

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

At about 11:15 a.m. today, our merciful Father visited the emergency wing of St. Lazarus Hospital, Alba, Italy, to call to her eternal reward by way of a pulmonary embolism our sister:

CARMINATI FRANCESCA TERESA – SR. FRANCA
born in Graffignana (Milan), Italy on 21 January 1929.

The pedagogy the Lord used with this dear sister was truly unique: just 15 days ago she had returned to Italy after more than 45 years as a missionary in Portugal. At the Superior General's request that she accept a transfer to Alba so as to receive the assistance required by her deteriorating health, she had replied: "I accept the transfer to Alba, given that my physical energy is steadily declining. Thank you for inserting me in a context adapted to my age and health." These few lines summarize the kindness, docility, trust and love for the Congregation that had always characterized Sr. Franca's personality.

She entered the Congregation in Alba on 6 Oct. 1948, following the example of her sister Elisabetta who, although younger in age, had preceded her in the Pauline vocation. She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1951. After this, Sr. Franca diffused the Word of God in the dioceses of Chiavari and Livorno. Following her perpetual profession, she was assigned to the book center apostolate in Livorno and then was appointed superior of the La Spezia community. After a period in the Salerno book center, she was ready and willing to accept a transfer to Portugal as a missionary. This took place in 1967. She lived and worked in this profoundly Marian country up until 15 days ago, carrying out a variety of activities, including service as superior of the Porto and Funchal communities for several mandates, delegation councilor and community bursar. With simplicity and love, she helped to organize Bible missions in different dioceses throughout the country, but above all she dedicated herself to the book center apostolate, carrying out this mission with competence and conviction in Lisbon, Faro, Porto and Funchal. Priests, religious and the laity all sought her out with great trust, sure that she could help them find significant responses to their thirst for God and Gospel values, supplemented by words of faith and comfort.

Sr. Franca was a kind, good and serviceable sister who always sought to establish a positive relationship with every person. Her life witnessed to her joy at being a Pauline and she took every opportunity to brighten community life by organizing small celebrations, complete with home-baked pastries, which she prepared with great skill. She rejoiced in the beauty and universality of the Pauline vocation and when the Congregation's Missionary Project was announced in 1993, she wrote to the Superior General: "You can always count on me: I am at your complete disposition to serve the Word of God and do good. Even if I were 100 years old, I would feel the same way, in union with the whole Congregation."

For the last several years, Sr. Franca's health had been steadily deteriorating due to repeated "mini-strokes," complicated by thromboflebitis in one of her legs. But her heart continued to beat vigorously and joyfully for the Pauline vocation. When she celebrated her 60th jubilee of religious profession in 2011, she reconfirmed her deepest sentiments, saying: "I want my heart to be pervaded by the certitude that the Lord of Love dwells within me and that he is faithful to all his promises."

Today, the eve of the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we are sure Sr. Franca united her voice to that of the prophet Isaiah, saying to the Lord, "Here I am! Send me!" May the generous self-offering and example of this dear sister help many young women respond to the invitation to leave everything and follow Jesus, allowing their lives to be pervaded by a wonder and joy that will lead them to be fruitful and vibrant apostles.


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 9 February 2013