

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

At 8:35 p.m. today (local time), while the Church had already begun to contemplate the mystery of the Baptism of Jesus, God our Father visited St. John of God Hospital in Pasay City, Philippines to call to new life our sister:

LIWAG LYDIA – SR. MARIA PAOLA
born in Tiaong (Quezon), Philippines on 28 February 1928.

Sr. M. Paola entered the Congregation in Lipa, Philippines on 31 December 1949. She underwent the first stages of her formation in this community, concluding her novitiate with her first profession on 29 June 1953. Sr. M. Paola was a person who could be trusted completely: she deeply loved her Pauline vocation and sought to live it with profound fidelity.

As a young professed, she was stationed in Lipa, where she worked at the reception desk and served as doorkeeper. Later she was assigned to the sewing room of the Pasay community. In 1959, she was appointed superior of Naga and at the end of her term of office she had the grace to spend a short time in Rome completing her studies. When she returned to the Philippines in 1961, she was delighted to find a short letter from Maestra Thecla, who wrote to her and her travel companions: “I think that by now you have arrived in Manila, after what I hope was a good trip. I was thinking of all of you on your journey but I was not able to send a letter in time for your arrival in Bombay. I didn’t have even a moment of time, so I count on your understanding. Be happy and serene. Do the holy will of God well and at all times, and then...heaven! Let us pray for one another. We are always united before the Tabernacle.”

Sr. M. Paola was dearly loved and esteemed by her sisters who, during consultations, often proposed her name for the office of councilor or local superior. She was a temperate person who loved and lived her vow of poverty. She never expressed any special needs or desires; instead, her concern was to place all her resources at the service of the Congregation and Pauline mission. “If a habit is still good, why change it?”: this was the Gospel mentality and logic that inspired her. Convinced that nothing belonged to her personally, she had a rare ability to preserve and maintain things. Our Filipino sisters say that on many occasions they were pleasantly surprised to see the re-appearance of porcelain dinner services that Sr. M. Paola had preserved over the years with an almost jealous love.

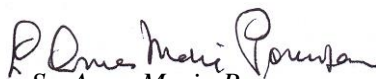
In 1962, Sr. M. Paola served as local bursar in the Queen of Apostles community in Pasay and immediately afterward was appointed superior of Cebu. In Quezon (at that time the headquarters of the Provincial Government), she served as provincial councilor. Following this, she carried out the office of local councilor in the Queen of Apostles community, Pasay. In 1976, she returned to Lipa as superior, and at the end of her mandate was assigned to the Pasay book center. Following this she was appointed local councilor and group animator in the large Pasay community. After a short time in Lipa, she returned to Pasay in 1983 to work in the administration office and then was once again asked to carry out the service of local councilor.

In 1985, Sr. M. Paola returned to Lipa once again as superior. At the end of her mandate, she was assigned to the Queen of Apostles community, where she worked in the administration and shipping departments successively, input data into computers, performed household duties and worked in the bindery.

In 2010, the progression of Alzheimer’s disease made it necessary for Sr. M. Paola to be transferred to the community of sick sisters. Over the years, her strong and decisive character had mellowed, transforming her into a tender and sweet person. She placed herself in the hands of her caregivers, expressing her appreciation for every service done for her and speaking kindly and cordially to everyone.

On 26 December 2015, a succession of heart attacks made it necessary to admit Sr. M. Paola to the intensive care unit of St. John of God Hospital. After a number of days of agony, the heavens opened for her as they did for Jesus and God the Father addressed the same comforting words to her: “You are my beloved child.” It is consoling to think that on this very meaningful liturgical feast, Sr. M. Paola has been immersed in the waters of new life and has put on a new garment—her wedding dress, the “dress” of immortality.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 9 January 2015