

In the Father's House

«As we have been united
in the profession of the faith,
so let us keep ourselves united
in suffrage and intercession».
(Fr. Alberione)



At about 12 noon (local time) on Thursday, 25 February 2021, our dear Disciple of the Divine Master died in the community of Tokyo-Yotsuya (Japan).

BROTHER SHIGEO MICHELE GIUSEPPE YAMAUCHI **90 years, 70 of Pauline life and 66 of religious profession**

Shigeo was born near the city of Matsuura, in the prefecture of Nagasaki, on 15 April 1930, but was registered in the civil registry only five days later and was therefore officially born on 20 April. The family, of peasant origin, is made up of father Kitamatsu Stefano, mother Shizu Maria, six sons and a daughter. Shigeo is the fifth in the order of birth. He was baptized on 18 April 1930 in the church of Tabira, dedicated to the 26 Holy Japanese Martyrs, with the Christian name of Michael. Here on 25 October 1942, he too received the sacrament of Confirmation.

After elementary school, he entered the Nagasaki Minor Seminary to attend middle school. This is when World War II broke out in the Pacific. He was right in the seminary building when, on the morning of 9 August 1945, the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. These were hours of extreme anguish for the collective drama that Japan, now close to surrender to the Allies, was experiencing. Brother Giuseppe, a name assumed by Shigeo with the religious profession, could not tell much of those dramatic days, if not the frustration of having been able to do little to save the lives of the many wounded who stood before him. In those moments, he too did his best, along with the other seminarians, to burn numerous corpses near the Nagasaki Cathedral to avoid the spread of infections.

Sometime later, he left the Minor Seminary because he felt the difficulty of preaching in public. He then returned to his family to help his father in the fields. Later he found work first as a mechanic in a workshop and then as a carpenter. One day, he met Brother Chujiro Paolo Yamano, one of the first Pauline disciples, and decided to enter the Society of Saint Paul to consecrate himself to the Lord, following his older sister who had entered the Congregation of the Annunciation a few years earlier in Nagasaki.

On 19 March 1950, the feast of St. Joseph, he entered the community of Fukuoka. After an initial period of acclimatization, in April 1951, he was transferred to the Tokyo-Akasaka community, where he was already beginning to deal with typographical work. In this same community, the novitiate period began on 8 April 1953, with Fr Carlo Boano as group Master. On 9 April 1954, he made his first religious profession, which he would confirm in perpetuity on 9 April 1959.

During the period of Juniorate and until October 1971, he continued to carry out the apostolate in the printing house. In November, he was called by obedience to move to the Tokyo-Wakaba community, where he worked until March 1976 in the field of broadcasting. In that year, he began to serve in the Tokyo bookstore, a very demanding apostolate that he would carry on until March 1984, at which time he was appointed Director of broadcasting. In 1990, when his mandate ended, he continued to offer his contribution in the same sector until the end of 1999. During this period, he was for a long time Councilor and Local Bursar of the Tokyo-Wakaba community, until he became Delegate from July 1997 to 31 December 2002. These canonical assignments did not distract him from the direct apostolate, as he continued to go to our bookshop in central Tokyo, continuing in this service even when, in 2006, he was transferred to the Tokyo-Yotsuya community.

Brother Giuseppe has always interpreted the dimension of studiousness as the “mission within the mission” proper to the Pauline. After completing his service as Delegate in Wakaba, in fact, together with the apostolate in diffusion carried out with exemplary seriousness until July 2015, he attended a computer school with great interest at the age of over 70 to deepen some graphics programs – Photoshop, Illustrator and In design – which were very useful for creating the advertising pages of our monthly magazine and other Catholic periodicals.

On 24 July 2015, he was operated on for stomach cancer in the hospital of the University of Keio and then transferred until 9 February 2016, for rehabilitation, in the “Santa Maria” hospital in the Japanese capital. Having recovered, he suffered a lot in 2018 from pneumonia. The Sisters of the Pious Disciples took care of him until the end, giving him that tenderness which was the well-deserved final reward for a life spent in spreading the Word of God.

At noon on 25 February 2021, Brother Giuseppe left just as he lived, in silence. May his example now strengthen Japanese vocations, in particular those facing the Pauline charism in the promising land of Vietnam. And from heaven, he intercedes for the whole Congregation.

Rome, 26 February 2021



Father Stefano Stimamiglio, ssp
Secretary General

The funeral rite will be celebrated on 27 February 2021 at 1 PM in the chapel of the Tokyo-Wakaba community. Subsequently, after the cremation, the ashes will be deposited in the chapel of the Society of Saint Paul at the Tokyo-Fuchu cemetery.

The Superiors of Circumscriptions are to inform their communities for the suffrages prescribed (Const. 65 and 65.1).