

FR. GIOACHINO M. ROSSETTO (1880 – 1935)



Father Gioachino M. Rossetto (his baptismal name was Giuseppe) was born in Falgare di Poleo, a town land in Schio, Province of Vicenza on June 8, 1880. His parents were Girolamo Rossetto and Maria Luigia Maule. He pursued his studies in the Bishop's College in Schio (1892-1894) and the Vicenza Seminary (1894-1897). In 1897 he decided to become a Servant of Mary. The friars received him as a candidate at the basilica of Monte Berico on November 27, 1897 and sent him to Saluzzo (Cuneo) to begin his novitiate on January 6, 1898. He was given the religious name of Gioachino (Joachim).

Fra Gioachino was ordained to the priesthood in 1903 and remained in the Monte Berico community from 1903 to 1907. In that year he went to Venice where he remained until 1912. He then went to Saluzzo and from there went to London to learn English. From 1913 to 1914 he worked in the mission at Natal, South Africa. He returned to Italy in 1914 and lived first in Rome and then Vicenza. He held various offices at this time: Socius Provincial, Prior of the Monte Berico Community and Rector of the Basilica. He spent the crucial years of the First World War in Follina (November 1916 – 1919).

On Christmas night, 1919, he founded the *Famiglia delle Figlie di Dio* [Family of the Daughters of God] in Vicenza. The first members made their consecration commitment at home at midnight. In April 1919 he was reconfirmed as Prior of Monte Berico for a third term. The Venetian Province of the Servite Order was established on April 4, 1922 and the following day the first Provincial Chapter was celebrated. Fra Gioachino was elected Socius Provincial and appointed Prior of Monte Berico for yet another three year term.

In 1926 the *Istituto Missioni* [Mission Institute] was opened on Berico hill. Fra Gioachino was appointed Master of the young postulants and held this office until 1928. In the summer of 1927 he fell sick and was at death's door. After a few months he recovered and continued working until the April 1928 Provincial Chapter. The last seven years of his life were filled with trials. He planned to establish a male group alongside the "*Figlie di Dio*." The group would be called *Sacerdoti Adoratori Missionari* [Priest Adorers Missionaries] and opened a college in Vittorio Veneto (1929) for boys with this vocation. He suffered a great deal from the calumnies aimed at him. He suffered too from a series of sicknesses and on June 11, 1935 he died in the Servite Priory in Tirano (Sondrio).

His body was first buried in Tirano and then later moved: on November 22, 1935 it was brought to Milan; on March 7, 1959 it was taken to Poleo di Schio; in 1979 he was buried in the Vicenza cemetery and then in 1987 he was laid to rest, definitively, in the Monte Berico Sanctuary.

The Diocesan Inquest for the Cause of Beatification of Father Gioachino M. Rossetto was opened in Vicenza on September 15, 1995 and concluded on December 18, 2003. On April 27, 2007, the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints issued a decree recognizing the validity of the Vicenza Tribunal's process.

While we were continuing with the preparation of the *Positio super virtutibus* we received an unforeseen decision from the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. The Congregation withdrew its *Non Obstare* granted on April 21, 1995 and issued an order of *Non procedere ad ulteriora*. The Congregation did this after an intervention from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

This precludes any efforts to demonstrate Father Gioachino M. Rossetto's heroic exercise of Christian virtue.