



Father Gioacchino SANGIORGIO
(1918 - 2013)

*Died 12 March 2013, in Redona -Bergamo (Italy)
aged 94, with 75 years of Religious Profession.*

Gioacchino was born in Biassono (Mi) on 1 December 1918 into a family of eleven children, of whom one would become a Religious Sister and one a Jesuit. He inherited from his parents a great enthusiasm for the missions. His contact with the Company of Mary came through his parish-priest who had known the Montfort Missionaries for some time. He spoke with enthusiasm of this Congregation, persuading Gioacchino to enter the Montfortian seminary.

He joined the seminary in Redona -the Villa S. Maria -in September 1931. After his secondary schooling, on 8 September 1936, his novitiate began, and he made his first vows exactly one year later. He continued his formation in Loreto (An), where he studied philosophy and theology. On 8 September 1942 he made his perpetual profession and on 10 April 1943 was ordained priest in the Basilica of the Santa Casa.

For the first ten years of his priestly life, Father Gioacchino alternated between teaching in Loreto and in Redona-Villa S. Maria and the ministry of preaching, based in the community of Treviglio, during the Peregrinatio Mariae. In 1954, he left for the United States, where he stayed until 1963. He was tireless in seeking financial resources to support the educational institutions of the province; he taught in the scholasticate in Litchfield and did not disdain ministry in the parishes. Returning to Italy, from 1963 to 1975, Father Gioacchino was committed to preaching and above all to missionary animation, in the communities of Treviglio, Reggio Calabria-Rosario -where he was also superior -and Caravaggio. In addition, from 1968 to 1971, he held the office of Counsellor and Provincial secretary. Of a jovial nature, appreciated for the style of his preaching, he loved to prepare every homily, writing them out and keeping accurate copies. In every community in which he lived, he was always a great walker. He saw one of his nephews, Fr. Giorgio Crippa, embrace the same path of Montfortian consecration.

Fr. Gioacchino crowned his missionary dream when in 1975, he left for Malawi, his first destination being Balaka. Then he dedicated himself to teaching in the minor seminary of Nankhunda and, from 1986, in that of Mangochi. In 1989 he took on the running of the Lake House. He shared in all the events that marked the Montfortian presence in Malawi in those years.

In 1997, Father Gioacchino left Malawi because of repeated attacks of malaria. Obedience called him to Reggio Calabria, first of all to the Casa della Madonna and then, in 2000, to the Church of the Rosary. Despite his age he gave himself to welcoming people and to the ministry of reconciliation.

The weight of years began to make itself felt, and Father Gioacchino asked to be transferred to Redona-Villa Montfort. There he arrived in October 2002. Especially during his first years

there he did not fail to give his collaboration to the ministry. And on 12 March 2013 he died peacefully in the Lord, full of years and with almost 70 years of priesthood. He rests now in the cemetery of Bergamo.