

Mother Umile D'Andrea

(July 20, 1896 - February 4, 1984)

Mother Umile D'Andrea was born on July 26, 1896, in Cosenza, Italy of a large family. In her home town, there was a Baptistine Convent - a very poor and desolate one. She spent most of her time, interest, and energies in helping them in whatever they needed, begging for clothing, food, fire-wood from her own family and friends. At that early age, she was a Baptistine at heart.

Finally, on March 3, 1918, she went to Rome accompanied by the Superior of the Convent, Sr. Adalgisia, and another friend, Carmelina Barbieri (Sister Rose). She entered the Novitiate on March 7, 1918, and received the religious habit on September 8. Her mistress was Mother Crocifissa Militerni.

After making her first vows on September 9, 1919, she was assigned as mistress of the orphans in Rome. Two of these women are still living. In America, she continued her life-long interest in and love for children, working with the orphans in St. Lucy's in Newark from 1923 to 1927.

Named Superior of Newark by Mother Artemisia Cirillo in 1927, she was most reluctant to accept this office, but she did so out of obedience, fully aware of all the burdens and difficulties it entailed. Her administrative gifts were later put to use in Providence Rest in the Bronx in 1933, and in Our Lady of Pompei, a newly opened convent in Brooklyn. Serving in these houses for a brief period, she spent more than twenty years in St. Lucy's and St. John Villa Academy in Staten Island. From 1954 through 1957, Mother acted as Visitor for all Baptistines in America. Her strength of character and courage made an indelible mark on the development of the American Community.

At the end of her term, she was appointed Superior of St. Joseph's Villa in Peapack, New Jersey, and in 1961, she served as Superior of Gladstone. On August 22, 1962, she was (in her own words) "presented as Superior in Glen Cove," the Novitiate. "In this house one enjoys the peace of the Lord, and I am content. However, I am always ready to do the will of my superiors," she wrote. This assignment gave her the opportunity to resume God's work among the young Sisters and the children of Morgan Island. She spent many hours with her little visitors, and they in turn loved to visit her. When she was too ill to receive them, they came to ask for her and brought her flowers from the Convent garden. Her love for children brought her to the Convent as a child, and it became her last joyous mission in her final active years.

Mother's health began to fail rapidly and she was taken to Providence Rest in January of 1979 so that she could receive skilled nursing care. For five years she shared in the Cross in a special way, finally surrendering her spirit on February 4, 1984, surrounded by her Sisters' presence and prayers.

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE!