

Pasqualine Terlizzi was born at Solofra, Province of Avellino, Italy, on February 18, 1873. From very early infancy, her parents, Raphael and Theresa Santora, God-loving Catholics, instilled in her the principles of righteousness and virtue upon which they had patterned their own lives, especially deep piety, charity and humility.

Just before the turn of the century, Pasqualina entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. John the Baptist and, after a year of postulancy, she received the holy habit and her name in Religion, Sister Beatrice. The following year our fervent novice was admitted to the first profession of vows, jubilant at the realization of her youthful dream -- total consecration and dedication to Christ, a long-felt need and burning desire of a soul deeply in love with Him.

In 1901, following a mysterious inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Sister Beatrice requested and received our holy Founder's permission to come to the United States of America on a special mission of charity -- to help her sick brother who lacked the necessary means to take care of himself. Our sainted Founder's vision and foresight enabled him to trust Divine Providence Who, by devious ways and tortuosities, often derives great good from seemingly questionable events.

Relinquishing the holy habit was a difficult task for Sister Beatrice. This was followed by a long and arduous journey to the United States where she took up her abode with a sister living in Corona, Long Island. Rising at five each morning, Pasqualina would attend daily Mass before going to work. This entailed an additional sacrifice, for the church was a mile away from her home.

About a year after her arrival in this country, her brother passed away and our young woman's thoughts turned to the convent, wondering how she could find a way of returning to religion. She often visited an uncle, living on Thompson Street, New York City, and spent much of her free time in St. Anthony's Church there. It was perhaps in this Church that she met the Baptistines to whom she revealed her desire to join them in their heroic efforts to pioneer a noble apostolic movement -- the establishment of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. John the Baptist in America.

There opened before Pasqualina marvelous new vistas of the apostolate -- children, especially, the orphaned and destitute, to be loved and rescued from ruin; and seeds of a new spring for the beloved Institute. For two months she left her sister's home every day to visit the Baptistine Convent on Cranberry Street in Brooklyn, and spent much time with the Sisters in planning her re-entrance. Finally she confessed her intentions to her sister, explaining that the reason for which she had left the convent in Italy and had come to America no longer existed.

Back in religion, Sister Beatrice joyfully shared the hardships, humiliations and contradictions of the early foundation, convinced that all works pleasing to God bear the imprint of His holy cross. Rejected by the Catholic hierarchy in America as inept foreigners, the first band of Baptistines, valiant women of God, Whose love for Him bore them aloft above

the seemingly insurmountable obstacles barring their way, subdued their spirits, and were kind to all who came to them. The example of their controlled and ordered way of life was ultimately blessed, for in 1906, His Excellency Bishop John J. O'Connor, of the Newark Diocese, called the Sisters of St. John the Baptist to direct St. Lucy's School and Orphanage, located at 12 Amity Place, Newark, N. J.. At St. Lucy's, the pioneer Sisters were steady and untiring in their daily ordered and disciplined way of life and, somehow, a peaceful existence crystallized. Out of the chaos, humiliations and rejection endured so nobly and joyfully, there rose a convent, the cradle of the American Foundation, a flourishing orphanage for girls and our first parochial school. These dauntless young women sought first the kingdom of God and all the rest was added by Him. Their deep, underlying and enterprising fidelity to God was blessed by Him in ways beyond their wildest dreams.

It was at St. Lucy's Convent that Sister Beatrice's outstanding qualities of gentleness, charity, humility and simplicity were soon valued and appreciated. Early in her religious life she was recognized as an "Angel of Charity", who lavished the riches of her tender heart upon all the members of the household. The young Sisters of those days found in her a dear friend and understanding big Sister. The prodigal love and solicitude for the young Sisters who confided in her signalled her as a soul set apart to diffuse the sunshine of God's love among those, especially, who, in their youthful days of inexperience, were stumbling along the road of perfection. No matter what the source of discouragement, Sister Beatrice was always there to comfort and inspire, rich torrents of peace flooding the troubled heart.

As assistant prefect of the orphans, Sister Beatrice was loved as a veritable mother, a dear friend, and an indefatigable missionary, whose only goal was to relieve the sufferings of the orphans, and, in her own simple way, to educate them to virtue and holiness. As often as not, accompanied by one of the older girls, she begged in the vicinity just to have that little "extra" for the orphans; fresh eggs and other needs for the weaker ones, cake, fruit and sweets for the entire group. The good people of the neighboring stores, penetrating the veil of modest reserve, discovered in her the angel of charity and tenderness for God's poor, and gave with generous abundance.

Later Sister Beatrice served as Superior of St. Anthony's Convent, Albany, N. Y., and of the House for the Italian Immigrant at Water Street, New York, ever giving of herself unreservedly that those who came within her sphere of influence be brought closer to God. Back again to Newark to which she referred as "home", Sister Beatrice resumed her work with the orphans.

Then when holy obedience considered the duty too heavy for her declining health, she made herself useful in sewing and mending the Sisters' habits, and lending a helping hand here and a kind word there. As her life ebbed on and age crept slowly along, Sister Beatrice, in need of nursing care, was transferred first to Providence Rest Home, Bronx, New York, and later to Mount St. John Convent, White Plains, New York, residence for the aged and infirm religious of the Congregation. At the sunset of life, as in her days of youth and vigor, she retained her serenity and joviality, accepting physical suffering as an integral part of life, and a precious gift from above. Never a word of complaint was uttered, but only appreciation and gratitude for those who took care of her, a smile of contentment and joy ever brightening her face. She died as she lived -- peacefully and serenely on April 19, 1963, surrounded by the Sisters who

had learned from her an unforgettable lesson in humility, charity, fidelity to the holy rule, devotion and affection for the Superiors and for our dear Institute.

Thus Sister Beatrice, wise and prudent virgin in whom burned the love of God and neighbor, went out to meet the bridegroom profoundly aware of His calling as He stretched before her the rich reward of a life so well spent, and invited her to share the glory of the scarred but sacred flesh of the Son of God.

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE!