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Dearest Sisters,

At about 1:20 last night, the Divine Master visited the infirmary wing of our Via Antonino Pio community, Rome to call to heaven the oldest sister in our Congregation:

JOVINE ADELE – SR. M. TIMOTEA
born in Palata (Campobasso), Italy on 22 March 1909.

Last March, Sr. M. Timotea celebrated her 101st birthday—a long life rich in self-offering, in doing good, and in many apostolic experiences that she often pioneered.

Sr. M. Timotea entered the Congregation in the community of Rome on 4 February 1932, at the age of 23. In July 1933, she was sent to open the community of Naples and then to carry out the diffusion apostolate in Aversa. After this, she was sent to Alba for her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 20 August 1935. Immediately afterward, on 10 September, she obtained her driver's license. Sr. M. Timotea was the Italian province's first Daughter of St. Paul licensed to drive a car and she became the "driving instructor" of its members. Her first students were Sr. Giuseppina Maria Balestra and Sr. Maria Rosaria Visco. A congregational news bulletin from that period reports that these two sisters took their driving tests on 12 May 1937 and returned home joyfully flourishing the fruits of their victory....

Sr. M. Timotea visited the province's branch houses to teach the sisters how to drive in view of the propaganda apostolate. Over the next few years, she herself served as driver and errand runner in the communities of Rome, Florence, Cagliari and Naples. In 1940, she was sent to open a community in Piedimonte and in April 1941, before making her final vows, she was appointed local superior of Fiume (Istria). Along with all the inhabitants of this highly-contested zone, she suffered the fears, privations and horrors of World War II, one of the most difficult periods of Italian history. While in Fiume, she also made the effort to learn Croatian so as to establish apostolic bonds with the people in this bordering nation.

In 1946, Sr. M. Timotea was transferred to Trieste and from there to Udine. In both communities she carried out the service of local superior. In 1951, she returned to Rome to undertake a special work: that of making costumes for the actors in the films produced by the newly-established cinema department. She herself said of this experience:

"I began this new work in January 1951 and performed it up until the summer of 1954. I lived in the Divine Master community in Rome, and because space was scarce my bedroom had to serve as my workroom. In the beginning, I stored all the bolts of material there but later I was given a small shed near the dog house to use for storage. When the bolts of material began to mount up, I was permitted to store them in a small corner in the subcrypt of the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary. It was Maestra Thecla who supplied me with the cloth and trimmings needed for the costumes. When the little room in the subcrypt became too small for all my supplies, she let me use a larger room in the basement of the Divine Master building. Later, everything was transferred to the SSP community in Via Portuense. I carried out this work until we stopped producing films due to a lack of funds. I was a trained seamstress and I developed a deep interest in designing costumes. At first, I trained myself in this art by reading the Bible. Then Maestra Thecla gave me a 30-volume series of books entitled, *Costumes and Customs*. I also acquired a 12-volume series in Spanish on the same subject and all these books helped me ensure that the costumes I created were authentic in appearance and appropriate to the characters being portrayed. When the screenplays called for specialized costumes, I would borrow books from the national library and photocopy the pages I needed. In this way, I learned, for example, all about how Egyptians dressed from the beginning of their culture up to modern times. So as to put the finishing touches on my

costumes and make sure they compared favorably to other examples, I would visit the basilicas and other churches of Rome and carefully study the mosaics and frescoes depicted on their walls. I made all the costumes for the film *Il Figlio dell'uomo* (*The Son of God*) and I also made the personal props used by the characters in the fifty 16-mm. catechetical programs produced by the Daughters of St. Paul.”

In 1955, Sr. M. Timotea was sent to Great Britain to learn English and to collaborate with the sisters who had just opened our first community in that country. A year later she returned to Rome, where she worked for the next ten years in the shipping/billing department of the record studio. But this did not complete her apostolic experiences because in 1979 she was asked to take charge of the maintenance of the technical equipment in the radio sector in Via Antonino Pio.

When Sr. M. Timotea's strength began to decline, she dedicated herself to making rosaries, which she gave to our sisters to disseminate throughout the world. Even though she spent her last years in the infirmary wing of the Via Antonino Pio community, she continued to feel that she was a vibrant part of the community and Congregation up to the end of her life.

Recently, she had begun to say she wanted to meet the Lord and that she was asking him with great faith to call her home to heaven. About a week ago, she began to feel ill and this past Thursday a pulmonary edema aggravated her condition. With full lucidity, Sr. M. Timotea readied herself for her meeting with Jesus Master. She received the last sacraments and said goodbye to her provincial superior and sisters. And last night she passed to eternity so quietly that the sister keeping vigil at her bedside was not able to pinpoint the exact moment of her death.

During her long life, Sr. M. Timotea left us the example of her great faith and her passion for the apostolate. That faith allowed her to accomplish great things without any special training because she placed all her trust in the grace of obedience and in the power of the *Pact*.

We thank the Lord for having given Sr. M. Timotea to our Congregation for so many years and we entrust to her protection all our sister-drivers, called to face the intense and chaotic traffic of the large cities in which they live and work in order to bring the Gospel to everyone.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 25 October 2010