



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 about 4:00 p.m. today, our merciful Father visited the infirmary of our Divine Providence community in Alba, Italy to call to himself our sister:

BUSSO MARGHERITA – SR. FILIPPINA MARIA
born in Bra (Cuneo), Italy on 7 February 1921.

A note this dear sister sent to the Superior General on the occasion of her 70th anniversary of religious profession provides us with a good summary of her vocation: “A life of love...an apostolic life lived with enthusiasm and faith. I spontaneously think of a verse of the psalm: ‘I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will sing to my God as long as I exist and he will be pleased with my song. My joy is in the Lord.’”

Sr. Filippina’s life was truly a hymn of praise to God, expressed through all the forms and languages of communication. Her long Pauline experience throws a ray of light on our vocation in the Church, which is characterized in a special way by the teaching apostolate. Almost at the end of her long and fruitful life, Sr. Filippina confided: “We were always sustained by the grace of mission, the grace of office. Our contribution to this was commitment. Our charism is very powerful. Even if we have not studied sufficiently, faith in the Pauline mission will help us find new ways and means to carry out the publishing apostolate.”

Sr. Filippina entered the Congregation in the community of Alba on 8 September 1932 at the age of eleven. Several years later, she made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 3 March 1940. She loved art and beautiful things and in 1939 she was given the chance to study music and design. She herself recounted: “I made my first trip from Alba to Rome with Maestra Thecla in 1939. On the way, she told me: “I know that you like to play [musical instruments] and draw, so in Rome you will study music and design.” This decision made me very happy. Every day I practiced on the harmonium and later I was asked to teach music to the community.”

Sr. Filippina continues: “In Rome, I had private classes in design for about two years with Professor Mario Barberis. Along with two other sisters, I also attended art classes taught by Professor Gian Battista Conti. From 1942-1943, we went to the Beato Angelico Art School. With this small storehouse of knowledge, we began to illustrate catechisms and to compile an archive of photos for book covers, as well as other resources needed by our typography department. The book *In the School of Jesus*, published in 1947, merits particular mention in this regard. Another work worthy of note was a small missal for children entitled, *I Speak with Jesus*, which was published in 1950 and reprinted many times.”

A true Pauline, Sr. Filippina began working in the recording department in 1953. Looking back on those days, she said: “Primo Maestro vigorously promoted this apostolate. He came up with ideas for catechisms, which were then produced by the Daughters of St. Paul. As aids to the texts, we created a series of short film strips on the Liturgy and the lives of the saints. At first the images were static and there was no sound track. But it was quickly decided to add sound by recording the explanation of the text found in the teachers’ guides. Thus the production of records developed alongside that of our catechetical series.”

But another pioneer experience awaited her: in 1955, Sr. Lorenzina Guidetti was asked by the Founder to start a magazine for young women and she asked if Sr. Filippina could help her with this project. It was an excellent choice and thus the magazine *Così* was born. The Founder himself told them what subjects the periodical should deal with and what columns he considered to be essential. He assured them that the magazine was destined to do a lot of good. Other sisters began to collaborate with the project, all fired by great faith in the Pauline vocation, mutual esteem, respect and friendship. The work was intense and the daily schedule rigorous: often the sisters worked until midnight and then resumed their apostolate at 4:00 in the morning. But all were filled with great joy at the thought that this charismatic activity was in the forefront of its field. Sr. Filippina made an important contribution to *Così*

through her impagination and graphics work, and as a member of the team she stood out for her fidelity to the periodical and her readiness to make any sacrifice necessary for it.

At the end of this beautiful apostolic experience, which also included many sufferings, Sr. Filippina was asked to return to the recording apostolate. On the wave of the liturgical reforms promoted by Vatican II, two new branches of production were initiated: liturgical music and songs by Christian singers and songwriters. The FSPs began to collaborate with professionals in the music field, channeling their work into the apostolate of evangelization. Among the noted Italian recording artists with whom Sr. Filippina worked were Marcello Marrocchi, Rino Farruggi and Giosy Cento.

Sr. Filippina also dedicated the best of her energies to musicals, which she not only helped to produce but also accompanied on their tours around the country. One of the best known of these was entitled *Forza, venite gente*—a theatrical performance that required great faith, courage and enthusiasm to stage. She herself said: “The motivations that prompted us to agree to co-produce this stage performance with RCA International were the same ones that have always sustained the apostolic activities of the Daughters of St. Paul, namely: the grace of the Pauline vocation and of the charism, the ideal of making ourselves ‘all to all,’ and the experience of Primo Maestro who, during a Bible Week held in Alba in 1925, called in a theater group from Turin to re-enact the life of Jesus for three consecutive evenings. In just a short time, the original theater group for the *Forza, venite gente* comedy performed the musical in more than 1500 cities in Italy. Even today, it remains a best seller due to its poetry, lively and moving songs, and truly professional cast.”

In 1987, Sr. Filippina retired as director of the recording department so as to dedicate herself to more direct service of her sisters through the office of superior, which she carried out with discretion, serenity and wisdom. She was first appointed head of one of the sub-groups of the large Via Antonino Pio community and then superior of the Milan/Paolo Uccello community for two consecutive mandates. The years flew by but Sr. Filippina’s zeal to undertake new initiatives such as the mini-media apostolate kept her young at heart, open-minded and keenly aware of the need to adopt the new languages of communication.

In 2003, she asked to be transferred to Alba so as to accompany our more needy sisters and help out with various services compatible with her age. Several months ago, while climbing a ladder to reach a storage closet, she lost her balance, resulting in a bad fall. She unfortunately never fully recovered from the physical repercussions of that accident.

One day, reminiscing about communal experiences with another sister with whom she had lived for a long time, Sr. Filippina exclaimed with shining eyes: “What beautiful lives we’ve had!” Yes, Sr. Filippina, you had a very beautiful life—one dedicated to evangelization, forever straining ahead to fulfill God’s dream for you, giving your all to him and to your sisters with simplicity and joy.

Affectionately,



Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 3 February 2014