

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
CASA GENERALIZIA
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Dearest Sisters,

At 1:00 a.m. last night, the 28th Sunday of Ordinary Time, our good Father visited Our Lady of Grace Social Center in Lisbon, Portugal, to invite to his eternal wedding banquet our sister:

MOREIRA SILVA SR. MARIA DE LOURDES
born in Mosteiros-Vidais (Lisbon), Portugal on 8 June 1947

Sr. Lourdes was a very responsible sister who conscientiously and wholeheartedly carried out every duty assigned to her, even when the condition of her health required great courage to accept and live what the Lord was asking of her.

She entered the Congregation in the community of Apelação (Lisbon) on 4 January 1973, which at that time was the seat of our Portuguese Delegation. She made her postulancy and novitiate in that community, concluding this stage of her formation with her first profession on 2 October 1976.

As a young professed sister, Sr. Lourdes helped to carry out Bible Weeks and collective diffusion in Funchal and Lisbon. In 1980, she was sent to Brazil to complete her education and prepare for her perpetual profession, which took place in Cidade Regina, Sao Paulo, on 24 January 1982. She remained in that community until she finished her studies, obtaining a diploma in Theology and a License in Philosophy. In her letter requesting permission to make her perpetual profession, she wrote: "I feel that Jesus wants me to belong to him forever." She felt her poverty but she also trusted completely in the grace of God, whom she felt would give her the strength she needed to remain faithful to him.


Sr. Lourdes returned to Lisbon in August 1983, where she dedicated herself to the formation of the aspirants and pastoral work for vocations. She served two terms as Delegation councilor while at the same time continuing formation work in the communities of Lisbon and Porto. In 1992, she was appointed superior of the Funchal community on the island of Madeira, after which she returned to Lisbon to once more serve as councilor for formation. During that time, she also held the offices of Secretary and Bursar in the Delegation government. In 2002, Sr. Lourdes was transferred to Faro, where she worked in the book center, but several years later she was once again asked to carry out the office of bursar in the community of Lisbon. She was sustained in all her endeavors by a strong and profound faith and a great love for the Pauline charism, which she deepened by participating in the month-long *Donec Formetur* course of spiritual exercises.

In 2013, Sr. Lourdes returned to Faro, where she carried out with great simplicity the duties assigned to her, even though at this point she was almost completely deaf and was also suffering from hepatitis C—a malady that was steadily undermining her health. A few years ago she was diagnosed with liver cancer and in April 2017 her condition had worsened to the point that surgery was necessary. From that point on, her life alternated between the increasing deterioration of her health and times in which she rallied and continued to look to the future with hope. Although she was steadily losing strength, she yearned to return to a "normal life" in which she could spend all her energies for her Delegation and the work of evangelization. Fully aware of the gravity of her condition, she had undergone surgery with the desire to offer her life for her community.

Like all the people of Portugal, Sr. Lourdes deeply loved the Blessed Mother and in this last stage of her life especially, she fervently prayed the prayer taught by the Angel of Peace to the three little shepherds of Fatima: "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love you! I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love you."

Despite her almost total deafness, Sr. Lourdes possessed a beautiful singing voice, which she gladly used to enrich her community's liturgical celebrations. Today we like to think of her as clothed in her wedding finery, singing praises to God in the eternal Liturgy of heaven. We entrust to her all the needs of our Portuguese Delegation, which she loved very much, and also the many young people seeking their vocation in life. May her example give them the courage to risk their lives for the Gospel.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 15 October 2017