



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 7:15 p.m. today, while the Liturgy was introducing us into the Feast of the Epiphany, the Lord visited our community of Alba, Italy, to call one of our sisters to “arise” and clothe herself in everlasting light:

**ZUCCHERINO MARIA GIUSEPPINA – SR. MARIA**  
**born in Busca (Cuneo), Italy on 23 February 1937.**

Sr. Maria was always a “quiet presence” among us: a sister who was reserved but at the same time fully involved in the mission and life of the Congregation, very faithful to prayer and community life, but at the same time always ready to “go forth,” even if it meant remaining away from home often for weeks at a time so as to enable the Word to speed forward from the mountains to the coasts, to simple people as well as those in the highest scholastic environments.

Sr. Maria truly passed among us in loving and active silence, giving her entire self to God and to the Pauline mission with great respect, delicacy and sensitivity. Writing confidentially to the Superior General on the occasion of her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, she described herself as follows: “I am a very small sister, the ‘last’ of the alphabet, who can’t find words to express the gratitude I feel in my heart.... Seventy years are a lot and my body is beginning to show signs of weakness, but my heart is filled with a great yearning to continue making a gift of myself, to still do something for the Lord and for the people of our time through our beautiful Congregation....”

She entered the Congregation in the house of Alba on 8 September 1959. Three years later she was sent to Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 30 June 1963. She remained in Rome for her Juniorate, making a valuable contribution to the typography, in particular the offset printing press. After her perpetual profession in 1968, she was assigned to Alba, where she continued her service in the technical apostolate.

In 1973 she had the chance to experience the Institute’s itinerant mission, first in the beautiful alpine valleys of Aosta and then in Savona on the Ligurian coast. After a year of renewal in Alba, she was transferred to Milan to work as a “propagandist” in that huge and dynamic diocese. In her busy community, Sr. Maria was truly tireless in organizing displays, book fairs and numerous Biblical Missions and Gospel Weeks. The apostolate compelled her in some ways to overcome her innate shyness, and faith helped her surmount every obstacle. Her goodness created harmony and balance in the group of sisters with whom she collaborated.

In 1982, Sr. Maria was transferred to Alessandria, from which she travelled to the Tortona book center on a weekly basis. For her it was another place from which she was able to manifest her openness to the people and the local Church. Her kindness and cordiality, sincere smile and bright eyes, were the best “calling cards” for the many customers who frequented that apostolic Center. Following this, Sr. Maria then served for 10 consecutive years as the superior of the Aosta community. Authorization for her to serve a third mandate was requested from the Holy See precisely because of her ability to foster a community environment of genuine love.

For another 11 years she was a serene and active presence in the community and book center of Mantua until, in 2015, the onset of Parkinson’s disease made it advisable to transfer her to the infirmary of the community of Alba. The sisters who assisted her in this time say that she was a true “angel”—a sister who always did her best to avoid annoying, worrying or disturbing others. In these last days her physical situation suddenly worsened, leading her very quickly to the contemplation of that mystery, hidden for centuries, manifested in all its splendor in the Liturgy of these days.

On the luminous Feast of the Epiphany, Sr. Maria’s life rises like incense to God as the treasure chest of her existence opens to reveal its precious contents to him in an act of offering and adoration.

Affectionately,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 5 January 2021