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FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
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Dearest Sisters,

We just received the news that yesterday, Monday of Holy Week, the Lord Jesus visited the infirmary wing of our community of Nazca (Buenos Aires), Argentina to call one of our sisters to celebrate Easter with him in heaven:

GIMENEZ SR. NILDA
born in Gualeguaychu (Entre Rios), Argentina on 21 October 1924.

Like the Suffering Servant whom we are contemplating in the liturgical readings this week, Sr. Nilda was called “from her mother’s womb” to proclaim the good news of salvation through the various forms of the Pauline mission and also through the apostolate of suffering. In fact, for the last 14 years of her life, Sr. Nilda suffered from a particularly severe form of senile dementia. Her sickbed was transformed into an altar—the cross upon which she offered her life to God, day after day, in silence and prayer. Her many years of illness were a true “paschal mystery”—a time of light and shadows, life and death—for her and for the sisters who lovingly assisted her.

Sr. Nilda entered the Congregation in the Nazca (Buenos Aires) community on 7 Oct. 1945, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. She was 21 at the time. After a period of formation and study, she made her novitiate in that community, concluding it with her first profession on 20 August 1949. For the next few years, she worked in the Rosario and Nazca book centers. In 1953, prior to her perpetual profession, she was made superior of the Santa Fe community, and then of the Tucuman community. Following this, she served for 12 years as formator of the aspirants and postulants before returning to the service of authority in the community of Rosario. From 1974-1978, the post-conciliar period during which student unrest in the secular world was having repercussions also on our communities, Sr. Nilda was made provincial superior—the first Argentinian FSP to hold this office. Her appointment came at a difficult time due to the country’s military dictatorship, which was having a negative impact on the Pauline apostolate in general and on “Familia Cristiana” Magazine in particular.

Our sisters of Argentina remember Sr. Nilda as a good and kind person who sought to make the most of each sister’s gifts to extend the Pauline mission. As provincial superior, she participated by right in the Institute’s 4th General Chapter (Alba, Italy) and established an excellent relationship with newly-elected Superior General, Sr. Maria Cevolani. Like Sr. Maria, Sr. Nilda yearned to see the members of the Congregation grow in fidelity and communion, and in a greater sense of belonging to it.

When her term as provincial ended, Sr. Nilda returned with great enthusiasm to the book center apostolate in Santa Fe. This was followed by a period in Buenos Aires, during which she worked in the province’s center for animation and apostolic programming. Afterward, she continued the book center apostolate in Nazca and Tucuman. The Pauline apostolate was the driving force of Sr. Nilda’s life and she tried to carry it out always better by suggesting suitable reading to book center clients. These sought her advice with great confidence, sensing her innate wisdom and her ability to guide them through the difficulties of life. Sr. Nilda also loved to keep things neat and orderly so every book center she managed literally shone with cleanliness.

In 1999, it became necessary to transfer Sr. Nilda to the infirmary wing of our Buenos Aires community because her physical resources were so depleted she could no longer communicate with anyone. Like the Suffering Servant described by Isaiah, the Lord purified her in the crucible of affliction. We are sure that she is now communicating light to everyone by proclaiming the marvels of God, who always held her in the palm of his hand and surrounded her with immense tenderness.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 3 April 2012