

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 5:30 yesterday afternoon the Lord unexpectedly called to himself another sister from our Domingos de Morais community in Sao Paulo, Brazil:

CAMARGO PIRES DA SILVEIRA ANNA – SR. MARIA PIERINA
born in Itatiba (São Paulo), Brazil, on 21 May 1926.

Everything happened very quickly. Several weeks ago Sr. Pierina was hospitalized for some minor heart problems. After her release from the hospital she returned to her community, but her health continued to decline. Yesterday afternoon she suffered a heart attack and died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.

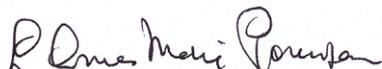
Sr. M. Pierina was a good and generous sister, who saw the providential hand of God in every event of life. She was a missionary on fire with the desire to do the will of God always and everywhere. She entered the Congregation in the Domingos de Morais community, Sao Paulo on 1 June 1943 and immediately began to carry out pastoral work for vocations and help out in the stock room. She made her novitiate in the DM community, concluding it with her first profession on 17 Feb. 1946. Following this, she carried out the propaganda apostolate for several years in Rio de Janeiro and then, in 1950, was sent to Staten Island, United States. Here she obtained a residency permit and for the next 8 years dedicated herself to diffusion of the Word of God to families, schools and businesses. In 1958 she was transferred to Caracas, Venezuela, where the Congregation had opened a community 2 years earlier. After having learned English, Sr. Pierina now had to learn Spanish and inculturate herself in a context filled with apostolic and vocational challenges. She said that her missionary trips around the luxuriant countryside, which sometimes lasted for months at a time, were wonderful experiences for her. When numerous local vocations began to request admittance to the Institute, the sisters decided to build a larger house on a hill overlooking the city. Passion for the apostolate also moved them to visit the islands of the Caribbean and to open a branch house in Puerto Rico, where the apostolate showed signs of great promise. The year was 1967 and Sr. M. Pierina became the first superior of the Rio Piedras community.

In 1972, she returned to Venezuela but by now her heart was deeply attached to Puerto Rico, where she was stationed anew from 1975-1991. After a brief sojourn in Caracas, she returned to Brazil to care for her sister, who was over 80 years old and in great need of assistance. In reference to this she wrote: "I have made the decision [to return to Brazil] with great suffering but also with great peace because I realize that my first duty right now is to my sister." Sr. Pierina spent the last 20 years of her life as a member of the Alberione and Cidade Regina communities in Sao Paulo, where she could be close to her sister and at the same time help the community through service at the reception desk. But her heart was always in the "missions" and she continued to offer her life and sacrifices for the people of Venezuela and Puerto Rico. She wrote: "I am learning to follow in the footsteps of Christ along the way of the cross so as to afterward celebrate the Resurrection with him eternally."

On her 50th anniversary of religious profession, Sr. M. Pierina summarized her life with these words: "Everything I did in the past 50 years was done in love and for love. In every community in which I lived, especially during my 42 years as a missionary, I deeply loved the sisters, the Pauline apostolate and the people of those countries and I received much joy and consolation from them in return. Now the Lord is asking me to love them in a different way, that is, in silence and surrender to his will. I want to live in a spirit of intense prayer and contemplation, up to the point of mysticism, so as to witness to the goodness, peace and tenderness of the heart of Christ."

We thank the Lord for the life and witness of Sr. M. Pierina, who spent her time among us doing good and continually seeking the treasure for the sake of which she joyfully abandoned everything else.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 27 July 2011