

Christmas service and party of Swiss catholics

Autor(en): **J.J.B.**

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RITA NOTARI, née ABATE †.

The Ticinesi Colony in London were deeply shocked and saddened by the news of the sudden death of Rita Notari — Rita Abate as we all knew her before her wedding last May.

Our hearts go out to her mother, brother and sisters in their distress and to her husband, whose marriage with the girl he had known since childhood, has been cut short, so tragically.

To those of us who knew her and worked with her, this is indeed a great personal loss. Her active connection with the Unione Ticinese has ceased when she left England to live in Geneva with her husband, but she continued to take a very great interest in our activities and sent many messages of goodwill.

The "Sezione Femminile," of which she had been Secretary, acknowledges with grateful remembrance her long and faithful services and the "Corale" in which she had performed with such grace and distinction owes its existence in great measure to Rita's enthusiasm and initiative.

She will not be forgotten and she will always have a warm place in our hearts and in our prayers. A Requiem Mass was offered on behalf of the Society at St. James' Church, Spanish Place, W.1, on Wednesday, 7th January, 1948, the same day as her funeral took place in Malvaglia, Ticino and wreaths were placed on her grave in the name of the Unione Ticinese and the Sezione Femminile.

Although the Requiem Mass, was offered on a week-day when many who would have wished to be present were not able to attend, the large congregation was witness to the esteem in which Rita was held.

Our thoughts now turn to what she wrote when Irene Berti was taken from us and in sorrow we return those words to her. Rita, too is a dear

presence that will be missed, more than we can express, but to her also we shall not say "Good-bye" for we know that we shall meet again. To you "Dear Rita" we say "Arrivederci".

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The mind, bewildered, is powerless to understand the tragedy which only the heart can feel, with an ever-present, brooding sense of loss. The mind can only think that, where there should be vitality and happiness, there is emptiness and desolation.

How many members of the Swiss Colony in London must have been shocked to learn of the sudden, tragic death in Geneva of Rita Abate, who only seven months ago became Mrs. Bruno Notari!

She was so full of life; she had so many interests, to each of which she devoted the deep sympathy of a sensitive heart, and the practical ability of an alert intelligence. She was so gay: her eyes laughed with the merriment of a child, and yet the seriousness and tragedies of life were very real to her, and there must be many, even chance acquaintances, who are grateful for her instant practical sympathy.

With that unlimited energy, that self-sacrificing devotion and that courage and alertness of mind which were so characteristic of her, she gave five years unstinting and unforgettable service as Secretary of the Unione Ticinese, Sezione Femminile. Her devotion and happy initiative were an inspiration to all with whom she came into contact, both inside and outside the Society.

I can only pray that God may grant courage to her bereaved husband, and to her mother, her sisters and her brother. To me, she will always be "Rita."

T. Lunghi-Rezzonico,
President Unione Ticinese,
Sezione Femminile.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE AND PARTY OF SWISS CATHOLICS.

The Service on December 28th, at the Church of St. Peter's at Westminster, was well attended, and a very homely and sacred "Stimmung" prevailed. The carols and the short and to the point "homily" of the Chaplain from the pulpit brought Christmas and New Year thoughts to the people present.

Father Gut, assisted by Father Hummel from the Mission House Bethlehem gave solemn benediction.

At the subsequent Christmas party at the Cathedral Hall there were present some 600 Swiss compatriots with their children and friends, and we seemed, judging from the babel of tongues, to be transferred to the town and villages of Switzerland.

There were amusements provided for young and old, a conjuror, songs by the mixed Catholic choir, accordions played by Miss Gandon, Mr. Gandon and his quartet created a real happy spirit.

There were presents for all children (there must have been nearly 80) and all were delighted with the

huge Christmas Tree and the kindly words from Father Christmas.

To the delight of all, H.E. Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, "looked in" at the party, gave a few cheerful words to the assembly wishing all a happy and blessed 1948 and on leaving gave all his blessing.

Whilst the party was officially over about 7 and the young and elders retired, the more energetic ones carried on with games, songs and dancing till about 9.30 p.m.

Thanks are due to the Chaplain F. Lanfranchi, and his many willing helpers who made the party such a rousing success.

J.J.B.

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