

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

The Lord has visited us once again. At a little after 1:00 a.m. last night, he stopped by the infirmary of our Alba, Italy community to call to his eternal light our sister:

COREN SR. MARIA
born in Pulfero Mersino (Udine), Italy on 16 July 1930.

Sr. Maria entered the Congregation in the community of Alba together with her sister Giuseppina on 25 March 1949, the feast of the Annunciation—the feast of the Virgin who said *yes*. Like Mary, this dear sister always said *yes* to God, her readiness to do his will put to the test time and again time in her constant service to the communities in which she lived, doing good to all.

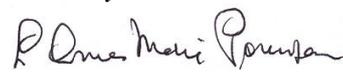
While still a postulant, she was assigned to the “propaganda” mission in the huge diocese of Milan. Immediately after her first profession in Rome on 19 March 1953, she returned to this apostolate, traveling the roads of Europe with great peace of heart and bags overflowing with books. In 1954, after a year of apostolic service in Lugano, Switzerland, she was sent as a missionary to France, the country that would become her second home. In fact, Sr. Maria spent 52 years in that country, dedicating herself wholeheartedly to her sisters and to the Pauline mission. Paris, Marseilles, Lyon and Arras were the Pauline communities in which she worked as an active disseminator of the Word of God for more than 20 years, and then as a true “housekeeper” in her community, carrying out every type of household service day after day for more than 30 years. Honed in a spirit of self-sacrifice from the time she was a child, she donated her entire being to the Lord and to her apostolic activities with the simplicity and silence that characterized her entire life.

Sr. Maria never pursued higher studies but she possessed an innate “wisdom of heart,” a special sensitivity that enabled her to identify with the sufferings of others and offer them words of faith. Our sisters of France say that she was an intuitive and resourceful person and remember with emotion her industriousness and creative ways of approaching every task, whether it was cooking, sewing, wardrobe maintenance or any other household service.

Everything Sr. Maria did was inspired by a missionary spirit so when the Congregation launched its Missionary Project in 1993, she wrote from France to the Superior General: “When I read the circular letter you sent us for Christmas, I was profoundly moved and I want to say that I am ready to collaborate [with this Project]. If chosen to be a member of a foundation team, perhaps I could help the other sisters by doing the things I do here in France: sewing, ironing, preparing meals, cleaning the house.... This desire to be useful is very strong in me but I am serene and at peace about it. I offer you my ‘widow’s mite’ in union with the shepherds before the crib of Jesus....” And in another letter, she wrote: “I continue my mission of prayer and complete self-surrender into the hands of the One who called me into existence. In union with the Virgin Mary, I am ready to do the will of God.”

In 2006, Sr. Maria was obliged to leave France and return to Italy due to her deteriorating health. She was transferred to Alba, where she continued to serve her sisters, often suffering in silence and offering small misunderstandings for the great intentions she carried in her heart and that enriched her life: the people she had met on her apostolic missions, the Church, the Congregation...

During the last years of her life, lived in silence and prayer, the Lord prepared Sr. Maria for her definitive meeting with him. Perhaps the words of Fr. Alberione resounded in her heart: “You will remember this day [first profession] at the point of death, as you are preparing to pass to eternity, where you will make your final and eternal profession. When Jesus says to you, ‘Come, spouse of Christ,’ may you generously respond: *yes!*—the same generous *yes* you said in response to your vocation.” In the silence of last night, the moment arrived for Sr. Maria to say her final *yes* to God and make her “eternal profession.” Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 31 January 2017