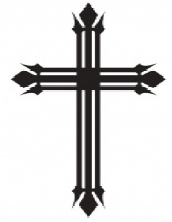




## Born to New Life

### Sister Annette D'Antonio, M.P.F.



Sister Annette D'Antonio died peacefully on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, New York. She was 73 years of age.

Born in Middletown, Connecticut on March 29, 1950, Sister Annette attended St. Sebastian School in Middletown. Inspired by the good example of the Religious Teachers Filippini she had come to know and love, Sister Annette entered the community in 1964, received the habit in 1968 and made her Perpetual Oblation in 1974.

Sister Annette received a BS degree from the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, New Jersey, and a MS from Central Connecticut State College in New Britain, Connecticut, in Elementary Education. In her 55 years of religious life, Sister Annette faithfully ministered as classroom teacher, Vice-Principal, and Principal, serving in the (arch) dioceses of Hartford and Providence. Blessed with the gift of music, Sister Annette generously shared her angelic voice and musical talents wherever she ministered. In her community leadership roles, Sister Annette was appointed convent Superior and elected Provincial Councilor.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Annette was held in Saint Lucy Chapel at Villa Walsh on Tuesday, September 19, 2023. Her body was laid to rest in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh. In her tribute, Sister Elizabeth Toft who was a companion to Sister Annette during the years of initial formation, offered these thoughts, *"It was with tremendous joy that Sister Annette handed over her life to God completely and forever by her Perpetual Oblation. ...She excelled in all she did. She was a prayerful, dedicated Religious Teacher Filippini, and was devoted in a special way to the Blessed Mother and to the Rosary.... Her schools were touched by her creativity and love of learning about God's Word, Jesus. She was loved by her students, parents and parishioners... She left a handprint on our hearts."*

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in attendance at Sister Annette's funeral, remarked, *"Upon my arrival at Villa Walsh last month, I was very anxious to visit with Sister Annette. When asked by Sister Ascenza, 'How are you doing?' In an immediate upbeat response, Sister Annette answered, 'God is so good!' What a faith-filled reply! Only a relationship of trust and surrender to the Lord could enable her to so readily respond 'God is so good!' The single sentiment I want to express today is my personal and deep gratitude to Sister Annette. I admired her generosity in sharing her gift of song...at many of our community events. ... Her gift of song made a positive impression and her joy, her ease and the enthused spirit that accompanied her performances always made a difference at our gatherings. Thank you, Sister Annette, for sharing your gift with community!"*

In his homily, Reverend Father Stephen Sledesky, the principal celebrant of the Liturgy noted, *"Sister Annette was fiercely loyal. She would give her utmost best... If she were your friend, she would be there for you no matter what. If she were your teacher, she dedicated herself to your growth and learning. ... If she were the principal of your school, she would be committed to its success. Whenever she took on a task, she always saw it through to completion. Today, we not only celebrate her life so selflessly given over to others in service of Our Lord, but we recognize that she, too, was and is on the receiving end of another's fierce loyalty to her: the fierce loyalty of Our Lord. From her very beginning, God had chosen her. In the waters of Baptism, she first accepted the call to be a disciple of Christ. ... And when she took on, not only the Baptismal garment, but also the habit of the Religious Teachers Filippini, once again she rooted her identity in Christ. ... For the Lord, through His death and Resurrection, conquered death and united Sister Annette in that Mystery of His dying and rising so that what we celebrate here is not her death so much, but her being born into eternal life. ... Her passing took place on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. ... There is something very powerful in that because ... Jesus, who died on the Cross, exalted before us on that day, the 14<sup>th</sup> of September, came for her, took her by the hand, and led her into His Kingdom, where she will never walk alone for she truly walks with God."*