

Sr Agnese Serra

30 November 1928 – 19 May 2023



Sr. Agnese was originally from Sardinia, born on 30 November 1928 in Terralba near Oristano. She was always very attached to her family and in particular to her brothers and sister. One brother became a priest of the Xaverian Congregation.

At the end of the 1950s Sr Agnese was in Rome for work and during those years she met a Marist Sister who told her about the Marist spirit and she fell in love with it. After a few years in Rome, in 1960, she left to begin her Marist formation in France in Saint Foy les Lyon, where she made her first profession on 4 October 1962. She later returned to Italy to the Parish Community of Saluzzo in Cuneo.

In Italy she lived in various communities and places, making herself available, with generosity, to every task that was requested of her.

One of Sr Agnese's gifts was her ability to welcome the people she met in her mission with special attention to those in particular need.

She is remembered as a woman, happy to be so, simple in her manner, of few words but going straight to the problem or its solution. The essential characteristics of her personality: lovable and loved, welcoming, grounded, attentive to reality being willing to face it without fear and having no guile.

Sr. Agnese was a Sister who was happy to be so. She gave herself to God with all her strength and showed interest in her neighbours in many ways: by visiting the sick, as an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, she was at the side of the elderly, with youth groups, with families, with those seeking work and with those she visited, she managed with perseverance to bring Jesus through Mary.

Sr. Agnese worked for a long time with the Marist Fathers who remember her with affection, and the following is part of the testimony of a Marist Father:

Thank you Sr. Agnese.

It was a great gift from God to know you in Moncalieri, Torino, and to have you as a sister in the Marist Family.

I have gradually come to know and recognise in you, Mary, woman of the Gospel - as I like to call the mother of Jesus and mother of every disciple and disciple of her Son - Mary and the way of being a Marist in daily life. In your gentleness and resoluteness, in your discretion and care, in your kindness, in your always generous and delicate service.

You have been a precious sister to me in the most difficult and richest years of my vocational journey. How many occasions to discern together and read the events of life in the light of the Gospel, and how many times those words of Mary to the servants at Cana came to me through you: 'Do whatever he tells you'.

Returning with memory to so many shared episodes in the daily toil of governing the house in Moncalieri, in designing "Il Ricino" (Home for women in difficulty with children) up to concretely taking part in the first Marist work really shared between Marist lay people, Marist Sisters and Marist Fathers, experiencing that truly "everything is possible" for those who believe in Him and do not remain prisoners of themselves.

Father Antonio Airò SM.

Sr Agnese's funeral took place in the parish church of Santa Maria del Rovere, Treviso, on 24 May 2023 concelebrated by the Sisters' Chaplain Don Luca, the Parish Priest Don Adelino and Marist Fathers Mario and Giancarlo. The readings chosen for the funeral ceremony were Proverbs 31:10-31; Psalm 111 and Matthew 25:31-46.

A thought taken from the homily for Sr. Agnes:

"A strong woman who can find her?" asks the author of the book of Proverbs.

We can answer that we have known one: Sr. Agnese.

It is precisely having known Sr. Agnese in one or more of the different seasons of her long life that helps us to understand what Scripture means when it speaks of a "strong woman".

Immediately after the ceremony Sr Agnese was buried in the cemetery of Ponzano Veneto, next to the Marist Sisters who preceded her to the House of the Father.

We thank Sr. Agnese for her life of witness of a 'happy' Marist Sister. Her memory will always be present in our hearts. May she rest in the peace of the Lord. Agnese, pray for us.

