



## Father Carmelo Fedrizzi

1925-2016

Carmelo Fedrizzi was born on 7 April 1925 in Sevignano di Segonzano (TN), to his father Domenico and his mother Giuseppina Simoni. He entered the seminary of Besana Brianza (MI) on 7 October 1937 where he attended primary school. This was followed by a two-year period of studies at secondary school.

On 17 September 1942 he entered the novitiate of the house of S. Giuliano in Verona and ended the year with his religious profession on 8 September 1943, a day that passed into history because of very different events. He took up his school studies again and every year renewed his temporary religious vows. In 1944-45 the events of the war forced the seminary, for reasons of prudence, to move to Valle Colorina, in the Province of Sondrio. In the autumn of 1946 Carmelo went to the Major Seminary of Mottinello, in the commune of Rossano Veneto (VI), for his theological studies, and there he made his solemn profession of consecration in the Order of St. Camillus on 5 October 1947. In the same religious house he was ordained a deacon on 8 December 1948, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. Then, at the end of his theological studies, on 8 April 1950, a Holy Year, he was ordained a priest in Padua at the hands of Msgr. Gerolamo Bortignon, the Bishop of Padua.

His first ministerial position was at the hospital of Forlì and this he held from 6 August 1950 onwards. On 2 November 1959 he went to the religious house of Predappio (FO) where there was a preventorium for minors. On 13 June 1960 he was moved to Verona to the hospital of Borgo Trento which had been inaugurated in 1942. In the 1960s the geriatric centre was created and there Fr. Carmelo had his home and performed his ministry. On 30 November 1965, moved by the new winds of the Second Vatican Council and by a wish to take the spirit of St. Camillus to faraway lands, he left for Colombia, his destination being Bogota and Medellin. On 5 March 1967, however, he had to suspend his activities and return to Italy for health reasons. He went back in October 1969 as chaplain at the hospital of Bucaramanga and he remained there until January 1971 when he was moved to Bogota. On 30 June 1973 he returned for good to Italy and on 3 September 1973 he was assigned to the hospital of Borgo Trento, once again in the geriatric section, where for over forty years he provided spiritual assistance to the patients.

On 6 February 2005 he entered retirement at the S. Maria del Paradiso religious house where, however, he celebrated Holy Mass at the nearby infirmary of the Ursuline Sisters.

He lived long enough to celebrate the sixty-fifth anniversary of his priesthood. At the beginning of January a fall led him to be admitted to hospital for an operation on his thigh-

bone. During the rehabilitation stage there were complications and an infection led to his death at 13.00 on 28 February 2016, in the emergency department of his old hospital.

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A son of Trentino and of the Val di Cembra, of a fine tall physical presence with white hair, Father Carmelo retained the character typical of mountain people: he was a simple, modest, spontaneous, immediate and good-humoured person. He was an affable man whom people met willingly because he always had some good words for them. It was rare to see him sad and if at times he was such he was nonetheless able to find words of hope and comfort.

His experience in Latin America left in him a mark of natural sympathy for simple people who worked, who had hard lives and who had a simple and essential faith. Not in the least complicated in his way of thinking, and with his feet planted firmly on the ground, he was a priest who was very careful not to place useless burdens on the shoulders of people.

In his Camillian ministry he was always, and only, a hospital chaplain, refining how to be near to people who were suffering because of their health. He loved patients and took people to his heart; he formed ties of friendship and fraternity that were fine and long-lasting.

He was a religious of a simple, hidden and humble faith, but also a faith that was marked by his humanity. He did not love external demonstrations of his faith but, rather, he prayed a great deal, perhaps preferring personal prayer to communal prayer.

Fr. Carmelo did not want to bother anybody; he was shy when paid a compliment; he almost never liked talking about himself; and he preferred to speak about other people or to talk more about things that had been done rather than feelings that he experienced or the wishes that he had in his heart. Of an agreeable character and good company, he had the spirit of a child; he loved bicycling and even more walking races, an amateur sport that he himself practised assiduously as long as he was able to do so. He was a formidable walker! During his retirement he complained of pains in his feet and his legs; in truth what he most wore out were his shoes. It was as if he was stamping his feet, and he certainly suffered the immobility that was imposed on him by his last admission to hospital.

The Lord Jesus, who walked far and wide on the roads of Palestine, has certainly now added him to the group of his itinerant disciples on the infinite roads of Heaven.