

Generalate – Rome

Necrology n. 38 July – December 2024





Sister Alma Blume, MPF

*** Baltimore, Maryland**

July 7, 1931

† Medical Center, Morristown

September 11, 2024

Sister Alma Blume died peacefully at the age of 93 on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at Morristown Medical Center, Morristown, New Jersey.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, on July 7, 1931, Sister Alma entered the Religious Teachers Filippini on June 13, 1945. She received the religious habit on June 15, 1947, and made her Oblation on July 2, 1950.

From an early age, Sister Alma had a love for learning and was an avid reader. She earned a BS degree in Education from Fordham University, New York, and an MS in Guidance from Marywood College, Marywood, Pennsylvania.

Throughout her 77 years of religious life, Sister Alma zealously shared her gifts and talents in a myriad of ways. She ministered as classroom teacher, Vice-Principal, Principal, Director of Religious Education, and Guidance Counselor at both the elementary and high school levels, engaged in retreat ministry and served as Delegate for Religious. In addition, she was named Directress of both Formation and Vocation promotion for the Province of Saint Lucy. Sister Alma was appointed local convent Superior and was elected a delegate to Provincial and General Chapters.

Sister Alma was missioned in the (arch) dioceses of Camden, Hartford, Metuchen, Newark, New York, Paterson, Philadelphia, Santa Fe, and Trenton. For 12 years, Sister Alma competently served as Director of Religious Education at Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, a parish that welcomed the Religious Teachers Filippini into their faith community in 2001. Due to declining health, Sister Alma took up residence in Saint Joseph Hall at Villa Walsh in 2015. In her last nine years of life, Sister Alma courageously bore her long-term suffering with admirable faith, patience, and acceptance.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Alma was held in Saint Lucy Chapel at Villa Walsh on Saturday, September 14, 2024. In his homily, the Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of Paterson, making reference to changing the direction of a train, shared, *“Death hastens to end life. But Christ himself, by his death on the Cross has ‘tripped the switch’ and robbed death of its victims. He has made our dying with him the beginning of a new life, God’s own eternal life. Here is the hope we have today as we hand Sister Alma back to God.”*

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in her letter of sympathy to the Sisters of the Province wrote, ... *“Sister Alma possessed a strong, dignified posture that demanded respect from everyone she encountered regardless of age, position, or title. Efficient, organized, detailed and meticulous best describe her. When a matter was grave, Sister Alma could calmly and firmly settle a problem and offer sound advice. When the matter was light, Sister Alma was the first to welcome and initiate laughter and fun. Among her many talents, Sister Alma was a great speaker and entertainer: articulate, prepared, and polished, readily capturing the attention of her audience. She was the emcee at many of our community gatherings and possessed the ability to keep the program moving and light. ... She possessed the ability to make every Sister shine.”* Mother General continued, *“Because of diminishing health, Sister Alma returned to New Jersey aware and resigned of her need to enter Saint Joseph Hall. During her early years as a patient, she was always present and faithful to Mass, prayer times, and meals with the Sisters in the Chapel, dining room, and lounge. Her quiet presence*

also reflected peace and acceptance of the cross now handed her. ... The Gospel reminds us, 'Whoever wishes to come after me must deny herself, take up her cross and follow me.' On this special Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, when light is cast on the great impact the Cross has in our lives, we are encouraged that Sister Alma in her last years was able to embrace the Cross and share quietly in Jesus' sufferings. This is the result of a prayerful Maestra, who allowed Jesus to transform her and ready her for eternal life. Sister Alma ... rest in peace!"

Sister Alma Blume's mortal body rests in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh.



Sister Gerardina Lisanti, MPF



✱ **Muro Lucano PZ**

November 18, 1940

✝ **Rome**

September 27, 2024

Sister Gerardina Lisanti was born in Muro Lucano PZ on November 18, 1940, in a faith-filled family, who offered two daughters to the Lord, Sister Gerardina and Sister Brigida. Sister Gerardina entered the Pontifical Institute of the Maestre Pie Filippini on October 16, 1956, received the religious habit on September 7, 1958, and made her Perpetual Oblation on August 27, 1961.

The path of Sister Gerardina's apostolic service was very complex. Her presence was renewed several times in various places in central-northern Italy: Capalbio GR, Spoleto "S. Gregorio" PG, Piacenza, Limena PD, Varese, Gubbio PG, Sulmona AQ, Spoleto "De Amicis" PG, Otranto LE. Due to health problems, Sister Gerardina's last residence was Rome-Via Sangemini. This transition was accepted with patience and always with a smile.

A greater part of Sister Gerardina's mission included her mission as a teacher in the nursery school, assistant in the after-school program of the primary school, catechist for children and young people, and local superior in various communities. Wherever assigned, Sister Gerardina left her mark as a joyful witness and a person open to change and growth.

An encounter with Sister Gerardina was pleasurable because she was enthusiastic about her consecrated life. Her presence exhibited a positive experience, serene, welcoming, and respectful. Fundamentally good and gentle, Sister Gerardina loved her vocation as a Maestra Pia. She possessed a tender devotion to the Madonna that was transmitted to those she taught and those she encountered in her mission. Simple and amiable, delicate and sensitive, she was ready to help anyone who needed assistance.

Sister Gerardina had the ability to bring both the young and old together, and for everyone, she had a kind word, a piece of advice, and a prayer to offer. She often repeated, *"If we do not trust in the Lord, we are poor and incapable of solving the various problems that life presents us."*

The sisters in community with her share this memory: *"... the time spent together left only joyful memories... Sister Gerardina found a way to defuse and overcome the obstacles we encountered... Ours was a cheerful and serene community, helping each other, even in the most tiring work... With*

the lay colleagues, she was affable and courteous; she willingly collaborated in activities with the children. She always had a word of appreciation for everyone."

Although her path was, tormented by persistent illness, Sister Gerardina always gave a strong message of hope, supported by faith and trust in the Lord. The suffering that accompanied Sister Gerardina for many years was accepted and highly valued by her. Even in the darkest moments, she shared a smile, the testimony of acceptance of pain with a great spirit of abandonment to the Will of the Father.

Her smile, sowing glimmers of light, Sister Gerardina lived fully until the end, awaiting the meeting with her Groom. At dawn on September 27, 2024, the Lord called her home.

Sister Gerardina Lisanti's body was buried in the family tomb in the cemetery of Muro Lucano PZ, her hometown.



Sister Maria Soccorso Cuccia, MPF



✻ **Caltavuturo PA** **September 10, 1940**
✝ **Rome** **September 27, 2024**

Sister Maria Soccorso Cuccia, born in Caltavuturo PA, on September 10, 1940, entered the Pontifical Institute of the Maestre Pie Filippini, on August 6, 1960. Sister Maria received the religious habit on August 27, 1961, and made her Perpetual Oblation on August 30, 1964.

Sister Maria was missioned in numerous places: Rome-Via Caboto, Montemaggiore Bel-sito PA, Sala Consilina SA, Teggiano SA, Castro LE, Naples, Aliminusa PA, Andrano LE. Sister Maria also served as a local Superior.

In her apostolic service, Sister Maria's responsibilities varied. She was primarily a nursery school teacher. Further duties included caring for the boarding girls, orphans, and those with family problems. She was a catechist and animator of the parish youth group.

Sister Maria's spontaneity and the vivacity with which she related to others made her an attractive entertainer. She eased moments of tension by creating joy and sharing happiness. With her constructive dynamism, she was involved and aroused enthusiasm. She supported, and encouraged efforts made in the various community and pastoral initiatives, so much so that she was jokingly and affectionately nicknamed "the troubleshooter!"

Among the testimonies collected, a young man enthusiastically shared these statements. "*... It is not possible to forget a person like Sister Maria, a woman of smiles, confident, and a lover of young people. She was always full of new ideas and desired to do something different. A tireless daughter of Saint Lucy, she was an example to follow for many people. She transmitted faith and love for God and for others. A hug to you, in Heaven, Sister Maria, you will always be in my heart!*"

Characterized by affability, attention, and a desire to give relief and comfort, Sister Maria's presence in the community, and her way of approaching others in her apostolate were admirable. She always participated actively and with full availability. In prayer, she managed to recharge herself to read every event through the eyes of faith.

Sister Maria's way of speaking and above all her way of life, a firm tenacity and a great sensitivity was expressed in creative and unconditional generosity. In the eighties, during the earthquake, together with her sisters, she visited the affected parish communities of the nearby towns distributing basic necessities.

In the last period of her life, with serenity and patience, she was strongly tested by illness. Despite pain, she radiated trust and courage. She renewed her offering to the Lord, who called her to himself the evening of September 27, 2024, to welcome her to endless joy.

Sister Maria Cuccia's mortal remains were buried in the family tomb in the cemetery of Caltavuturo, PA, her hometown.



Sister Rose Iapaola, MPF



✻ **Jersey City, NJ**

August 24, 1925

✚ **Morristown, NJ**

October 28, 2024

Sister Rose Iapaola, died peacefully on Monday, October 28, 2024, at Saint Joseph Hall, Health Care Center, Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey, at the age of 99.

Born to Tobio and Josephine (Fraraccio) Iapaola on August 24, 1925, in Jersey City, New Jersey, Sister Rose grew up in a large, loving, and faith-filled family. She entered the Religious Teachers Filippini on December 27, 1939, received the religious habit on June 15, 1941, and made her Perpetual Oblation on August 27, 1944. Sister Rose was awarded a BS degree in Elementary Education from the College of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, New Jersey and earned a MA in Religious Studies from Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island.

In her 83 years of religious life, Sister Rose shared her gifts and talents in a myriad of ways. She ministered as a classroom teacher, Vice-Principal, Principal, and Director of Religious Education, moderator of parish women's groups, and engaged in parish pastoral ministry. She was appointed to serve on the Commission for the Revision of the *Constitutions and Rules* of the Religious Teachers Filippini from 1978-1979. Fluent in Italian, Sister Rose was called upon for decades to serve as General Chapter translator, and to assist with secretarial responsibilities. With evident leadership qualities, Sister Rose was appointed local convent Superior.

Sister Rose generously gave of herself in the (arch) dioceses of Albany, Camden, Cleveland, Hartford, Metuchen, Newark, Paterson, Pittsburgh, Providence, Pueblo, Scranton, and Trenton. In 2016, due to declining health, Sister Rose retired to Villa Walsh. Two years later, she took up residence in Saint Joseph Hall Infirmary.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Rose was held in Saint Lucy Chapel at Villa Walsh on Monday, November 4, 2024. In his homily, the Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of Paterson, noted, *“In all her assignments in 12 dioceses, Sister Rose brought joy and the good news that Jesus was the love of her life. ... Because she loved her religious community, she gladly helped others understand one another across language barriers, worked hard to place the community on a solid foundation of Constitutions and Rules, and gladly invited others to become Religious Teachers Filippini.”*

Sister Angela Bulla, a long-time friend, shared, *“In Community, Sister Rose’s fervent loyalty involved her in many projects. Her Jersey City wit and wisdom prevailed, as well as her precocious insight. ... We attended every General Chapter from 1969 to 2007, and savored the experience, along with Sister Christine Spirito.”*

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in her letter of sympathy to the Sisters of the Province recalled: *“Although Sister Rose has spent more active years in the Queen of Apostles Province than in the Saint Lucy Province, I had opportunities and encounters with her through the years to aptly confirm her love of mission, love of Community, and her deep devotion to Our Lady and Saint Lucy. Sister Rose was friendly, enjoyed engaging in conversation, and retained a smiling, friendly appearance.... Sister Rose is not foreign to the Generalate or Rome. Following Vatican II, she was commissioned for one year to represent the Queen of Apostles Province in rewriting our Constitutions. I am certain that through the years there remained a sense of awe each time Sister Rose turned page to page of our Constitutions, knowing she participated in this awesome task! ... We can never negate all the good Sister Rose has accomplished in her years of ministry. And during these last years of long-suffering, we take comfort in the words of St. Paul: ‘Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day’ (2 Cor. 4:16) Today, Sister Rose meets her Lord and Master, purified in His love and grace. She is united with Christ, her loving Spouse, and is rewarded life eternal with Him. Sisters, let us pray that each day we, too, are being renewed in Christ’s love and grace.”*

Sister Rose Iapaola’s body was laid to rest in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh.



Sister Maria Concetta Rivellino, MPF



✿ **Riccia CB**

November 27, 1923

✠ **Rome**

November 12, 2024

Born in Riccia CB on November 27, 1923, Sister Maria Concetta Rivellino would have turned 101 within a few days. Truly, a long journey of earthly life.

On August 30, 1938, Sister Maria Concetta entered the Pontifical Institute of the Maestre Pie Filippini, encouraged by her aunt also a Maestra Pia, Sister Stella Reale. Sister Maria Concetta received the religious habit on October 15, 1941, and made her Perpetual Oblation on August 2, 1945.

After her initial formation in the post-war years, Sister Concettina served caring for infants and after-school children. Later, she carried out the apostolate of parish catechist and primary school teacher in various locations: Spoleto PG, Rome-Via Caboto, Rocca di Papa RM, L'Aquila, Teggiano-Prato Perillo SA, Frascati RM. She returned to some communities several times. Sister also held the office of local superior.

With a refined and polite manner, Sister Concettina knew how to address and maintain relationships with everyone. With the students, she was a patient and tenacious teacher, and worked hard to bring out the best in them; with the parents, she was a reliable counselor and a careful guide; in the community, with the sisters, she was discreet, respectful, and attentive to everything and everyone. Sister Concettina loved singing and music. She is still remembered as a young girl, embracing her accordion, while she created pleasant entertainment, playing religious melodies and popular songs, too. With the group of girls of Catholic Action, she created small occasional shows and recreational and humorous sketches.

Willing to be helpful in every circumstance, Sister Concetta generously made available her time, talents, and experience. As long as she could, she willingly served in the corridors between the classrooms for assistance and at the reception desk to welcome the students who, in turn, reciprocated her affection, competing to offer to accompany her and support her on the path that led to the house.

On the morning of November 12, 1924, Sister Concettina Rivellino left this earth to join her Spouse. Her peaceful and prayerful passing, surrounded affectionately by the community sisters, can be defined as enviable. In Heaven, she now enjoys peace and eternal rest.

Sister Maria Concetta Rivellino's mortal remains were buried in the tomb of the Institute in the cemetery of Nettuno RM.



Sister Maria Riccitelli, MPF

✱ **Riccia CB**
✠ **Rome**

January 25, 1929
December 10, 2024

Born in Riccia CB on January 25, 1929, Sister Maria Riccitelli entered the Pontifical Institute of the Maestre Pie Filippini on October 20, 1949, received the religious habit on October 15, 1950, and made the Perpetual Oblation on September 6, 1953.

Truly a missionary in a very special way, Sister Maria carried out her apostolate in many places, from the north to the south of Italy, on the islands and in distant lands: San Giorgio di Livenza VE, Sulmona AQ, São Paulo (Brazil), Avezzano AQ, Scurcola Marsicana AQ, Cagliari, Rome-Via Trevignano Romano, Cave RM, Corese Terra RI, Aliminusa PA, Anzio RM, Rome-Generalate

Sister Maria lived a long and meaningful life. She worked, as a teacher in the nursery school, was an assistant and catechist for the children, and dedicated herself to cooking and attending the door. She

is best defined as patient and hardworking, with an exceptional spirit of sacrifice. Hers was a style of simplicity, availability, and humility.

Wherever Sister Maria was sent in the name of obedience, she spread smiles and kindness. Animated by faith and active charity, she always thought of others, small and big, poor and needy. Gifted with excellent mental and practical abilities, Sister Maria was open to dialogue and discussion. She intervened in conversations always communicating some of her reflections on God's Word. She was very sensitive and attentive, interested in everything that happened around her, and tried to grasp and illuminate the most relevant aspects.

Smiling, joyful, ardent in a missionary sense, a tireless apostle, she enthusiastically joined the initiatives of the community and the parish and participated actively. A skilled communicator, she was lively and effective in recounting many episodes of her life, especially when she related the misadventures caused by her poor knowledge of the language in a foreign land.

With a strong sense of belonging to our religious family, Sister Maria never lost interest in what was happening round about her. She wanted to be informed about everything and her eyes widened when she was told about the good that was being done elsewhere.

Sister Maria loved to read as a means of information and spiritual enrichment. Above all, continuous prayer marked her life as a *Maestra Pia*. She faithfully cultivated devotion to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and Saint Joseph.

One of the sisters relates with affection and admiration: *"I was a child, when on October 6, 1950, the Maestre Pie entered my village, and to welcome them, on that day, the parish priest had planned a First Holy Communion celebration ... I keep imprinted in my heart the memory of Sister Maria, a young Maestra Pia, always with a smile on her lips..."*

No doubt, the Lord found Sister Maria serene and patient, when on the night of December 10, 2024; He visited and embraced Sister Maria to take her with Him to Heaven.

Sister Maria Riccitelli's mortal remains were buried in the family tomb, in the cemetery of Riccia, her hometown.



Sister Deusdete Chaves, MPF

✻ **Piancó, Paraíba,**

May 7, 1932

✝ **São Paulo, SP**

December 16, 2024

Born in Piancó, State of Paraíba, Brazil, on May 7, 1932, Sister Deusdete entered the Maestre Pie Filippini on December 27, 1962, received the religious habit January 5, 1964 and made the Perpetual Oblation on January 10, 1965.

Sister Deusdete and Sister Therezinha Salgado were the first Brazilian vocations.

Sister Deusdete has always been involved in the pastoral care of the Parish of “Santa Croce” in Itaberaba, and was also the first Principal of the School opened in the same Parish, which, over the years, became the current College “Santa Lucia Filippini” in São Paulo.

Sister Deusdete obtained the Obteve or Diploma of the Normal School in 1953 (before entering the Institute), in the State of Paraíba; the Diploma of Teaching from the College “Santa Lucia Filippini”, in São Paulo; the State Diploma of Secretariat in São Paulo; the Degree in Literature from the University “Teresa Martins”, São Paulo; the Degree in Pedagogy from the University “Campos Salles”, São Paulo; the Diploma of Religious Sciences from the Claretian University, São Paulo.

Sister Deusdete carried out her educational and evangelizing mission in the various communities of the Vice-province, as a teacher, principal, local superior: “Santa Lucia Filippini” House, São Paulo, “Madonna Addolorata” Parish School, São Paulo; “San Giuseppe” House and “Villa Provvidenza” Parish School, São Paulo; “Nostra Signora del Buon Consiglio” House in Miracatu, São Paulo; “Santa Zita” House, Alto di Villa Maria, São Paulo; “Madre Ninetta Jonata” House in Mairinque, São Paulo; Vice Provincial House; “Our Lady Help of Christians” House, Vilhena, State of Rondônia; “San Carlos” House, São Paulo; “Our Lady of Fatima” House, Villa Penteadó, São Paulo. Sister Deusdete spent her last years of life, tried by illness, in the Vice Provincial House.

Sister Deusdete was a committed sister, with a great spirit of service and always faithful to community life. She loved Consecrated Life, the Institute and our Founders. She had good relationships with people and welcomed everyone with her usual smile. She was active and involved in every moment of the life of the Institute and its works. She was gifted with a generous missionary spirit and worked in the Pastoral activities of the different parishes to which the Superiors sent her.

She lived her illness and suffering in silence, cultivating his life of prayer.

On December 16, 2024, Sister Deusdete serenely completed her mission on earth and her desire to meet with the Lord was realized. Now she enjoys the celebration of heaven, incomparable in front of the joy she experienced on earth in the path of history of the Vice-province, since the beginning.

Sister Deusdete Chaves’s mortal remains rest in the crypt of the Vice-provincial House, in São Paulo, Brazil.



Sister Mary Ann Gecina, MPF

✻ **Ellwood City, Pennsylvania**

July 24, 1940

✝ **Morristown, NJ**

December 24, 2024



Sister Mary Ann Gecina, MPF, died peacefully on the morning of Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24, 2024, at Saint Joseph Hall, Health care Center, Villa Walsh, Morristown, New Jersey. She was 84 years of age.

Sister Mary Ann was born in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, on July 22, 1940, to a loving family. Educated by the Religious Teachers Filippini at Purification of the Blessed

Virgin Mary School and Church in Ellwood City, Sister Mary Ann entered our Community on August 15, 1958. She received the religious habit on August 31, 1959, and made her Perpetual Oblation August 26, 1962. Sister Mary Ann earned a BS degree in Secondary Education from Saint Joseph University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a MS degree in Chemistry from the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

In her 65 years of religious life, Sister Mary Ann did not seek the spotlight, yet she generously shared her gifts and talents wherever she was missioned. Her love of nature and the outdoors was indicative of her creative and inquisitive disposition. She faithfully ministered as a dynamic classroom teacher in the (arch) dioceses of Camden, Metuchen, Newark, Providence, and Trenton. She served as local convent Superior and accepted roles as varied as teacher of advanced placement chemistry, chorus teacher, chair of the music department, producer of annual school musicals, and athletic director at Paul VI High School in Haddonfield New Jersey, and also used her combined skills as Principal of Villa Victoria Academy Upper School in Trenton, New Jersey, for 14 years.

The Most Revered Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Paterson, offered a Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Mary Ann at Saint Lucy Chapel, Villa Walsh on Saturday, December 28, 2024. The Most Reverend James F. Checchio, Bishop of Metuchen, with four additional priests, concelebrated a beautiful Eucharistic Liturgy.

Sister Ascenza Tizzano, General Superior, in her letter of sympathy to the Sisters of the Province wrote, *“Sister Mary Ann had numerous talents that she shared freely and that added to the richness of the spirit of the Community and the people she served, especially the youth. Blessed with diverse talents, she shared these gifts generously, joyfully, professionally, and at the same time modestly. The school plays she directed, her excitement and skill in the field of sports, her flair at the piano, and her love to teach and to explore, each were significant in her interactions with others and in bringing life in a variety of ways to our mission. Although her accomplishments were extraordinary, she presented herself so simply and in a soft-spoken casual manner. A smile always appeared engrained in her facial expression. Today she presents her wrapped gifts to the Newborn King with a heart filled with love and gratitude for all she has received and all she endured.”*

In her tribute, Sister Marianne McCann, who worked closely with Sister Mary Ann for many years, especially at Paul VI High School observed, *“Without being able to rely on a huge, flamboyant personality, Sister Mary Ann always amazed me with her ability to make friends and really care for people...even people she did not know well. One afternoon, the doorbell rang, and Sister Mary Ann answered it. The next thing I know, I am standing in the kitchen with a small, yapping dog. This was followed by Sister Mary Ann getting a glass of water for the elderly dog owner and telling me that she had to drive this man and his dog home. In a matter of a minute, she gave of herself. For the 25th anniversary of her Investiture, Sister Mary Ann gave friends a remembrance of a small, framed quote by Dag Hammarskjold that inspired her. It read, ‘If only I may grow: firmer, simpler, quieter, warmer.’ We here today are witnesses to her living just that way. We pray and mourn for Sister Mary Ann who is now mercifully freed from her pain and suffering. May the angels lead our dear Sister and friend home to eternal peace.”*

Sister Mary Ann Gecina’s, mortal remains were laid to rest in Ave Maria Cemetery at Villa Walsh.



