

## The mosaic of Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd

The figure of Mary Mother of the Good Shepherd is an image that was very dear to our Founder, Fr. James Alberione. In it he sees the model of the pastoral care that he entrusts to us, Pastorelle. The mosaic represents a true synthesis of the pastoral spirituality that animates us.



*Mosaic of Fratalocchi- D'Urso  
Mother House – Albano Laziale*

- The Virgin is portrayed in an attitude of great simplicity and sweetness, in the act of offering "fresh grass" to the sheep that come to her, an element that Fr. Alberione interprets in relation to the Word and sacraments, and to all that leads to "life in abundance" (cf. Jn 10:10). Fr. Alberione understood Mary's mission as the "threefold cooperation" with Jesus Good Shepherd: shepherding, guarding and guiding the flock with the simplicity, laboriousness, goodness and everyday life of the "shepherd". She pleads and intercedes for the Pastorella who feels the needs of the entire people of God, and lives her ministry making herself mother and sister to all.
- In front of Mary we see Jesus the young Shepherd in the midst of the sheep in the act of welcoming them with love. Contemplating the face of Jesus allows us to understand the mission entrusted to him by the Father: to shepherd the flock even unto laying down his life for the flock (cf. Jn. 10:18). Fr. Alberione used to exhort the Pastorelle to imitate the young shepherd by way of instructing, giving good example, grace, and making theirs the spirit of Jesus good Shepherd who knows and gives his life for the flock.
- Standing near Mary, respectively on the left and the right, are the apostles Peter and Paul. The two greatest apostles of the Church. Both are in the midst of the flock, engaged in their effort of gathering the sheep and showing them the Way: Jesus, the young shepherd and Mary the shepherdess. From Peter the Pastorelle learn how to serve God's flock gratuitously and with joy, faithful to Christ and to the Church. From Paul, they learn the courage to search for a pastoral ministry that is in dialogue with history and all its various cultural expressions.
- The flock is very numerous and is placed at the centre, and here the attention and interests of the different figures converge. The sheep are walking towards Jesus; they listen to his voice and hear themselves called by name (cf. 10:3-4). The Pastorelle Sisters feel the compassion of Jesus for those who still do not believe or are far from him, and to them they turn with special care.