

June 21, 2007

Death Notice No. 18 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the Italy, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **ACHILLE BERTAGNOLLI**, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on June 4, 2007 in Rome in the 85th year of his age and the 69th year of his religious profession.

Achille Bertagnolli died in the hospital on the morning of June 4th. He was born in Taio (Trent) on June 7, 1922 to Guido and Luigia Chini.

He entered the postulate from Collegio Santa Maria in Pallanza on July 14, 1934 and later decided to follow his Marianist vocation by entering the novitiate at St. Remy Signeulx (Belgium) on September 11, 1937. He concluded his novitiate year by making his first profession on

September 12, 1938, along with two fellow brothers from Italy, Natale Brivio and Pietro Monti.

Returning to Italy, he continued, as a scholastic, with his secondary education in Classics spending a year in Pallanza and three years in Rome. It was during his stay in Rome that he received his secondary school diploma in the classics, just as World War II was breaking out.

Following the war, he became a member of the community of Santa Maria in Rome and attended La Sapienza University, concluding his studies in 1949 with a degree in Classics. In the meantime, on September 1, 1946, he made his perpetual profession.

Having always been a great fan of sports, and being one who kept himself in excellent physical condition, he and Fr. Carlo Buzio collaborated in the founding of the *Vis Nova Calcio* (Soccer Academy) at Santa Maria. There, for many years, he served as an enthusiastic organizer and patient coach.

After a year of teaching in Pallanza at Collegio Santa Maria (1948), he was assigned to Rome to teach in the middle school at Santa Maria. The following year he was transferred to the Postulate at Giove (1950).

From 1951 to 1953 he could be found once again at Santa Maria in Pallanza where he was a teacher and assistant at the boarding school. Returning to Rome, this time for good, he once again became a member of the community at Santa Maria in 1954. Here he was a teacher in the two-year science program of the Institute. From that point on, until his retirement, he served in this capacity as well as Vice-Rector of the same two-year program for several years.

Brother Achille, as a teacher, took his responsibilities to his young students very seriously. He desired to be close to them in their formation and to encourage them to develop the best in themselves. Whether it was calling them to a love of discipline, challenging them scholastically, or as a coach, he tried to excite in them the desire to pursue what is good. He loved to instill in them a hope for achieving their goals of leading a long and good life. He spent a great part of his life devoted to Santa Maria in Rome and dedicated himself to helping to maintain the prestigious cultural and athletic reputation of the Institute. He worked very hard to identify his educational apostolic mission with Our Lady, knowing that she had confided to him this work at the Institute, which bears her name, so that he might help to make it better.

Required to retire from his ministry of teaching, having reached the age limit, over these last few years he developed the faithful habit of making a pilgrimage to the nearby Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore every afternoon. While walking, and while inside, he said the Rosary and prayed for his family, friends, former students, and so many people that he cared for, in particular his brother, Fr. Fabio, who was, for many years, a missionary in Brazil.

During these last months, his strong constitution became noticeably weakened as he suffered from great fatigue. He spent time in the hospital from May 10-21 for evaluation and treatment. Then, on the morning of June 4th just before he would have undergone a minor procedure on his esophagus, he suffered by a pulmonary embolism (blood clot) and died around 10:30 a.m.

Achille Bertagnoli leaves behind the memory of a true gentleman in both his character and his behavior. He had a love for life (this was certainly never more obvious than when he sang), was polite and congenial amidst people, and had a great devotion to the mountains and people of his native part of Italy. The numerous and gracious presence of his former students at his funeral attested to their feelings of respect and affection which they held for him as their teacher, coach and friend.

He was laid to rest at Verano Cemetery, in the tomb of the Marianist Family and we take consolation in thinking of him in the company of all of his loved ones (family and fellow brothers) together with the Virgin Mary and Our Lord Jesus.