

The Servant of God Giuseppina Berettoni

Giuseppina Berettoni was born in Rome on 6 August 1875, Via dei Quattro Cantoni, 36.

Her first years were spent under the attentive care of her parents: Cesare Berettoni, of Morrovalle (Macerata), and Orsola Marini, of Rome. Giuseppina was only eight when, contrary to the custom of those times, she received her First Communion. Her fervent reception of the blessed Sacrament nurtured in young Giuseppina her first important decision: to enter the “Daughters of Mary”, taking a vow of virginity (when she was nine years old). Expressing her disinterest for the world, she wrote when but nine years old: *“the spirit of the world, that which dominates us is in open contradiction with the spirit of Jesus”*. She also promised, and maintained during all her life, not to turn down any request made to her in the names of Jesus and Mary.

All my energy – she wrote – all of my life I want to spend making Jesus known to the Christian people. Characteristic of her life was the apostolic lay activity in varied forms and in any field with which her zeal was confronted, with a special preference for the Clergy and everybody consecrated to God. With youngsters she was a strong but amiable teacher; with children, *tenderly loved by Jesus*, amongst whom she spent the better part of her life, she was always motherly. She worked generously for the Daughters of Mary until the last day of her life; in the Franciscan Third Order she was an unparalleled novice mistress.

Fr Tacchi Venturi S. J. wrote, with regard to her work for the dying: *God used her for the salvation of unrepenting sinners, who at the very end of their lives, after having rudely sent the priests away from their beds, won over by her angelic ministrations during their illness, surrendered to her and accepted God’s Ministers, shedding tears on the Crucifix.*

Her apostolic activity was carried out mainly in Rome, where she spent the major part of her life, but her good deeds also reached Argentina, Genoa e the Marche, places where she lived for short periods.

Quick and perspicacious, witty and lively in conversation, she was liked by everyone. Her overwhelming love for Jesus radiated from her attractive presence which reflected a deep rooted innocence and purity.

As she had prayed and foretold, God granted her to close her life in the field. On January 17, 1927, just after receiving Holy Communion in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, where she had been baptized, she collapsed near the Chapel of Our Lady of “Salus populi Romani”, who had given her so many extraordinary proofs of Her protection and love.

Rome conserves many memories of her fruitful apostolic activity. Her mortal remains are to be found in the Verano Cemetery in Rome (plot n. 2 – Pincetto Vecchio).