



*"Faith in the resurrection
opens up fraternal communion
beyond the threshold of death ...".*

(RoL 24)



Today, 17 September 2025, at 4.45 a.m.
in the community of Negrar, our sister
ELENA, Sr GABRIELLA MARIA RENIER
has parted this earthly life.
She was 86 years old and 64 years of religious life.

"I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart." With the psalmist, we give thanks to the Good Shepherd for the life of Sister Gabriella, who for sixty-four years lived her watchful, attentive, and maternal ministry towards all who knew her.

Elena was born in Conche di Codevigo (Padua) on 16 September 1939, and was baptized on 23 September 1939, in the Parish of Santa Maria della Neve in Conche (Padua). She entered the Congregation at the Mother House in Albano Laziale on 2 September 1958 and entered the Novitiate on 2 September 1960. She made her first profession on 3 September 1961, taking the name Sister Gabriella Maria. After her first profession, she was sent to the apostolate in Budrione (Modena), San Prospero (Modena) in 1963, and Bari (Bari) in 1965. She made her perpetual profession on 3 September 1966, at the Mother House in Albano Laziale.

Sr Gabriella has been described since her initial formation as a person of prayer, recollected, humble, helpful, generous, and available for any need, and a lover of community life. She was a diligent, very tidy sister, passionate about the pastoral apostolate, especially with children. One sister has described her thus: *I have known her tenacity and steadfastness in undertaking and living her pastoral mission. In recent years, this has been especially evident in her relationships with the elderly and the sick, her willingness to listen to those who sought her out in the morning, when she was busy with other services, or in the evening after Mass, sitting in the pews. She remained silent and listened. Prayer had become her apostolate; each bead of the Rosary was a face, a story to be entrusted to the Good Shepherd.*

She carried out her ministry in the field of education in preschool, in the formation of pastoral workers, and in the pastoral care of families, the elderly, and the sick.

A young woman she knew, in a letter to Sister Gabriella, wrote: *"I want to thank you as a sister for coming to visit me in prison, and I cannot forget this... You are like my family; I love you so much with all my heart."*

After her perpetual profession, Sister Gabriella returned to the community of Bari and remained there until 1973, when she spent a period of study at Albano Laziale, Mother House. She subsequently continued her pastoral ministry in various communities: in 1975 in Rossano (CosenzaS); in 1986 in Statte (Taranto); in 1996 in Doria (Cosenza); in 2001 in Avellino; and in 2006 in Barletta, where she remained until July 2025. For a few weeks, she had been in the community of Negrar, having been transferred due to her very poor health.

Sister Gabriella lived an intense and enriching pastoral ministry until the very end, when, sadly, but aware of her poor health, she accepted the invitation to join the community of elderly sisters in Negrar. She had been present from the beginning in the community of San Giovanni Apostolo (Barletta). The parish priest, Don Rino Mastrodomenico, remembered her during the farewell celebration for the community: *I bless the Lord for the presence of the Sisters of Jesus the Good Shepherd, for Sister Gabriella, guardian of my priesthood and of my life, ever vigilant and attentive.*

We thank the sisters of the Barletta community, who, together with the parish, provided the necessary care so she could remain in the apostolate as long as possible. We also thank the sisters of Negrar who lovingly cared for Sister Gabriella.

As we thank the Father for the gift of Sister Gabriella's life, we ask her to entrust to the Good Shepherd the yearning for Peace that dwells in the hearts of suffering humanity in these difficult days of global conflict.

Sr. Aminta Sarmiento Puentes
Superior General

Rome, 17 September 2025
Saint Robert Bellarmine