

# Obituary

## Antonella Khursheed (1958-2000)

Antonella Khursheed, the secretary of our Singapore Association Bahá'í studies group, lost her life on 30<sup>th</sup> July in a motorway accident while vacationing in Italy. The cause of the accident was a burst tire. She leaves behind her husband Anjam, and 6 year-old daughter Sarah.

Antonella enthusiastically served our Singapore Association of Bahá'í Studies group from its very beginning in 1996. She helped found it, and was one of the three key people always involved in it. Antonella desktop published all four volumes of the Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review journal published so far and managed its distribution to various Bahá'í institutions around the world. In 1996, Antonella wrote a paper entitled "Jesus the Son of God and the Incarnation Doctrine", which was subsequently published in our first Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review. She had a deep interest in the history of Christianity, and its relationship to the Bahá'í Faith. Antonella organised our annual Singapore Bahá'í Studies conference. Practically all the conference organisation was managed single-handedly by Antonella. She arranged all the usual conference details with great love and enthusiasm, from providing the food, welcoming our participants and speakers, through to the printing of the programme of Abstracts. She did all this in a great spirit of service, and she is for us, quite simply, irreplaceable. Words cannot describe our feeling of loss for Antonella.

Antonella was an Italian from a Catholic background, born in 1958 in Rome. When she was 15 years old, she investigated and discovered the Bahá'í Faith, and was the first in her family to become a Bahá'í. Later her sister and mother also became Bahá'ís. In 1992, she married Anjam Khursheed, a Pakistani of British nationality. In September 1993, her daughter, Sarah, was born in Torino, a city in the Northern part of Italy. The family moved to Singapore in January 1995 where Anjam Khursheed took up an Associate Professor post in the Electrical Engineering Department at the National University of Singapore.

Antonella Khursheed was well known in the Singapore community for her altruism and inspiration and she leaves behind a living legacy of good deeds and charitable works. She was the past president of Faculty Link, an organisation in the National University of Singapore that co-ordinates and helps newcomers settle down. Antonella always made herself available to anyone in need and readily offered a helping hand to all who asked. She worked tirelessly to create a sense of unity and involvement within this diverse community and initiated charity projects and fundraising events. Antonella was also a keen crusader for the environment and was responsible for starting the glass bottle and 'green bag' recycling projects at Kent Vale (condominium for university lecturers), for which she recently received a community award. She also initiated the 'Books at Home' project which allowed residents to browse and buy quality children's books in the comfort and convenience of her own home.

Antonella was a very active member of the Singapore Bahá'í community. Apart from being secretary of the Singapore Bahá'í Studies group, she most recently served as Secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Queenstown. Antonella believed deeply in the underlying unity and equality of all people and devoted her life to making this belief a reality. She and her husband held regular dinner talks in their home to promote inter-religious and multi-racial harmony. She was also the editor of her daughter Sarah's school newsletter and still managed to find time to volunteer weekly at the Rotary family community centre. Antonella was enthusiastic and tireless in her pursuits and her generous spirit and warm heart will be greatly missed by all those whose lives she touched. Her compassion, generosity and enthusiastic spirit of service will not be forgotten and is an inspiration to the many people she came into contact with. She will always be with us ~ her belief in people and her desire to be of service to humanity ~ these are living legacies that we can continue in our own lives.

*Anjam Khursheed*