

**Br. Oreste De Angelis**

Br. Oreste (De Angelis Mattia) son of Pasquale and Diana Rosalia was born on June 16<sup>th</sup> 1940 at Casal di Principe (Caserta). He entered the Capuchin Order of Naples Italy at the Friary of Arienzo on August 29<sup>th</sup> 1956 where upon completing his novitiate year he made the profession of his first vows on August 30<sup>th</sup> 1957. From Arienzo he was transferred to the St. Eframo Vecchio friary for theological studies where he made his perpetual vows on the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1962. On June 26<sup>th</sup> 1965, he was ordained to the priesthood.

He was very intelligent, although a little dispersive. He enjoyed a joyous and cheerful character, and he knew with Franciscan simplicity how to de-dramatize the more difficult situations. He loved and praised life as a great gift of God. He was always available to obey. Together with another brother, Padre Guglielmo, he was sent to St. Philip Neri parish in Toronto Ontario for the spiritual assistance of the Italian immigrant community. When he returned to his Capuchin province of Naples he occupied different roles in different friaries. He was always available and had a big heart. A man of simplicity, he knew, with a Franciscan touch to be a friend to all. He was sought by many because of his sense of serenity and peace.

He would say: “life is beautiful because it is a gift from God, therefore let us live it. Let us avoid burdening it with our poverty and our limits”. And this is what he sang with great passion when he was in good company. He was an authentic interpreter of folk songs, especially the Neapolitan songs, not just with the voice but also with gestures and he would delight and lift the hearts and wipe the tears of many faces.

He was rich and poor at the same time. He was rich, because he always had empty pockets but a big heart. He was poor, because he was very detached from earthly things. He would use them out of necessity and free from attachment. His true home was the Capuchin habit, simple, cross-shaped and always with empty pockets.

Suffering, like a bolt from the blue, knocked on his door. Sister death ended his pilgrimage in the infirmary of Nola, on Saturday May 20<sup>th</sup> 2006 the day dedicated by the Church to Mary. His last words before closing his eyes to the light of this world were: “Madonna mia, aiutami tu! Andiamo” “My Lady, help me! Let’s go...” Yes! Br. Oreste accompanied by Mary, our Mother, has opened his eyes to the light of the beauty of God. May the Lord welcome him in the arms of His eternal mercy and His goodness!

