

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ  
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO  
CASA GENERALIZIA  
Via S. Giovanni Eudes, 25  
00163 Roma  
Tel. 06.661 3039 - Fax 06.661 57 208



Dearest Sisters,

On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and the vigil of the Second Sunday of Advent, God, our good Father found ready for the eternal wedding feast our sister:

**SHINDO TSUNeko – SR. MARIA LEONIA**  
**born in Keijo, Korea on 27 April 1931.**

Sr. M. Leonia died of a stroke at 2:56 p.m. (local time) in the Hiratsuka Kyousai Byoin Hospital in Hiratsuka, Japan. It all happened very unexpectedly. Two days ago, she was found lying on the floor of the community room and was immediately taken to the hospital for emergency medical care but by that time the effects of the stroke were irreversible.

Sr. M. Leonia entered the Congregation in Osaka, Japan on 21 December 1956, two years after her baptism. A simple brochure bearing the invitation to visit the local Catholic Church proved to be decisive for her conversion and then her vocation to the religious life. After several years of Pauline formation, she made her novitiate in Tokyo, concluding it with her first profession on 30 June 1961.


Sr. M. Leonia was a very fervent and generous sister, always ready to carry out any service entrusted to her by obedience. With her characteristic kindness, she dedicated herself to various forms of the Pauline apostolate throughout the years, ranging from work in the shipping departments of Sendai, Tokyo, Osaka and Kagoshima, to capillary and collective diffusion in Tokyo and Hiroshima. In Tokyo, she also organized the community library. Sr. M. Leonia always remembered with particular enthusiasm the nine years she spent in the FSP book center in Tokyo, located next to the cathedral, where she rejoiced at the opportunity to spread words of faith and hope. In 1995, at the end of this stage of her apostolic life, she wrote: "Book center work has been a great gift to me. It has allowed me to meet so many people. I was also involved in the remodeling of our book center from start to finish so I was very reluctant to leave but I am happy to have helped prepare a beautiful 'temple' for the Lord."

From 1996-2012, Sr. M. Leonia worked in our small Osaka book center. She enjoyed welcoming people to the Center and established good relations with them, making many friends but never wasting a minute of time. In her spare moments, her swift hands were always busy crafting artistic rosary cases. After the Osaka book center closed, Sr. M. Leonia's health began to decline. A stroke, followed by a succession of falls resulting in broken bones made it advisable to relocate her to the Hiratsuka community, established to provide for the needs of the sisters with fragile health. The transfer caused Sr. M. Leonia suffering but she accepted it with faith, saying that the time for purification had come and that God, in his mercy, was preparing to open to her the gates of heaven.

In the last few years of her life, Sr. M. Leonia was repeatedly hospitalized—a situation she viewed as an opportunity to grow on both the human and spiritual levels. She wrote to her provincial superior: "The nurses are very solicitous toward me, carrying out their services with a smile and great tenderness. On my part, I have offered my life to God, who continually fills me with his light and strength. I don't want to be lazy. I want to offer all the time I have left here on earth for the Congregation, for my community and for the salvation of all people. I accept everything from the hands of the Lord."

Sr. M. Leonia's intimacy with the Divine Master matured under the banner of a verse from the Word of God that formed the bedrock of her vocation: "Do not fear: I have called you by name" (Is. 43:1). Today that Word was brought to completion in her life: the time had arrived for joy and liberation; a time to sing a new song to the Lord for the marvels of grace he had accomplished in her.

Affectionately,

  
Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan  
Superior General

Rome, 8 December 2018