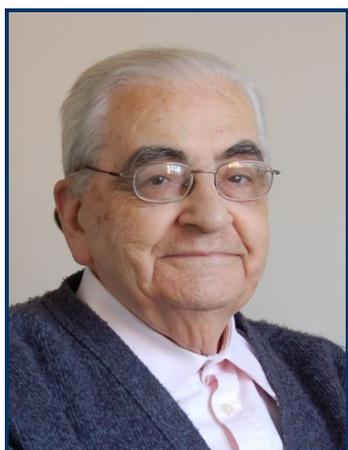


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January 18, 2013

Death Notice No. 1 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of Italy, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **GIOVANNI GINEPRO**, of the Santa Maria Community, Rome, Italy, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on January 15, 2013 in Rome, Italy, at the age of 96 with 80 years of religious profession.

Lu Monferrato in the Province of Alessandria and the Diocese of Casale Moferrato has been the source of many religious vocations, including Blessed Filippo Rinaldi, the third successor of St. John Bosco, the saint of youth. And in the same area was born on December 5, 1916, Giovanni Ginepro, the fourth and last child of Giuseppe Ginepro and Teresa Demartini, who supported their whole family through their farming. The family had deep-rooted Christian principles, such that Giovanni was baptized the following day and later educated in those sound principles in

an environment that constantly saw flourish so many religious vocations to the Society of Mary. The sacrament of Confirmation at the age of nine put the seal upon his whole formative path in the parish. He wrote in his *Travail d'élection*: "I always had the fixed notion in my head, in the fourth and fifth grades, that I wanted to be an Olivetan Benedictine. My playmates made fun of me, but the idea was there anyway, always the same, fixed, constant.... One of the principal reasons that prompted me to take this step was that I no longer wanted to be a farmer, a job in which I had a bit of experience for a couple of years. So one day when I was going to school, two classmates stopped me and told me that they were going to the postulate in Pallanza.... They mesmerized me with their description of the lake. I let myself be won over by their words and went that same day to the archpriest and laid out for him my request." It was in this almost gospel way that Giovanni's Marianist vocation was born, and he entered the postulate on September 3, 1927.

He was not yet of age, but the Council considered it opportune to admit him to the Novitiate of Saint-Remy since he was mature and the best student in the class. He began his novitiate in France on September 12, 1931. "So I do have a vocation, and I want to follow it under the standard of Mary. On my deathbed I shall be quite happy to have lived as a religious son and apostle of the Lord and of my good heavenly Mother...." He was admitted to first profession by Fr. Schellhorn on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception the following year. He continued his studies and earned the classical *Maturità* in Rome in 1935 and his degree in Classical Letters in 1940.

Already at Easter of the following year he "asked the Lord to give us the grace to know how to always accept our own crosses, above all those unforeseen and feared." In fact, at the end of March he had spit up some blood, an experience that marked him physically and spiritually. But the numerous calcifications in his lungs did not impede him from continuing to teach and he hastened to acquire a certificate for teaching the classics in our school (1942).

“The superiors, who are God’s representatives, can do with me whatever they will. If they want me to be a priest, then I shall be a priest and I shall put all my good will into being one as worthily as possible.” Upon reading these words, his superiors directed him into theological studies, even though “I feel attracted to being a teaching brother.” In obedience, Giovanni entered the Seminary in Fribourg. But a few months later, after Fr. Emile Neubert noted that, because of the health issues that had arisen a few years earlier, he was unable to seriously and confidently follow his studies, Giovanni was advised to leave the Seminary and continue later when his health was better. In February 1947 he returned to Italy to the community of Brusasco to strengthen his body and spirit.

At the beginning of the academic year he was assigned to the teaching community of Pallanza and remained there as a teacher of literature and French until 1951, when he was invited to our educational work in Rome. There he taught in the middle school classes. In 1954 he returned to Pallanza to teach literature and French again and to be an assistant prefect for the boys housed in the boarding section. There they recognized “the great intelligence with which he carries out with almost fastidious scrupulosity whatever is asked of him.” In educational matters he was very demanding and hard to please. He got zealously involved with the alumni and gave their association a new life that it had never known in the past. His academic duties notwithstanding, and in spite of some periods of illness still occurring in his everyday life, he did not neglect his studies and devoted himself to the study of the French language, brilliantly passing the teaching certificate for French.

Armed with this certificate and in collaboration with the Province of France, at the end of 1961 he was invited to the African mission in Brazzaville, the capital of the French Congo, and began his educational and missionary adventure outside Italy. In 1965, still in collaboration with the French province, he lent his services to the mission in Tunis, teaching both French and Italian.

He would like to have continued his missionary experience at Lama Kara also, but his mission of collaboration with the French brothers ended in 1971, when he was recalled to Italy and to Santa Maria in Rome. There he continued his teaching as long as his strength permitted.... Even though with the best of intentions he would have continued to teach, advanced age forced him to confront a reality of life and necessary retirement.

The final years of his long life were passed in the serenity of the infirmary of the Istituto Santa Maria, where he always showed a healthy curiosity that allowed him to give meaning to his days and to be interested in the happenings in the world, the Church and the Society of Mary. It was always an edifying experience to take him daily Communion, which he received with great devotion, reciting *Adoro Te devote, latens Deitas...peto quod petivit latro poenitens*.

Just over the past few months his strength declined and he became bedridden and slowly died in the morning of January 15, 2013. It was just forty days after his 96th birthday.

In remembering him in our prayer, let us go back to what he had written in his Plan of Life: “So I do have a vocation, and I want to follow it under the standard of Mary. On my deathbed I shall be quite happy to have lived as a religious son and apostle of the Lord and of my good heavenly Mother....” and in his will: “But before leaving this valley of tears, I feel the need to ask pardon of the Creator for the violations of his law...and I entrust my soul to the mercy of God.”

May he rest in peace under the mantle of Mary our Mother.