

**THE PROCESS OF CANONIZATION
OF THE SERVANT O GOD
VERONICA ANTAL**



EARLY YEARS OF VERONICA ANTAL

“This is the will of God; your sanctification” (Thes,4,3; cfr. Eph. 1,4).

Veronica was born to George and Eva Antal on December 07. 1935, in Botești, a village of Nisiporești. She was the first of the four children, with whom God was to bless this family of simple peasants, in the charming region of Moldova. The following day, December 08, Feast of Our Lady’s Immaculate Conception, the child was brought to the Roman-Catholic Church in Hălăucești, as was the custom of that time, where she was baptized by the Parish Priest, Fr. Felix Rafaelli. She was given the name Veronica, in memory of one of her father’s sisters, who had died in her youth.

Veronica had hardly begun to pronounce her first word: “Mama” when her grandmother began to teach her very simple prayers in line with her age. According to the testimonies of relatives and of those who knew her in her tender childhood, Veronica was described as a person of robust physical constitution, sociable, pious and intelligent. She used to play with other

children of the neighborhood, but never forget to join her parents and her grandmother for religious celebrations that took place in the lovely little Church of Nisiporești.

Veronica began to attend the primary school of the area when she was about seven. Here, she learned to read, to know her numbers and to discover the wonders of literature, history and geography. There seemed to be nothing extraordinary in her life up to this time, except that it was obvious she had a strong devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist and to the Virgin Mary.

On completing the first four classes in the primary school, Veronica became more involved in the daily life of the family. She helped her mother in the household tasks, learnt how to spin wool and to make native costumes. She would also work in the fields with her family and with the neighbours.

When she was about sixteen years of age, Veronica joined the Church choir in Nisiporești and at the same time enrolled in the Marian Association, founded by St. Maximilian Kolbe and with other Franciscans, among whom Fr. Iosif Petru Mari, who was born in the same village as Veronica.

Around this time, too, Veronica began to think seriously about her future. She wanted to join the Convent of the Franciscan Sisters in Hălăucești, but her attempts to do this were destined to failure, since once the Communist Regime took over, all the Catholic Congregations in the country were suppressed and their convents closed.

“A little sister without a convent”

Unable to realize her dream of embracing the vocation to which she felt called by God, that of being a sister, Veronica did not lose hope and began to think how she could live out her calling. On the recommendation of her spiritual director, Fr. Alois Donea, Veronica became a member of the Third Order of St. Francis (Tertiary), making a private vow of Chastity. In order to be able to dedicate herself more fully to her spiritual life, she built a small cell alongside her home, where she used to withdraw as often as possible. She never missed going to Mass and receiving Holy Communion. If Mass was not celebrated in her village, as the Church was a branch of the Roman-Catholic Church of Hălăucești, she would get up in the morning at 4.00, in winter as well as in summer and, with a group of friends, walk the eight miles to Hălăucești in order to take part in the Liturgy and receive Holy Communion. This spiritual food gave her courage for her daily struggles and helped her progress in her spiritual life. She often let her friends know of her desire for heaven and her call to holiness, allowing nothing to get in the way of her goal. Besides participating in the Sacrifice of the Mass, Veronica also took part in the *Hours of Adoration* which were held every Thursday in the Church in Nisiporești. She used to pray the Rosary whenever possible, praying for the different needs of the Church. She also nourished her spiritual life by reading spiritual books.

Prayer and the love of God needs to be concretized in love of one's neighbour: Veronika did this by forgiving promptly those who committed some fault, visiting the sick and the elderly who lived alone, taking the children of exhausted mothers in her arms and comforting them lovingly, teaching the children to say their prayers and preparing them for their First Holy Communion.

The years went by and Veronica's faith became even deeper, a faith that would be sealed by her blood in a very short time.

In the evening of August 23, 1958, Veronica, accompanied by a group of friends, left for Hălăucești, where the Sacrament of Confirmation was to be administered the following day.

Next day, she took part in the Liturgy, where with great solemnity, Monsignor Petru Pleșca conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on a large group of young people from that parish. “Veronica seemed pale and downcast” during the Liturgy, recounts one of her friends who accompanied her. Could she have had a premonition of what was to happen ? Only God knows!

Following the Liturgy, Veronica helped to arrange things in the sacristy, after which she went to have a meal with one of her friends from Hălăucești. Towards evening, her friends wanted to go home, but she told them to go on ahead, that she would follow them...

After some time, Veronica said goodbye to this friend and started out for Nisiporești. On the way, she put her trust in God and with her rosary in her hands, began the long trek home of eight kilometers, walking hurriedly. Half way home, she met the young man, Pavel Mocanu, who overcome by passion, accosted her and began making indecent proposals to her. Veronica tried to continue on her way, but he persisted in his outrageous design.

Dragging her into a cornfield near the fountain named “Vangheaua”, he began to wrestle with her. After a while, unable to satisfy his lust, he took out a knife and stabbed her 42 times, covering her body with wounds. She collapsed, inert.

Veronica’s body was found two days later by labourers on their way to work in the fields. She was face downwards, lifeless and covered in blood; her rosary clasped in her right hand and a cross of corn pods on her back. Surely the Virgin Mary loved Veronica in that she was born on the Feast of The Immaculate Conception; and Veronica loved the Mother of God, in that she died with her rosary in her hand.

After the police had come and the necessary research had been carried out, Veronica was taken home, where two doctors carried out an autopsy. One of the doctors who examined her could not refrain from exclaiming: “Happy the Mother that gave you birth! A virgin you were and you died, a virgin”. In this way he testified to the fact that her killer was unable to carry out his intention of raping her.

News of Veronica’s death spread immediately both in her native village and to the surrounding areas, so that when her funeral took place on August 27, the Church of Nisiporești was crowded.

“St. Veronica”

This is what the faithful of Nisiporești and the surroundings call her. Immediately following her death, the statement: “She lived as a saint and she died a saint” was on the lips of all. From that time, children, young people, adults and older people; persons of every social condition and of every religion, have not ceased to visit her tomb and the place where she was killed, confiding to her intercession their various problems. The results have never been slow in coming.

In 1980, Fr. Anton Demeter, who was assigned to the Roman-Catholic Parish of Barticești, in the vicinity of Nisiporești, tried to make known the life of this young Christian woman, who preferred to offer herself to Christ rather than lose her virginity. Thus, he began to collect a large number of testimonies from different members of the faithful of Nisiporești, as well as from those who had recourse to her and had tried to set aside for prayer, the place where she was born.

In 2003, following the spread of her reputation for holiness, and on the insistence of the faithful who had known her, Fr. Pătrașcu Damian, Vice-Postulator of the Cause, decided to undertake the *Informative Process* concerning the life, virtues, reputation, holiness and martyrdom of the Servant of God, Veronica Antal.

Thus, on November 25th, 2003, the introduction of the Cause already mentioned, took place in the Church of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady in Nisiporești, in presence of a large number of priests and of the faithful.

Since then and up to the present moment, a number of sessions have taken place in the Tribunal constituted for this Cause, during which a large number of testimonies have been heard.

The diocesan enquiry was closed on November 12, 2006 and the record of the Acts of the Process were sent to the Congregation for the Cause of Saints, where the necessary enquiries leading to this young woman being recognized as a saint and presented as such to the world, will continue.

Until then, believers are invited to pray to God, our Father, so that our Mother Church will recognize the sanctity of the Servant of God, Veronica Antal, in the shortest delay possible.

Prayer

O God, Almighty Father, we praise you and we thank you for giving us your servant, Veronica Antal, who was strong in preserving her virginity even at the cost of shedding her blood and thus became an example for us of how to live as authentic Christians. With great joy, she offered her life of service to Jesus through her vow of virginity and by continual prayer, she sought to keep her lamp always lighting, so as to be ready to meet her Divine Bridegroom.

We beg you, Eternal Father, to honour your Servant, Veronica, with the crown of holiness, so that she may become a true example of what it is to be a strong Christian and strengthen young men and women on their road to perfection and to true happiness. Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

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Mons. Petru Ghergel

Bishop of Iași

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*All those wishing for further information or for booklets on the life of the
Servant of God, Veronica ANTAL, should apply to:*

P. DAMIAN PATRASCU
INSTITUTUL TEOLOGIC FRANCISCAN
Str. Ștefan cel Mare, 268/B
Roman – 611040 (NT)
Tel.0233/731002
E-mail:patrascu@libero.it