

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

At about 4:00 this morning, the Father visited the infirmary of our Divine Providence community of Alba, Italy, to call to eternal life our sister:

BONINI DINA MARGHERITA – SR. TERESINA
born in Regnano di Viano (Reggio Emilia), Italy on 20 July 1924.

If Sr. Teresina could send us her greetings right now, we are sure that she would fill this sheet of paper with stars—her habitual way of enriching her correspondence. Sr. Teresina belonged to a very special family. She was the ninth and last child of Enrico and Adelaide Bonini, luminous and holy examples of a married couple and parents who gave the Lord five of their children: Paolina and Agnese among the Capuchin Sisters of Parma, Italy; Celina and Teresina among the Daughters of St. Paul, and Leonia among the Franciscan Sisters of Mary Immaculate.

Sr. Teresina entered the Congregation on her 10th birthday and, although still a child, she quickly learned the art of printing and the requirements of the Pauline life. She made her novitiate in Alba, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1943. As a young professed, she carried out the propaganda apostolate in Ivrea but soon afterward she was called to the missions. In fact, on 13 Oct. 1947 she left for the United States where she carried out the diffusion ministry for more than 20 years in Staten Island, Derby, Youngstown, Alexandria, Miami and Buffalo. She traveled the streets of these cities with a bag overflowing with books to distribute to the people, and in return the generous Americans gifted her with abundant “beneficenza.” How many stories Sr. Teresina recounted about the conversions that had taken place through the propaganda apostolate! In one instance, she said, a simple leaflet left in someone’s office in New York City saved a desperate person from suicide. As the man himself told the sisters: “Last year you came by my office. I didn’t take any of the books you offered me but you gave me a small leaflet that I reread often. One day, when I was feeling desperate, I left home without saying goodbye to my family, determined to end my life. I entered my office in that turbulent state of mind but then I caught sight of that small leaflet on my desk. I picked it up and reread it. I thought of you, sisters! The leaflet said, ‘Try! Others have succeeded and you will too, with a little effort.’ Well, I *did* try and business began to improve. I’m alive today thanks to you, Sisters!”

Looking back on her many years as a propagandist, Sr. Teresina wrote: “Even though I was an ardent missionary, I was insufficient and inadequate in all ways. So I handed myself over to Jesus. I told him: ‘I can’t speak English, Jesus, so you have to use my tongue’...and lo and behold, the words flowed out because it was Jesus who was speaking! I learned a lot of things from the Tabernacle.”

In 1969, Sr. Teresina returned to Italy. Because of poor health, she spent several years in the Albano community, where she received the medical care she needed. In 1974 she was transferred to Alba, where she continued to dedicate all her strength to the Lord through intensive work in the bindery. She was happy to “live for the Gospel” by carrying out the technical apostolate and she loved to share with the other sisters both the happy and sad aspects of her propaganda adventures, as well as the experiences in which God had poured out his grace on her in a tangible way.

A few weeks ago, Sr. Teresina came down with pneumonia. Bedridden and suffering from a high fever, she drifted in and out of awareness. And from this state she serenely passed to eternal life. The Lord called her to himself on the day on which the Liturgy, through the reading of the *Magnificat*, contemplates the great works God accomplished in the life of Mary and wants to accomplish in the life of every believer. In fact, *A Double Magnificat* is the title of the biography of Sr. Teresina’s parents. And *Magnificat* is the word that springs spontaneously to our lips when we consider this “holy family” whose last fruit was our humble, simple and faith-filled Sr. Teresina.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. Anna Maria Parenzan'.

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Vicar General

Rome, 22 December 2010