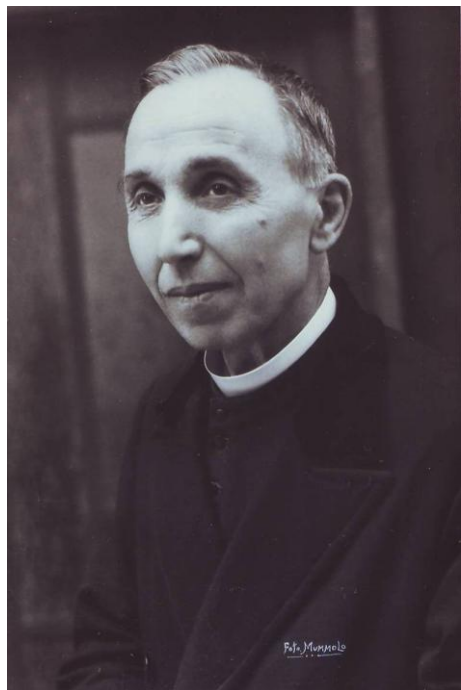


## FATHER FELICE CANELLI



Father Felice Canelli was born in San Severo (FG-Italy) on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1880.

In 1897 he began working as a teacher at the local primary school and he was interested in the education of the youngest children.

In 1903 he was ordained priest and began working for the most humble people. He founded a night school for young workers, a school of theatre and catechesis for abandoned children.

From 1906 to the end of his life he joined with the Salesians with whom he shared the Spirit and the Commitment in the education of young people to build “Good Christians and Honest Citizens”.

In 1911 he founded the “Don Bosco” Circle”, which was the basic element of any other circle.

From 1916 to the early beginning of 1919 he was an army chaplain in Sassoferrato and in Ancona.

When he got back to San Severo, founded in Father Luigi Sturzo his guide: “Christians in policy”, and managed in order to young people take part to many Catholic circles.

He was elected a member of the Provincial Committee of the Italian Popular Party.

He took part to the first National Congress in Bologna and he was the first party leader of the local branch of the party until 1913.

In 1919 he founded the “ASCI Don Bosco 1” with the Salesians ; but he had a great regard for Catholic University of “Holy Heart”.

From 1920s he was member of the Committee for the protection of maternity and childhood.

From 1920 he had important roles in the local GIAC, G.F. of men and women of Azione Cattolica.

From the 1930s to 1970s he was a Diocesan Delegate for Azione Cattolica, which he called “The Social Movement”.

From 1924 to 1927 he was a Provincial Ecclesiastical Assistant.

In 1925 he founded the “Women of Charity”, a social group as well as the Conference of Saint Vincent de Paoli.

From 1927 to his death, he was the Parish Priest of “Croce Santa” ( Holy Cross), a parish Church in the suburb of San Severo. In the following years, he changed its name into “Parrocchia Fiaccola” ( Parish Church Torch) for the Light of Faith and for the Warm of Charity.

In 1930 he was given the task to be the Diocesan main Officer of Salesian Cooperators and he was always the point of reference for everybody . During the fascism, he trained all his parishioners to a political commitment .

In 1943 he did all his best with the help of the citizens and parishioners to help soldiers, fugitives and political refugees.

In 1945 he supported the birth of Democrazia Cristiana and ACLI of San Severo.

In meanwhile, the previous quoted ASCI had closed, and in 1945 he supported its re-opening.

From 1946 to 1956, he organized holiday camps for poor children, meals for poor, out of work ,hot meals for 69 workers of O.N.A.R.M.O. who were working in bad conditions to build the road that linked the town of Torremaggiore to the town of Foggia.

In 1946 he had a spiritual son through the members of Costituente : the lawyer Raffaele Recca, point of reference of Democrazia Cristiana.

In 1948 he opened a nursery-school together with the Disciples of Jesus. He wanted to help families, and in particular all the women who worked for grapes and olives harvest. He also founded a school for sewing and embroidery.

From 1962 to 1969 he had another Spiritual Son at the Town Hall in San Severo, Pasquale Iantoschi who had an important political role as DC leader during the years after the war.

He was also really engaged in the local political life.

Father Felice Canelli spent all his life taking care of the poorest, the youngest and the oldest people, the most humble and he has always asked for the help of the richest, the politicians to make it possible.

He had a great Faith in the Providence:

He died on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1977 at the age of 97. His long life was a real evidence of Jesus life.

