



Father Pio Rizzi

1931-2015

Born in Cavizzana (Trento) on 29 September 1931, to Cesare Rizzi and Celestina Ceschi, Pio entered the Seminary of Villa Visconta on 6 October 1945.

After finishing his schooling in 1949, he began his novitiate in Verona S. Giuliano, where, the next year, he made his temporary profession and in 1953 his perpetual profession. He was made a deacon in 1957 in Mottinello di Rossano Veneto and a year later he was ordained a priest in Cittadella (Padua).

He spent the first year of his priesthood in Santa Maria del Paradiso (Verona) and engaged in various pastoral activities: he was the assistant at the oratory and the substitute for the chaplains of the numerous health-care and social/health-care institutions that were entrusted to the pastoral care of the Camillians: the Santa Giuliana nursing home, the old people's home of Verona, the sanatoria of Ponton and of Grola, and the nursing home in S. Pietro Incariano.

In July and August 1959 he spent two months in Ireland to study English given that it had been decided to send him to the Camillian mission in Formosa, today Taiwan, which he reached on 30 October of the same year.

After two years studying Chinese in Lotung, in May 1961 he was sent to the house of Yuan-Shan as financial administrator of the sanatorium. From 1962 he held the same post at the hospital in Lotung and from February 1968 in the Pescadores Islands.

For health reasons he returned to Italy on 6 August 1968 and to begin with he was sent to the St. Camillus nursing home in Milan. He then went to the seminary of Vigolo Vattaro (TN) as its financial administrator and as a teacher of English.

The doors of mission opened again for him as a parenthesis in his life with the setting up of the Camillian mission in Kenya. He was sent to the hospital of Tabaka in September 1974 to carry out a primary inspection and he spent a few months at that institution the following year.

After the experience of the mission in Kenya and a short spell as a substitute chaplain at the Cardarelli Hospital in Naples, he was appointed chaplain at the Umberto I Hospital of Mestre-Venezia. On 9 September 1980 he temporarily took the place of the financial administrator of Mottinello in Rossano Veneto until December and then in January 1981 he went to the St. Camillus nursing home of Cremona as head of admissions.

After a few months he once again engaged in the service of chaplaincy in the two health-care institutions of *Villa Lieta* and *Chierego-Perbellini*. He lived at Santa Maria del Paradiso and from 1998 onwards he was rector of the Church adjoining the community. This was a service that he engaged in until his final move which took place on 5 October 2005 and involved him going to the community of S. Giuliano where he belonged in a praiseworthy way to the rectory of the church entrusted to the Camillian community. During the last months of his life the symptoms emerged of a grave illness which within a short time led to his death. Cared for in a loving way by his brother Fr. Renzo and by his religious brothers, and visited by his relatives, Fr. Pio passed over to the other side on 9 December 2015.

From the outlines of the biographical data of Fr. Pio, the journey of his life appears one of great movement. The countries and cities in which he spent his life were many in number and the activities he engaged in were varied. One of the golden threads that linked his geographical movements and the ministerial tasks that he engaged in for more than half a century of his life can be identified in his *readiness to help*. In addition to his spiritual motivations, in all likelihood he was also helped in this by a natural curiosity that led him to encounter new places and to live different experiences, which his exceptional memory enabled him to remember. Wherever he was called to work, Fr. Pio was guided by certain characteristics that were typical of his personality: an enterprising way of relating to other people; moderate affections but a lovable character, and the clarity of his religious and moral principles, which were defended at times with the firmness that he had breathed in amidst the valleys

of Trento and cultivated thanks to his propensity to personal formation. He had a slightly hypochondriac way of living which developed following grave experiences of illness and this led him to limit his activities which he nonetheless engaged in with exemplary precision. The way he which he faced up to his death revealed an admirable human and spiritual maturity. Aware of his state of health, he talked about it with levity, even using emphases that were not without humour, without, however, ever uttering a word of discomfort. This made his *adieu* to this life easier as he awaited his final encounter with God.

**The funeral services will take place on Friday 11 December 2015,
at 10.00 in Verona San Giuliano
and at 14.00 in Cavizzana (TN),
with his burial at the local cemetery**