

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,

At 3:30 a.m. today, Feast of the Apostle Luke, the Lord once again visited the San Raffaele wing of our Albano community, Italy to call to himself our sister:

GIPPONI PIERINA ROSA – SR. MARIA AGNESE
born in Gombito (Cremona), Italy on 12 May 1935.

Following in the footsteps of her cousin Sr. M. Piera, Sr. Agnese entered the Congregation in the community of Alba on 22 January 1952. After a year of apostolic experience in Turin, she was sent to Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 19 March 1955. Immediately afterward, she was assigned to Messina to carry out the diffusion apostolate. But in 1956 she was transferred to Albano—the community in which she would spend almost her entire Pauline life.

Sr. Agnese's life story as a Pauline is both simple and great. Simple because she lived most of her religious life in the same community and great because of her generous, loving, gratuitous, humble and dedicated service to our Albano hospital and community for almost 60 years. The only break in this chronology was the two years she spent in the Via Antonino Pio community, Rome (1976-1978). Sr. Agnese truly gave God and the Congregation her all through her wholehearted attention to the others despite her poor health.


For many years, all the cleaning of the hospital and community were under her supervision: from the many terraces (which she kept beautiful and sparkling clean), to the reception area, to the stairs.... She was up and around at 4:30 every morning, ready to help out wherever needed, always very cordial toward others. Although her character was somewhat "rough-hewn," she always kind to everyone, including the hospital's collaborators, who remember with emotion and gratitude all the good they received from her. They praise the precision and punctuality with which she carried out her duties, her desire that everything be kept shining clean and in good order.... Their words of witness and those of the members of her community give us a glimpse of Sr. Agnese's cheerfulness and serenity, her readiness to laugh and joke with others.

Despite the hard work that absorbed so much of her energy, the center of her day was her meeting with the Lord, whom she sought and adored in the midst of all the noise and distractions of daily life in a big hospital. She would often stop and recollect herself in prayer so as to maintain her uninterrupted inner dialogue with the Divine Master, who accompanied her from dawn to dusk. In the last 10 years of her life, Sr. Agnese worked primarily in the laundry room and also took care of the community wardrobes. Under her capable management the linen closets all smelled fresh and clean and were always in good order. She never let anyone glimpse the aches, pains and fatigue that were the constant companions of her senior years.

Sr. Agnese loved community life and said that the times she spent with the sisters offered her support and made her life beautiful. Striving to continually learn from everyone and everything, she faithfully followed the talks of the Pope and mentioned in prayer the statements he made that struck her most deeply. She never manifested any particular personal needs but serenely waited for the call of the Lord, which came about due to an aggravation of her respiratory problems.

Sr. Agnese was a great Pauline apostle. The words of today's Liturgy can well be applied to her: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring tidings of peace, joy and salvation." We can truly say that her feet—so badly crippled by pain—always proclaimed joy, salvation and love for the Lord to every person she met on her path in life. May the offering of her life in this particular moment in the Church enable the Synod of Bishops to bring a fresh breeze to the world of youth—an experience of beauty and unity that will open new routes for the Church.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 18 October 2018