

MOTHER GABRIEL APICELLA

(November 9, 1906 - August 19, 1983)

Born Angela Apicella, of Filomena Dottolo and Felipe Apicella on November 9, 1906 in Cosenza, Italy, Mother Gabriel entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. John the Baptist on August 26, 1926 in Rome, Italy. In her new life, she received her new name, Sister Gabriel, and pronounced her first vows on September 8, 1928; a promise to which she remained faithful for 55 years.

Mother Gabriel's first assignment was that of House Mother to young girls at Viale Giulio Cesare in Rome, and later in Campobasso, Italy. It was an apostolate in which a special kind of caring began to take root. The maternal affection and concern she gave to her charges brought out the transforming Christ in them and in herself.

In 1937 she was missioned to the United States and was assigned to work as an Assistant House Mother to orphaned boys at St. John's School in Gladstone, New Jersey, where she continued to lavish her maternal qualities on children from broken homes. She undertook this assignment with holy resignation and total abandonment to Divine Providence.

In 1940, at the age of 34, she was given the responsibility of being Superior at Providence Rest, a Home for the Aged in the Bronx, New York, having the opportunity now to assist the aging as she did the young.

It was from this time on with assignments as Superior in Our Lady of Loreto Day Nursery; St. Lucy's Convent and St. Joseph's Villa, Immaculate Heart Residence and Providence Rest Home for the Aged that she especially began to touch many people's lives. Throughout her religious life she related to people speaking a language of kindness, gentleness, fidelity and love of God -- a language everyone understood. In the ambience of simple, convent life, involved in prayer and work marked by hidden virtues known to God and to those with whom she lived, Mother Gabriel gave expression to Christ's love within her, channeling love and harmony into every situation. Her quiet, gentle manner will long be remembered.

"...you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed--and He is your life--you, too, will be revealed in all your glory with Him." (Col. 3:3-4)

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE!