lora Manfredi, a current “Venerable” who died in the color of sanctity on the 12th of March 1954, dedicated her entire, albeit brief, life to increasing her knowledge of and love for Christ. A love continuously strengthened through her devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, invoked and introduced to everyone as “Our Lady of the Universe.” It was the Madonna herself to suggest the invocation: “Our Lady of the Universe, protect the Vatican and through the Vatican, protect the world.” Furthermore, the Blessed Mother reminds us: “Fear the hand of exile, seek refuge under my mantle.” In 1918, the Virgin appeared to Frana Macera (1905-1954) while she was receiving her First Holy Communion and healed her of the serious illness that afflicted her. The Madonna appeared to her also on other occasions, inspiring her to establish the Work of the Immaculate Apostolate and telling her in particular: “Fight against the enemy of the world, the devil prepares his army, and I say multitudes of Angels.” The image of the Blessed Mother, as she appears on the canvas depicted by a painter friend upon her specifications, presents herself full of living sweetness, wrapped in a mantle that shines bright white on a background of dark blue tinged with heavenly light. At the feet of the Virgin is the Vatican, and under the Vatican is the world. It is noted, a world necessarily enveloped in thick dark clouds, such that this image of the earth is not rendered quite “clear” to the eye. The protection of Our Lady, both over the Vatican and the world, is well-characterized by the very simple mantle, which the Madonna's extended arms spread out, as if to wrap everything under her maternal mercy. The image in its entirety presents itself in a surprisingly “true” way and creates a sense of comfort and security in whomever sees it. At the conclusion, the Madonna transmits through Frana the following message of hope: “Each time that someone’s eyes rest upon my image, my blessing will be received.” Our Lady also tells her that with the name of Lady she wanted to include all of the titles with which she was invoked: “I am the Lady of the Dawn. The world and men have fallen in the dark of night. I am the sunrises of a morning that will emerge to illuminate the way for men and bring them to the dawn of the true light.” And even: “Being the Mother of all, I desire to embrace the prayers that each of my children knows how to offer me spontaneously, and to accept from the poor ignorant one the simple desire to love me. I do not want a special prayer, I desire that everyone says with their own heart that which they would feel like saying in that moment to their own Mother who can grant everything... I am the Queen of Heaven and Earth, but at the same time I am the merciful Mother of every mortal being. I will listen to all the miserable and the fallen. I will listen to my children all the possibilities and the time to convert themselves, but was to those who resisted... I am the Pilgrim Mother, that in the whole world I go in search of hearts and of souls, whomsoever will wish to truly repudiate me will find me an empress and will bend to the earth their knees...” To me is given the power to fight and to win... and after this battle, favor will be renewed. You do not ask me what it means, the Rosary that "closes" my eyes? It means that all those who frequently recite this prayer form a sauc which unites them to me. And this is the hour of the Universal Virgin. And the hour of open battle with the enemy of the Church, but have faith and be strong. Everywhere it is said that the hour of the Chinese invasion has come, but I want to say also to everyone that it is the hour of extreme love and mercy.”

The course of her life Flora was animated by physical sufferings and emotional bonds, by profound charity by overwhelming faith, by humility, by asceticism, by heroic Christian strength, by continuous activities in the ordinary life and by apostolate. She had never taught her school, took any religious training, but was “extremely wise about the things of God and most skillful in the activities of men.” She insisted the importance of the instruction and formation of women. She instituted, with modern criteria, nursery schools to come to the aid of working mothers. She promoted the social and professional formation of young ladies, reasoning themselves with their formation and insertion into the world of work. In thousands ways she helped parents, young people, the needy, sick, poor, orphans, priests, nurses, entire families in difficulties, and many religious institutes, giving all of herself to everyone without ever asking for anything in return. In her spirituality, the Venerable Flora was very united to the Eucharist, and in her writings one reads: “In thoughts we unite ourselves to the Baby Jesus, in desiring to the Eucharistic Jesus, in suffering to the Crucified Jesus. The Most Holy Communion is the center of our gaze, the Eucharist is the center of our affections, the Cross is the center of our meditations, so that every sacrifice made in doing good is no longer a surprise or an anxiety... Feed yourselves well on the Bread of the Angels, so you can walk strong in the world of the weak.”