

misericordia e il perdono anche verso coloro che hanno tolto la vita a persone innocenti. Suor Rani, nel caleidoscopio proposto da Vadakkekara, si presenta come figura piena di luce, attraente non solo per i cristiani che vivono in India, ma per tutta la Cristianità, perché dedicando la sua vita per poveri e subendo il martirio, s'iscrisse nella fila dei santi, mostrando la straordinaria freschezza e l'indistruttibile vitalità del messaggio evangelico.

Wiesław Block

Bernardino Angelo Barban, *Beata Mamma Rosa. Testimone della bontà in famiglia. Biografia della Beata Eurosia Fabris ved. Barban. Sposa, mamma e terziaria francescana*. IX edizione ampliata e interamente curata da Gianluigi Pasquale [Via Scipione dal Ferro, 4; I-40138] Bologna, Dehoniana Libri, 2014. 21 cm, 356 p. ill. (€ 18,00) ISBN 978-88-88938-675-0

The fact that the book under review is already in its ninth edition and that it has been rendered into English speaks volumes for both its topicality and merit. This is the story of Eurosia Fabris (1866-1932), popularly known as “Mamma Rosa”, and beatified on 6 November 2005. The original first edition by Bernardino Angelo Barban OFM († 1980), a son of Mamma Rosa, has now been thoroughly revised and enriched with two additional chapters by Gianluigi Pasquale OFM^{Cap}, a great-grandson of the Blessed. In the introduction to the present edition, Dr Pasquale succinctly paraphrases the life of Blessed Eurosia as: “In this biography a wonderful story is narrated, the life of a girl who, translating into concrete attitudes the melodious expression of Paul the Apostle, had in fact lived *in her own way*, that is to say in a radical way, and in which case it means heroically” (p. 11). Viewed against the backdrop of today’s fast-paced world, the story of Mamma Rosa seems to mirror life in another planet, however, her zestfulness, untiring rhythm, her attention to details, constancy and whole-hearted dedication to carrying out her everyday tasks hold a fascinating appeal for the present-day generation. It is in place here to mention that the reviser-editor has strained every sinew to make the narration reader-friendly and even employs a language *à la mode*. For example, he describes the way the Blessed Virgin Mary’s life inspired Mamma Rosa to be a model mother: “La mamma Maria lo [Jesus] istruiva più con la dolcezza dello sguardo che con tantissime parole. Se avesse twittato certamente anche la Vergine di Nazareth non avrebbe usato più di centoquaranta caratteri” (p. 13). Thematically the narration takes place in a neat order, with the contents arrayed in twenty-two short chapters (p. 21-320) and seven appendices (p. 321-347).

The life of the Blessed is summed up as the unfolding of a triple vocation to motherhood, firstly, by accepting mother-child bond with two children, secondly, by being mother to nine children in marriage, and thirdly, by being adoptive mother to several other children. She was born on 27 September 1866 as the fourth of seven children in Quinto Vicentino in a practising religious family in the heartland of traditional Cathol-

icism in the northern region of Italy. Though she was christened Eurosia, after the virgin martyr to whom an altar is dedicated in the local parish church, the name proved to be a bit of a mouthful, and so came to be domesticated as Rosina. There was nothing eventful about her infancy and childhood. She learned the three R's and as a fifteen-year-old she began teaching catechism to other children. In 1885 in the spirit of "voluntary holocaust" she assumed the adoptive mother's role for two baby girls of fourteen and three months respectively of the twenty-eight-year-old widower Carlo Barban. Encouraged by the well-wishing neighbours Rosina and Carlo got married on 5 May 1886. And the following years saw her faithfully carrying out her maternal mission. She brought up the two children orphaned of their mother, her own nine children and three orphans. She is described as a "wonderful educator of children" (p. 59-71). From these children "God chose as many as six for himself, with the vocation to the ecclesiastical and religious state" (p. 74). Her kind-heartedness and benevolence attracted several needy persons to her home. In the aftermath of World War I there was much humanitarian work to be done in Northern Italy and Mamma Rosa tried in her own way to meet the human exigencies in the locality. And in the course of time she organised a home-school for training girls in cutting, basting and sewing dress for women, and this would be of benefit to many families.

Rosini's choice to embrace the Franciscan way of life may well be likened to the imprinting of a permanent seal on her life of interiority, altruism, poverty and detachment. "She joined the Franciscan Secular Order, participating in its assemblies, but above all living its spirit in poverty and joyfulness, in work and prayer, in the delicate attention to all, in the praise of God the Creator, the source of all good and of our every hope" (p. 322). She died in Marola on 8 January 1932 and the fame of her sanctity widespread in the locality led to the opening of the diocesan process of her canonisation. The exemplariness of her life, her selfless humanitarian activities, religiosity and joyfulness were a source of edification for all. Therefore, it was a mere question of time that the local recognition of her saintly life came to be solemnly recognised through her beatification on 6 November 2005. And at the fourth National Ecclesial Congress of Verona in 2006 Blessed Eurosia was chosen as the emblem of sanctity for the whole of Triveneto. In the same year, the "Casa Mamma Rosa" was opened in Torri di Quartesolo (p. VI) with the scope of providing security and protection to the young mothers who were single or had children in difficulties. In 2009, she was declared Patroness of the catechists of the diocese of Vicenza. Blessed Eurosia's name has also been associated with the national "Biblical Festival" that takes place annually in Vicenza. Fr Gianluigi Pasquale is to be commended for revising and updating Barban's work and making it a good read.

Benedict Vadakkekara