



Today is Thursday, October 10, 2019; day 67 in our countdown of 100 days leading to the celebration of Gianna Gobbi's Centenary.

On Thursdays, during this countdown, we will be sharing pearls of Gianna's joy from the memories of those who knew her. Today we share a reflection from Claudio. Thank you, Claudio!

"My first memories are very vague, because they are more than 60 years old and are mixed together with memories of Sofia, so that mostly what remains is just the sense of wonder and joy that came for me in the discovery of God who wants the best for us and who guides us like a shepherd guides his flock. The air one breathed at Via degli Orsini was one of joyful engagement in working with the material that recalled for us the parables and the episodes of Jesus' life. More than the presence of either Sofia or Gianna, it was the atmosphere of the atrium that impacted and accompanied us.

I must say that the memory I have of Gianna is suffused with tenderness. As an adolescent, I had Gianna as a teacher in middle-school, thus I knew her "under a different light." She taught us Home Economics and Mechanical Arts, while Sofia was the Religion teacher. For us boys, the hours we spent in Home Economics were mostly involving work with materials like wood, cardboard, and clay. I remember that the subjects of our handwork were often linked with religion lessons. In my case it was making a model of the synagogue at Capernaum, based on blueprints and drawings for the reconstruction of the building at the time of Jesus. Another project in those years was that of making a model of a mountain to represent the History of Salvation, with a road going up and the principle stages of the history that led to the coming of Jesus.

Gianna was a sweet, discreet person; one felt her non-intrusive presence; always ready to help if one needed help, in pure Montessori style. Then I remember her helping me when I was making my personal missal, her delicacy in helping me insert the prayers, and her way of helping me engage in the material, which was often made by her, as I later learned. Her tone was always that of an affectionate closeness to us children, but with care not to suppress our own expression and work. Finally, Gianna was perhaps the affective compliment to Sofia's presence, like two aspects of the same attention to the spontaneous religious nature of the child."