

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

With deep emotion, we want to let you know that at 6:40 this morning, one of our sisters in the San Raffaele wing of our Albano, Italy community voiced her eternal “Here I am” to the Lord:

NARCISI SR. DONATA
born in Martina Franca (Taranto), Italy on 22 June 1936.

The fifth of 8 children, Sr. Donata belonged to a beautiful, hardworking family from the Puglia region. She entered the Congregation in Rome on 14 September 1953. After her initial formation, she spent a period of apostolic experience in the Lecce book center and then returned to Rome for her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 30 June 1957.

During her Juniorate, she carried out capillary and collective diffusion in the diocese of Belluno and after her perpetual profession, made in Rome in 1961, she began a long curriculum in our book centers—an apostolate that would characterize her Pauline life. She passed among us doing good by means of her smile and professional competence in the book centers of Massa Centro, Reggio Calabria, Lecce, Naples Capodimonte, Benevento and Ancona.

She was appointed superior of the Ravenna community in 1983. But Sr. Donata yearned to take the Gospel beyond the borders of Italy and so she joyfully welcomed the invitation of the Superior General to serve as formator in the recently-opened Antananarive community, Madagascar. Before she left Italy, she participated in the Congregation’s 9-month course for novice mistresses, held in Tor San Lorenzo. She went to Madagascar in 1986 but her stay in that country was brief because of her fragile health. In fact, 3 years later she returned to Italy. Meanwhile, she had learned French and this was providential because she was asked to manage the French sector of the new St. Paul Multimedia Center, which in 1989 had just opened in Via del Mascherino, Rome. Sr. Donata worked in this Center up until 2013, when she was transferred to the Generalate community to carry out the services of receptionist, librarian and sacristan. About 2 years ago, she was diagnosed as suffering from an aggressive tumor which obliged her to spend prolonged periods of time in our Albano community, where she underwent repeated cycles of chemotherapy.

She lived this stage of her life with complete awareness of her situation and great dignity. In June 2018, she wrote: “I continue to be serene and trusting, feeling that I am in the good and secure hands of God. I thank him for the experience of this illness, which has allowed me to relativize many things and spend more time at his feet in trusting detachment. I haven’t put aside the desire to be healed because I want to help meet the many needs of the Congregation, but I am carrying my small cross in the shadow of the cross of Christ.”

At Christmas 2018, she confided: “It is very clear to me that the Lord gives us the hundredfold even now through the services we carry out, and that he also helps and consoles us in our tribulations. I am at peace! I am very serene about the state of my health and accept it with trust. When I learned how serious my condition was, I said to the Lord: ‘I am putting myself in your hands and that is where I intend to stay!’ Repeating this often, I felt a growing detachment from self, accompanied by great peace and serenity. This trusting surrender into the hands of the good Lord is the best medicine for both physical and spiritual health. I accept everything that comes my way as a gift and it enables me to marvel at how good the Lord is!”

We are grateful to Sr. Donata for teaching us how to live and die as authentic Paulines. She was an apostle passionately in love with the Lord and faithful to him; a disciple who lived, sowed and proclaimed the Word. We thank her for her witness of love and fidelity, her silent self-offering, and her serene acceptance of the unforeseeable plans of God. And we entrust her to the Virgin Mary, asking her to open the gates of heaven to our sister forever.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 28 March 2019