

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

At 8:00 this morning, Our Lady of the Rosary visited the San Raffaele community, Albano, Italy to take home to heaven our sister:

VANZETTA PAOLA – SR. MARIA RENATA
born in Ziano di Fiemme (Trent), Italy on 9 August 1933.

Sr. Renata was a discreet, precise sister, who was focused on essentials, scrupulous in her commitments, and a person of few words, like the people of the splendid Alpine region where she was born and raised. Very faithful to the charism that she found fully expressed in our Constitutions, she cultivated a great missionary passion even though she spent almost all of her life in various offices of the Congregation and Church.

She entered the Congregation in Alba on 26 September 1949, and after a time of formation and several periods of apostolic experience in the community of Brescia, she made her novitiate in the Motherhouse, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1953. As a young professed sister, she dedicated herself to diffusion in the extended diocese of Milan and then in Ancona and Pavia. But all too soon she had to be admitted to our Albano clinic due to lung problems. When she was assigned to Bolzano, Sr. Renata had the chance to fill her lungs with healthy mountain air while carrying out the itinerant apostolate. Maestra Thecla, a caring and affectionate mother, wrote moving letters to her, asking about her health, one of which reads:

“How are you doing? Do you still have a cough? How do you like Bolzano? I want to know because if you are happy there, perhaps you could remain in that house for a longer time. Tell me frankly and serenely what you think about that. Are you more comfortable in a book center or in a big house like Alba or Rome, or do you think you would be better off at Albano? I know that you are generous and always want to say “yes,” but I would like you to tell me frankly where you would feel best in both health and spirit.”

Accepting the maternal invitation of Prima Maestra, Sr. Renata returned to Albano so as to live in a protected environment while helping to take care of the sick sisters and also lend a hand as sacristan and door-keeper. For the rest of her life, she felt closely linked to this community, which for her was associated with many memories of important encounters she had had with the Founder and Maestra Thecla.

In 1962, she was sent to Rome to work in the administration sector of *Così*, the FSP magazine for young women. Between 1967 and 1969, she was part of a team that gathered at Grottaferrata to study and reflect more deeply on the Founder’s thought so as to prepare an initial collection of his writings and oral preaching, divided according to subject. Primo Maestro was aware of this and blessed the group’s work with the humorous comment: “Well, if you have nothing else more important to do...” It was valuable research that was well-utilized by the Special Chapters of different PF Institutes and provided a foundation for all future efforts involving deeper study of Alberione’s thought. After this, Sr. Renata spent some time in the FSP Documents Office in Via Antonino Pio (Rome) and in the secretary’s office of USMI (Union of Major Superiors of Italy).


From 1972-2018, she was a member of the FSP Generalate community, where she was called to take care of the Institute’s International Book Archives and launch its International Secretariat for the Apostolate. Later, her skill at running printing presses was put to good use in the Generalate’s technical office until, in 1987, she assumed responsibility for the Congregation’s Historical Archives.

She prepared herself for this service scrupulously by attending the Vatican Archives School and allowing herself to be taught by the experience of other Institutes. With patience, love and competence, she proceeded to classify and systematize the official documents pertaining to the history of our Congregation, while at the same time indicating her availability to lend a hand with various community needs ranging from the reception desk to the sacristy to the proofreading of the texts of the Founder’s Opera Omnia prepared by the sisters in charge of the Secretariat for Spirituality. She also found time to help out in the local parish, where she was a member of the pastoral council and also a Eucharistic Minister.

In 2018, Sr. Renata’s failing health made it advisable to transfer her to the San Raffaele community of Albano. She lived the last period of her life in serenity and peace, silence and docility, in intimate communion with the Divine Master, the radiant “Sun” that permeated her whole life. We thank this dear sister because, through her extensive work on Fr. Alberione’s historical documents and writings, she has shed light on our charism for the good of the Pauline Family and the Church.

Affectionately,

Rome, 7 October 2021


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan