hans Martin (Heerbrugg - Switzerland)  
 Ione Siani (Cava de' Tirreni SA - Italy)  
 Joaquina Abenia Rubio (Zaragoza - Spain)  
 Karen Scopa (Falkirk, Scotland - United Kingdom)  
 Maria Isabella Stancati and Mariano Strangio (Rome - Italy)  
 Mariapia Vaglio Torri (Cremenaga VA - Italy)  
 Mario Daniele (Naples - Italy)  
 Mario Savino (Noicattaro BA - Italy)  
 Monica Reitano (Catania - Italy)  
 Olga Ghisolfi (Volpedo AL - Italy)  
 Rita Incontri (Ovada AL - Italy)  
 Santa Pantaleoni (Fabriano AN - Italy)

## SYNOD OF YOUTH

The XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the theme "Youth, faith and vocational discernment" will be held from October 3 to 28, 2018. An itinerary which envisages the pre-synodal meeting from March 19 to 24, 2018, and the drafting of the *Instrumentum laboris*, or the document that also collects the answers to the questionnaire sent to local churches all over the world. Rereading the Church through the eyes of the new generations is one of the priorities that Pope Francis has indicated to all the world's local churches since October 2016, when he made his first announcement on the synod of youth. Many initiatives have been carried out both at the central level (by the Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops) and locally by individual dioceses, designed to make the appointment scheduled for October an authentic Church event according to the intentions of the Holy Father, who has called for active participation by young people, including those belonging to other faiths. (MG)

and contrite, calmed down; the Augustinians left the honour of presiding over the liturgical ceremonies to the secular clergy.

This was only the first of several movements of the body of Saint Rita over the centuries: the fact is commonly attested by many sources and also reported in the various processes for the canonisation of Saint Rita, along with the most famous phenomenon: the scent of roses that emanates from the body of the saint every time she obtains some grace from God, as asserted by popular tradition. ■

## PRAYER

This is Cascia.  
 Being called, welcomed and loved.  
 The sun on the skin, the scent of roses and stars.  
 The serenity that takes me arm in arm, hope caresses my chest.  
 A tear falls between the blue aisles ...  
 Coming close to you, finding a spot, watching you for hours and feeling indebted.  
 Another Grace I ask of you Rita, of you who know my life so well.  
 I perceive it, my voice has reached you, now I feel reassured.  
 This is Cascia.

*(Prayer written by our reader  
 Tanja Gobbato)*



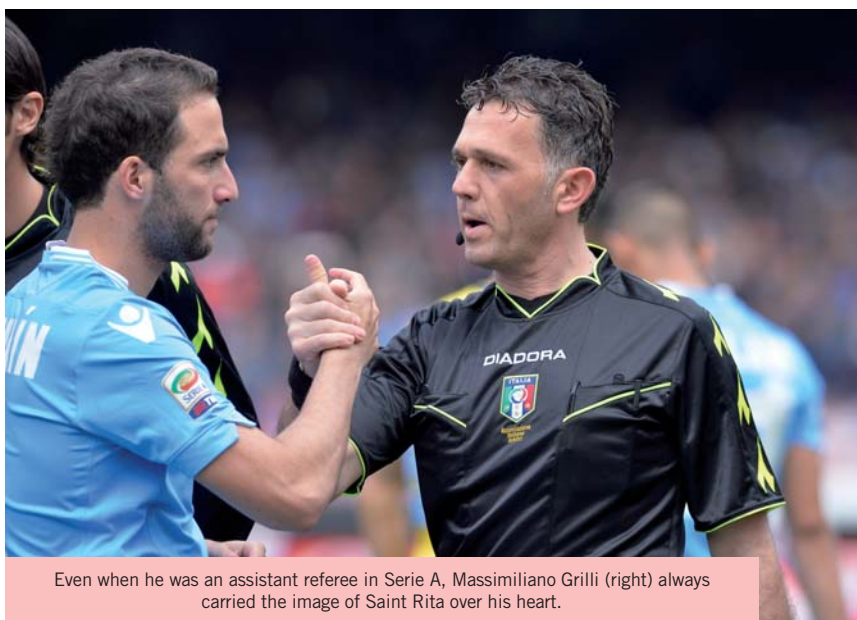
# “Santa Rita made me fall in love with the linesman's flag”

Massimiliano Grilli,  
the saint and our monastery

**I**n the last 30 years, he has climbed to professional success as an umpire in the football world: from the first steps to the highest regional levels, up to assistant referee in Serie A and then the major international competitions. In this long ascent, made up of matches with high emotional strain and difficult decisions, such as the choice of passing from referee to linesman, Massimiliano has always faced everything in the company of Saint Rita, “the saint who always smiles”, as he calls her, who has never left him on his own, not even on the pitch ...

**Massimiliano, when did your love for Santa Rita start?** I was six or seven. I entered the Basilica with my parents and it was as if she called me. The more I looked at her, the more I felt something strong. It's not easy to explain. I felt it inside. This attraction has become a necessity over time, so every now and then I must go to Cascia.

**You have said of Saint Rita**



Even when he was an assistant referee in Serie A, Massimiliano Grilli (right) always carried the image of Saint Rita over his heart.

that she is “the saint who always smiles” ...Yes, I always see her transmitting that sweetness and serenity ... I can always see her smiling. And when I find myself experiencing difficult times, I have never become demoralised myself and I have always said to myself ... a path is over now ... we're starting another one, but I'm not alone. I always have her near me.

**You have been a great football professional: first referee, then linesman. What role did Saint Rita play in**

**your career?** I see life as a challenge. My path in refereeing has been the same ... In all these steps, I've always had Saint Rita near me. She gave me the strength to fall in love with the linesman's flag, because it's not easy to go from referee to assistant, it's a completely different role. In my notebook, which I kept over my heart, I always kept an image of Saint Rita. Every time I had to take to the pitch, a moment before I left the dressing room, I

looked at this effigy and it was as if Santa Rita gave me a smile and told me: "Take it easy, because I am by your side", even in very important matches.

When I arrived in Serie A, I made a promise to Saint Rita. Looking at her, it was as if we had pronounced the phrase "Let's try ... Let's see if we can get to the international together". It was like a "challenge with a smile" that I accepted in front of the urn. And so I brought her my shirt as a thank you.

Then, I met Serena, my wife. One winter day, we decide to leave because I had the urge to go to Saint Rita

*Every time I had to take to the pitch it was as if Saint Rita gave me a smile*

and I wanted to take her too. We left and it started snowing. We passed and it seemed that the road opened up. We arrived, and we also greeted Sister Giacomina. We went to church for a bit. Then we left. No difficulties on the road. Then, in the afternoon, I learned that it had snowed so much and that the roads were no longer viable. It was as if Santa Rita had told me: "I know how important it is for you to come and see me. Leave



Sister Giacomina Stuari, editorial director of *From the Bees to the Roses*, with the football shirt received as a gift from the Cremonese team, with which Massimiliano Grilli collaborates.

without worrying, there will be no difficulties".

**Speaking of Sister Giacomina, the editorial director of "From the Bees to the Roses" ...How did your relationship come about? Today you collaborate with the Cremonese [football team], do you know she is a Milan fan?** Yes (smiles, ed.), she told me. A mutual understanding was born immediately with Sister Giacomina because she is a former athlete ... a person with a joyfulness that makes you fall in love, just hearing her speak. So it turned out that she was a

Milan fan and then I promised her that as soon as I refereed a Milan match I would bring her the shirt of a particular player. And in fact I brought her that of the "Pharaoh" ... El Shaarawy ... And I told her: "He is unique, as you are unique". I would also like to mention another (unnamed, ed.) person who gave me a small bronze statue of Saint Rita as a gift. I have deep respect and gratitude for him. It was a gesture that touched me deeply and I want to thank him profoundly. He is a person with an immense heart. ■

# Thank you, Sister Antonietta

edited by the Sisters

“It’s a death that strikes me in a particular way. It’s true, she tried on several occasions to leave this fragile curtain that contains us, but only today the Lord has silently opened to the knocking of her desire.

What can I say? The event brings back to me the many moments lived at her bedside when I brought Jesus to her or in the brief moments of crisis due to intensification of her illness. I particularly remember her desire to stand before the Host to ask

forgiveness for her inadequacy, her failures and her becoming spokesperson for sinners. It was truly a living intercession and I imagine how she offered up her illness, her lengthy impotence. She did not usually mention it, but it was there and it was visible! I carry it in my heart and I pray that the Lord will satisfy her desire for salvation for herself and for her needy brothers”.

These words of Mother Monica, Head of the “Mother of Good Counsel” Federation of Augustinian Monasteries of Italy – and superior of the Monastery which, in Novem-

***the Lord has  
opened to the  
knocking of  
you desire***

ber 2016, housed us following the earthquake for 42 days, a time of trial that Sister Antonietta endured and overcame despite her serious illness - we describe our sister M. Antonietta Stella, whom the Lord called to himself on February 14, at the threshold of her ninety years of life: a beautiful, humble, simple and candid soul who made service to the community and prayer the breath of her entire life. When her body began to feel the limits of the



Sister Antonietta, on the occasion of her Solemn Profession.



## *Her hands never left the Rosary*

illness due to Parkinson's disease which very slowly prevented her from any movement, her days were filled by continuous prayer. Her hands, together with her lips and her heart, never left the Rosary. How greatly she prayed for her community and for everyone! So many smiles and much gratitude for those who were around her to assist her, for her large family with the nephews and nieces who wished her great good: this was how she answered every time the limits of the progres-



sion of the disease gradually took away her physical abilities and the only thing neces-

sary was to contemplate the Face of Christ in prayer. Never a lament, if anything on her lips the name of the Lord ... "the source of the constitution of the whole, the light of the truth that we are called to reach and the source of happiness that we are called to drink" (St. Augustine, The City of God, 8, 10, 2).

Thank you, Antonietta. You served the Lord and all of us with dedication and love, you followed Christ on the way of the evangelical counsels for the Kingdom of Heaven. May you appear confidently before Him and recognise Him as the Bridegroom who invites you to the joy of eternal weddings. ■

## GIVE ME A HEART THAT LISTENS...

Dearest friend,

"Return to your heart: see there what perhaps you perceive about God, because the image of God is there: in the inner self Christ dwells, in the inner self you are renewed according to the image of God". This is the thought of our spiritual father St. Augustine. There is a challenge to which we are all called: that of learning to look within ourselves. The choice of life, in fact, is realised in listening to one's heart, in search of the most real and profound desires that the Father himself has hidden from you.

We offer you some days for listening, praying, discerning, living at the school of the Lord ...



**FEMALE VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION COURSE**  
from August 6 (evening) to 11 (morning), 2018

For information: Monastery of Saint Rita - Cascia PG  
tel.: +39 0743 76221 - e-mail: [monastero@santaritadacascia.org](mailto:monastero@santaritadacascia.org)

Let's give  
a nest to  
those that  
have none.

estrogeni

**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.

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**BIC/SWIFT: UNCRITM1J35**  
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