

In the Father's House

*"How we were united
In the profession of faith, so let us
keep ourselves united
in suffrage and intercession."
(Fr. Alberione)*



At 10:28 pm (local time) on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, he died in the infirmary in Rome from a cardiocirculatory arrest.

FR. FERRUCCIO PONTARIN

74 years old, 62 years of Pauline life, 50 years of profession and 43 years in the Priesthood

Ferruccio was born in Arzignano (Vicenza) on January 22, 1951, the eldest of three siblings, to parents Alessandro and Agnese Mani. He joined the community of Vicenza on September 25, 1962, entered the novitiate on September 7, 1973, made his first religious profession on September 8, 1974, committed himself definitively with perpetual profession on September 15, 1979, and was ordained a priest on June 27, 1981.

He began his apostolic work as an assistant in the bursar's office of the community in Rome, but in 1987, he was transferred to Catania, where he served as the superior of the community for two terms. In 1993, he returned to Rome to engage in provincial administration, but the following year, he was appointed superior of the community in Genoa, where he remained for many years until 2014, working in the bookstore and then again as superior and later as the delegate of the community. In 2016, he returned to Rome as the director of the bookshop on Via Conciliazione, and in 2018, he moved to Vicenza. Finally, in 2021, he was appointed superior of the community in Catania, a position that will be extended by the Provincial superior "*donec aliter provideatur*" (= *until the superior disposes otherwise*).

Fr. Ferruccio lived his religious and priestly sensitivity in a fully coherent manner, which translated during the long years dedicated to the apostolate of the Bookshop into a personal and confidential approach with customers. Even after a few years, many people continued to inquire about him.

In private, he was characterized by a sincere joy closely linked to his notable competence in the natural world: medicinal herbs, gardening, and even some delightful culinary recipes. Indeed, although from a distance, he never missed an opportunity to offer subtle "agricultural advice" to his farmer brother. In community life—always with wise discretion—he was attentive and vigilant, engaging in dialogue and collaboration.

In his apostolic ministry, Fr. Ferruccio held significant responsibilities that he carried out with great dedication, avoiding any desire for undue attention. He was very hardworking and managed tasks with exceptional care. He had a deep love for Pauline spirituality: to the groups he led (Cooperators, the Institute of the Holy Family), where he frequently shared the beauty and depth of the prayers composed by Fr. Alberione.

He was particularly sensitive and attentive to the aspect of vocational ministry. He always made himself available to accompany those he saw in need of

human and spiritual guidance. He consistently made the Pauline proposal to younger individuals, always with great discretion and determination.

A confrere shares: "In Genoa in 1997, as a young postulant, he made me feel at home during my brief experience in the bookshop. Fr. Ferruccio was always dedicated to welcoming people and ensuring they felt at ease. Through his authenticity, he consistently aimed for the well-being of others."

During his final days when he was visibly ill with cancer, he did his best to fulfill his duties more often than not. In his last days in the infirmary in Rome, he accepted the will of the Lord and the suffering he had to endure with grace. He communicated by phone with the confreres of his community in Catania, trying to reassure them, even as they sensed his increasing difficulties. "One of the last phone calls stays with me," recalls a confrere from the community, "when he told me he felt at peace, forgiven, and willingly asked for and offered his forgiveness for everything."

May the Lord welcome our brother and grant him eternal reward, as we ask Him to intercede for numerous holy vocations within our Congregation and the entire Pauline Family.

Rome, 20 March 2025

Fr. Vito Spagnolo, SSP

The funeral will take place on Friday, March 21, at 3:00 PM in the Subcrypt of the Basilica of the Queen of Apostles in Rome. According to his will, the body will be cremated.

Circumscription Superiors must notify their communities about the prescribed suffrages (Const. 65 and 65.1).