

LUIGIA TINCANI

Rome 1912. Luigia Tincani joins the university world: together with the students in the faculty of Magisterium in Rome, she feels their concrete needs, searches and finds new ways to reach out their intelligences and their hearts, to orient them towards goodness, truth of life and hope. At the side of the students more lonely, lost, doubtful in faith, uncertain in sensing their way of life and their future, employs the best of her life and her initiatives. It's a new mission for the woman, and it's the right time to intervene.

Laura Seneci, colleague and disciple at the same time at the university, sees in her above all the apostle, she writes: "Gina. She outclassed the fellowstudents by the strength of faith and the frank profession of it; was like a standard-bearer of a group of friends who had a great love and esteem for her. She led them to manifest their own faith with example and word without fear". In the faculty of Magisterium at that time, were great professors among them Luigi Pirandello, the well-known play-writer and novelist, the literary man Manfredi Porena, they hold her in a high esteem even the sectarian ones have great respect of her, as it happened -thumping the table- when a professor during his lecture declared that the Church, with the Inquisition, obliged the priests to reveal the secrecy of confession. Some years later the Tincani herself remembered:

« I thumped the table shouting: Isn't true! And I felt the stroke before I became aware of it». And professor dared to contradict her.

To help her fellow students at the university to grow at human and faith level, starts the first Female Circle of Rome at the Catholic University, which will collaborate with the male group FUCI, of the young Monsignor Montini. Her mission field is clear and she entrusts herself to it with her faith and enthusiasm. She has understood that " the Circle -if needed hits growth-" needed one person fully dedicated to it

The Tincani gives the start to the School of Religion at university level, whose professors are Blessed Cardinal Schuster, the dominicans Cordovani and Fanfani, the Jesuite Mattiussi.

She immerses the fellow students in the climate of the origin of the Church leading them to visit the various roman catacumbas and giving them the test and love for liturgical prayer. Luigia Tincani makes them able to prepare and use properly new technology of communication to collaborate with the various catholic movements of that time.

Among the collaborators animating the direction of the University Circle, besides Lodovico Fanfani and the princess Giustiniani Bandini, are Father Mariano Cordovani, Mons. Serafini, ecclesiastic Assistant of the Movement for women, doctor Pericoli president of FUCI male, Mons. Giandomenico Pini, Assistant of FUCI, Mons. Giovanni Battista Montini, the young professors Martire and Cingolani. University students and ex students spontaneously gathered round her and among these were: Agnese Tovini, daughter of the Blessed Giuseppe Tovini, Elsa Conci, Maria de Unterrichter, Maria Badaloni very much dedicated to the political and social life.

Maria Massani remembers: "During my first year at the university in Roma (1919) was invited to attend a lecture to the Quirino Theater. I didn't know from whom was the invitation coming. An official was the speaker; the war was just ended. There (I was new and was all alone, standing in the semi-circle stalls) came close to me Gina Tincani asking me : " Why are you here all alone? Come and seat". Then she spoke to me about the meetings at the Circle of the university students in Via della Mercede, and naturally, she invited me too in attending it. So I find soon myself so comfortable among friendly persons, and just a year later I was made vice president for the university level! And after me Maria Unterrichter was made president of the FUCI female, she married later with Jervolino. I remember that at the Monument of Quintino Sella, in front of the Finances Board we

exchanged the Presidency; often our meetings were continuing on the road, in the bus till one of the group would reach the right place to get down”.

To enlarge the missionary field, on 1925 Luigia Tincani opened in Milan the first residence for university students, followed by that of Rome in Tor de' Specchi, of Palermo and Bologna, each of these had their own characteristic, all aiming at the integral growth of formation.

According to Gina Tincani 'to form' is to give few fixed rules and offer confidential trust with dialogue, walking together in hearthly simplicity. She was very much capable to create an environment in which a serious life of study together with right freedom could find their own place. No coercion but educating to the sense of responsibility and good use of freedom, because those students were getting ready for the high mission of educators. The residence offered a good Christian atmosphere cultivating the spiritual formation; very characteristic was the familiar atmosphere of intimacy which made spontaneous to communicate making judgments and showing tendencies. With school there was a good collaboration for the cultural formation of the students, in arranging conferences with discussions on arguments capable to educate the critical sense and the valuation capacities. Visiting museum and library along with the national happenings were contributing to educate the youth nourish the love for the Mother land.