

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

We just received word that today, Wednesday of Holy Week, at 8:10 a.m. local time, one of our sisters in the Thecla Merlo community in Pasay City, Philippines answered the Divine Master's invitation to celebrate Easter with him in heaven:

CUADRA RESTITUTA – SR. MARIA PACIS
born in Anahawan (Leyte), Philippines on 8 September 1928.

Sr. M. Pacis lived and died in harmony with the name she received on the day of her profession. A woman of peace, she always warmly welcomed others and dedicated herself to small and humble services without asking anything special for herself.

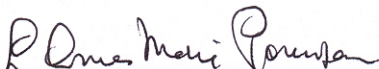
She entered the Congregation in Lipa on 19 June 1950. In this community, the "cradle" of the FSPs in the Philippines, she underwent her initial formation and made her novitiate, concluding this stage of her Pauline journey with her first profession on 19 March 1955. On that occasion she wrote: "I realize that I am nothing in the sight of God but with his help and that of the Blessed Virgin I can do all things. I trust in the guidance of my superiors and I am happy to carry out the Pauline mission. I want to become a good and holy Daughter of St. Paul." On the occasion of her perpetual profession, Sr. M. Pacis made the resolution to humbly accept any corrections she might receive and to selflessly dedicate all her energies to the Congregation. She was immediately offered the chance to serve her sisters through her assignment to the sewing room. For more than 25 years she also joyfully carried out the propaganda apostolate in the dioceses of Manila, Vigan, Iloilo, Tacloban and Legaspi. Sr. M. Pacis willingly accepted the sacrifices linked to this demanding apostolate, convinced that a single leaflet could convert a person and set that individual on the path to God. Inspired by this thought, she did not consider the weight of her propaganda bag and the many miles she walked to be a burden.

In the same selfless manner she willingly and humbly embraced the invitation of the Lord to silently dedicate her energies to household duties and many other services to the sisters in the communities of Pasay City, Naga and Cebu. Her strong feeling of belonging to the Congregation and her love for her superiors were proverbial. In 1995, Sr. M. Pacis participated with deep joy and emotion in a pilgrimage to the sites of our Pauline beginnings. She couldn't believe she was actually treading the ground walked by Fr. Alberione, Maestra Thecla and the many sisters and brothers who had helped the Pauline mission grow and expand in the Philippines. She felt especially close to our Institute's superiors general and assured them of her prayers, the offering of the Masses in which she participated, and above all her complete readiness to follow their directives. Her short, neatly-written letters reflect her simplicity of heart and her orderly interior spirit.

After several years of generous work in the Pasay bindery, in 2009 Sr. M. Pacis willingly returned to the local community of Cebu, where she lived up until this past March. While making her annual retreat last month, she was diagnosed as suffering from liver cancer, already in an advanced stage. But in spite of this, she wanted to return to Cebu as soon as possible to continue her work there.

Those who lived with Sr. M. Pacis remember her as a true sister: a friendly, affectionate person of strong faith and a deep prayer life. She continually thanked the Lord for the many gifts she had received from him, above all the gift of the Pauline vocation that had made her life so beautiful. She felt ready to meet the Divine Master and indeed wanted to see him "face to face" as soon as possible. We can confidently say that Sr. M. Pacis never resisted the Spirit. Instead, she surrendered herself wholeheartedly into the hands of the Father, allowing the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity to do great things through her littleness. We thank the Lord for the life of our dear sister and place her in the merciful arms of our crucified Savior.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 20 April 2011