

THE LIFE OF BLESSED AGOSTINA*

Livia Pietrantoni was the second-born of ten children of Francesco Pietrantoni and Caterina Costantini. She was born at Pozzaglia Sabina (Rieti) in the Diocese of Tivoli, 27 March, 1864, and was baptized on the same day.

At the age of four, she received the sacrament of confirmation in the church of Orvinio. On the 23rd of March, eighteen years later, she joined the Sisters of Charity of St. Joan Antida Thouret, at their Generalate in Rome. On 13 August, 1887, she was clothed with the religious habit and received the name of Sister Agostina, and appointed as nurse in the Santo Spirito Hospital in Rome. She made her religious profession on 29 September, 1893.

In May of the next year, tuberculosis brought her to death's door, and she received the Last Sacraments. However, she recovered in a marvelous way and after a short vacation at Porto d'Anzio, returned to her post — the tuberculosis ward — at the hospital. She had begged her Superior to permit her to remain at that post lest some other Sister would contract the disease. That was in May 1894.

Shortly before noon on 13 November, 1894, Sister Agostina was attacked and mortally wounded by her assistant — Giuseppe Romanelli, a former mental patient. She died after pardoning her assassin.

The funeral on the 15th of November was indeed a spectacle to behold. An estimated 200 thousand persons were present for her funeral and burial in the Roman Campo Verano cemetery.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF SISTER AGOSTINA

Her spirituality was very simple; it was that of the Beatitudes lived with an exceptional consistency. She loved and served

* *L'Osservatore Romano*, 23 November 1972. Proclaimed Blessed by Pope Paul VI, 12 November 1972.

the poor with complete dedication because in each of her patients, she saw the image of Christ. She loved her companion Sisters and chose to remain at her post in the contagious ward, lest another Sister contract the illness. Before she died, she forgave the man who had so brutally attacked her. Sister Agostina was devoted to the Eucharist, the Crucified Christ, and the Blessed Mother, whom she invoked with her last breath.

HER APOSTOLATE

The activities of Sister Agostina were limited both in time and in extent — eight years in the Santo Tomas Spirito Hospital in Rome. These were difficult years at the hospital: the Roman Question had poisoned people's minds, Freemasonry was rampant, the Sisters were expressly forbidden to speak of God to the sick. But for Sister Agostina, words were unnecessary: the testimony of her life, of her dedication shone through with more eloquence than words. And everyone understood her language. At times the restlessness of the type of sick the nurse called for police intervention. Sister always remained calm and serene on those occasions, saying: "They are not bad; they are suffering and need our compassion. Let us try to help them and pray for them." Her way was that of meekness, and she persevered in that attitude even to the bitter end.

PROCESS OF BEATIFICATION

The informative process for the introduction of the Cause of Beatification began in Rome in 1936 and continued until 1939. In 1941 her body was taken from the cemetery to the Chapel of the Generalate on Via di S. Maria in Cosmedin. On the 14th of December, 1945, was promulgated the decree for the introduction of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization. After the recognition of her heroic virtue in 1967, the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints accepted the validity of the miracles attributed to her intercession and on 22 June 1972 published the decree of beatification. The solemn Beatification took place in St. Peter's Basilica on 12 November, 1972.

THE TWO MIRACLES

On the evening of 7 March 1952, four-year old Caterina Monzeglio, a high-spirited child, was playing near the fireplace in her home in Ozzano Monferrato in the Diocese of Casale.

Suddenly a red-hot piece of iron wounded her left eye. She developed a lesion on the cornea; her parents were distraught. They invoked the aid of Sister Agostina Pietrantoni, after which the child fell asleep. On the following morning, the doctor was unable to find the slightest trace of injury.

In the afternoon of 5 September 1960, seven year old Vittorio Berti, living in Ravalle in the Diocese of Adria, while trying to jump on to his father's tractor, fell and was caught under the wheels of the tractor which passed over his abdomen. He was taken immediately to the hospital of Adria in a serious condition. Twice attempts were made to operate, but the condition of the patient forbade it. He was put to bed and entrusted to the care of the Sister nurse and his relations. There was nothing more to be done. However, after invoking the help of Sister Agostina, a short time after midnight, the child revived. He began to speak, asking for something to eat and to drink, and for his toys. In the morning the doctors found no sign of injury they had reported the night before.

MISAL NA PANG-ARAW-ARAW

Ikatlong Pagkalimbag

Batay sa huling pagbabago sa Liturhiya

**Isinalin ni Fr. Exceiso Garcia, O.P.
Pamantasan ng Santo Tomas, Maynila**

Mga nilalaman: Bagong Ordinaryo ng Misa, Introito, Kolekta, Panalangin sa alay, Komunyon, (ang mga Pagbasang hango sa Banal na Kasulatan, na kasalukuyang isinasalin ng may-akda, ay ipalilimbag sa isang nakahiwalay na aklat).

**Mabibili sa Limbagan ng Pamantasan ng Santo Tomas,
Maynila**