



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

At about 5:00 this morning, our good and merciful Father visited the infirmary wing of our Alba, Italy community to call to eternal life our sister:

**GIACONI ALBERTA – SR. PAOLA MARIA
born in Masiano (Pistoia), Italy on 28 February 1920.**

A few years ago, Sr. Paola M. wrote on a thank-you card: "Our only true dwelling place is in the heart of God." It is wonderful to think that today Sr. Paola M. returned our eternal dwelling place to find the Blessed Trinity waiting for her. On another occasion, she wrote on a note card in her small, neat script: "At the end of the road, I found Jesus waiting for me and he lifted me onto his shoulders. And I remembered that once, long ago, he had said to me: 'Remain in my love.'"

Now Sr. Paola M. is in truth being carried on the shoulders of her beloved Jesus and will *remain in his love* for all eternity. We want to thank her for her long life of fidelity to God and for leaving us the memory of her many examples of tact, nobility of soul and serenity, including in times of trial. Above all, we want to thank her for her big heart, which reached out over the years from numerous Pauline book centers to meet the needs of clients who turned to her for light, for help in re-igniting their faith, and for rediscovering meaning in life.

Sr. Paola M. was a "fruit" of the apostolic activities of our pioneer sisters in Florence, who visited the families of eastern Tuscany to bring them the "good press," as the Pauline mission was described in those days. She entered the Institute on 7 Oct. 1935 in Florence.

After a short time in that community, she was sent to Alba, where she underwent her initial formation and worked in the technical apostolate. She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 3 March 1940. Following this, she carried out the propaganda apostolate in Ferrara and afterward worked in the Alba typography for several years. In 1943, she was assigned to the book center apostolate—a mission that would absorb her wholeheartedly for the rest of her life. She was a true book center apostle: attentive to the needs of the clients, convinced about what she was doing, discreet in both words and behavior—in short, a person who offered the Gospel to everyone with grace and dignity. She served as superior of the Massa Carrara community for three years but afterward returned to the book center ministry, which she carried out zealously in Como, Ivrea, Bari, Piacenza, Arezzo, Livorno, Turin and Trieste. But the center on which she left the deepest mark was that of Bologna, to which she returned repeatedly during her long life and in which she spent a total of more than 35 years. She was a true "institution" in our Bologna book center: a person well known and esteemed by all the clients and sought out by everyone: bishops, priests, teachers and ordinary people alike, all who were confident that she could provide them with the material they needed to satisfy their deepest needs.

Sr. Paola M. suffered a number of illnesses over the years but it was only in 2002, after it was discovered that she had Parkinson's disease, that she was transferred from Bologna to Alba to provide her with the care required by her condition. At the Motherhouse, she continued to serve the Lord and the community through her simple and serene work as sacristan. In 2009, following a bad fall that triggered a brain trauma, she was transferred to the infirmary wing of the community. She continued to spend the last years of her life spreading goodness around her, accepting her sufferings without complaint. The advance of her illness progressively closed her throat to the point that it became very difficult for her to swallow, but Sr. Paola M. accepted this trial silently, determined not to be a burden to her caregivers. A few days ago her condition began to steadily deteriorate and the onset of a high fever hastened the moment of her definitive meeting with the Lord—an encounter for which she had been preparing with great love. Sr. Paola M. was called home to heaven on the Feast of St. Cecilia, a virgin and martyr whom Tradition says "always carried the Gospel of Christ in her heart and conversed with him day and night."

We believe that Sr. Paola M. also went to meet her Spouse with his Gospel in her heart and that she has now joined the heavenly choir in singing the new hymn reserved to all the saints.

Affectionately,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General