

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

At about 10:45 a.m. today, the XXVII Sunday of Ordinary Time, which this year coincides with the Feast of the Guardian Angels, these emissaries of God visited the Neurology Department of Verduno Hospital, (Cuneo) Italy, to usher into the kingdom of heaven our sister:

**PRIANTE ERMINIA – Sr. MARIA GEMMA**  
**born in Solaro di Gottolengo (Brescia), Italy, on 30 June 1934.**

Sr. M. Gemma entered the Congregation in the house in Alba on 5 September 1951. She was one of the fruits of the intense vocation ministry coordinated in the early 1950's by the superior of our Brescia community, Sr. Colomba Pallavicino. Sr Gemma always said with fervor that she was a "daughter of Sr. Colomba" and would list with pleasure the many young Brescian women who during that period were attracted to the Pauline vocation thanks to the witness of our FSP community, meetings with holy Pauline priests, and participation in vocation-oriented retreats. She spent the first 3 years of her formation in Alba and then was sent to Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 19 March 1955. We know that this important period of Sr. Gemma's life was very close to her heart because a picture of her novitiate group was found among her most cherished possessions.

As a young professed, she spent about 7 years disseminating the Word of God in the diocese of Pavia. From 1962-1984, she worked in the St. Paul Film Agencies of Trent, Reggio Emilia, Cagliari and Bologna. In this last community, she also worked in the kitchen for 8 years. Sr. M. Gemma was aware that providing healthy nourishment for her community was a very valuable service and so she tried to perfect her cooking skills by following the new recipes she found in our *Family Magazine*. From her Venetian grandmother, she had learned the importance of "celebrating life" and thus she did her best to create a warm family atmosphere that helped the sisters enjoy being together, including through meals prepared with special care and love.

In 1979-80, she welcomed with deep gratitude the chance to participate in a course of updating and ongoing formation held in our Motherhouse in Alba.

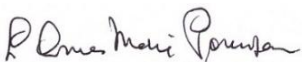
In 1992, her ailing mother's difficult health situation prompted Sr. M. Gemma to request time away from her community in order to assist her. She made the request with suffering but also in peace and with a profound sense of responsibility. She wrote to the Superior General: "I know that what I am requesting will not make my life comfortable or quiet, but before the Lord I have sifted through the discomforts and possible difficulties I will be facing and with his light I have concluded that the Spirit will come to the aid of my weakness. I believe always more firmly that God never abandons his children, and consequently I know that his grace will be my strength and my security." Nevertheless, Sr. M. Gemma tried to participate as much as she could in the retreats organized by the Brescia community so as to keep abreast of what was happening in the Congregation, which she considered to be her extended family.

When she returned to the community in 1996, Sr. M. Gemma was assigned to Alba, where she worked as a driver and also in the laundry and housekeeping sectors. Urged on by the desire to be as useful as possible, she also took sewing lessons, saying with conviction, "everything we do should be done well."

In 2013, Sr. M. Gemma was transferred to Livorno and the following year to Brescia, where she lived until a few weeks ago. Feeling unexpectedly ill, she was briefly hospitalized and then relocated to Alba on 12 September. A short time later, she was admitted to Verduno Hospital, where doctors discovered she was suffering from a brain tumor. By now in a comatose state, she was ready for her great journey home to heaven and today her Guardian Angel led her to the place God had prepared for her and from which she now uses her lovely singing voice to praise him with eternal joy.

Affectionately,

Rome, 2 October 2022.

  
sr Anna Maria Parenzan