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Dearest Sisters,

At about 2:00 a.m. last night, the “God of the living” visited our Queen of Apostles infirmary of Alba, Italy to call to his joy and peace our sister:

BARBIERI ONORINA – SR. MARIA ROSALBA
born in Vigorovea di S. Angelo (Padua), Italy on 13 November 1923.

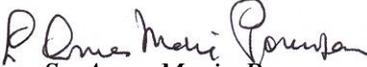
Last April, Sr. M. Rosalba suffered a mild stroke for which she was hospitalized in Alba. Afterward, she underwent rehabilitation at the Ferrero Institute, where her friendliness and enthusiasm made her a great favorite with everyone. Each evening, she would call all the patients together to celebrate Evening Prayer and say the rosary. However, serious lung complications soon required Sr. Rosalba to be readmitted to the hospital. She returned to her own community just 8 days ago, delighted to once more be home among the sisters she loved. Up until the moment she lapsed into a coma, she never tired of thanking them for their many services to her.

The Pauline life of this dear sister was characterized by her joyful readiness to communicate with everyone and a simplicity of spirit that led her to idealize the various situations in which she found herself and live them with a childlike spirit. She entered the Congregation in the community of Rovigo on 13 August 1938. After several years of initial formation, during which she worked in the typography and carried out the diffusion apostolate, she was sent to Rome for her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 19 March 1943. After this, she disseminated the Word of God to the families and collectivities of Genoa and Rome. In 1954, she began a long period of book center work in Cagliari, Foggia, Trent, Rovigo, Verona and Belluno successively, during which she also lent a willing hand with other services such as that of sacristan. She then worked for more than 10 years in the St. Paul Film Agency of Udine, happy to carry out what she considered to be an extension of the “propaganda” apostolate. Afterward, she served as cook and carried out many other valuable household duties in the communities of Pordenone, Cagliari, Naples and Mantua.

Sr. Rosalba, who had a wide variety of interests, longed to study music and during the 1960’s she was able to pursue this discipline at the Diocesan School of Trent, where she earned a diploma in the field. She also patiently taught herself to type so as to carry out more efficiently her work of sending out our Pauline periodicals to subscribers.

In 1999 Sr. Rosalba, who was very close to her family, became very worried about one of her sisters, who was no longer self-sufficient. She asked for a leave of absence to take care of her sister—a service that lasted several years. But Sr. Rosalba’s own health also declined sharply during this time, to the point that in 2006 she reluctantly agreed to entrust her sister to the care of others so that she could return to the Congregation to take care of her own health. Initially inserted in the community of Udine, she was then transferred to Alba. Up to the end of her life, Sr. Rosalba continued to say how grateful she was to belong to the Lord and to the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul. She nourished a deep devotion to Maestra Thecla and had carefully preserved several personal notes she had received from her. We believe that one of these, dated “Christmas 1943” and signed *Baby Jesus*, made a deep impact on her life and perhaps also on her death. The note reads: “I want you to be completely mine. Be generous. Don’t avoid making the small sacrifices required by community life. Do everything out of love for me, and when the time is right I will reward you. Have courage! Work hard to become a saint. I have already prepared the graces for you. My heartfelt blessings upon you. *Signed: Your little Jesus, who loves you very much.*” We are sure that Baby Jesus kept his promise to Sr. Rosalba by granting her the greatest reward of all—heaven, together with the full abundance of his blessings.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 3 June 2009