



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

With deep emotion I want to inform you that at about 4:00 this morning the Lord Jesus visited the San Raffaele wing of our Albano, Italy community to call to contemplate the glory of the Father forever our sister:

LOMBARDOZZI ERSILIA – SR. M. RAFFAELLA
born in Sora (Frosinone), Italy on 1 March 1939.

Sr. Raffaella entered the Congregation in Rome on 30 September 1953 at the age of 14. While learning more about the Pauline vocation, she quickly became an expert in the technical apostolate.

She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 30 June 1958, at the age of 19. As a young professed, she carried out capillary and collective diffusion in the diocese of Reggio Emilia and then returned to Rome to prepare for her perpetual profession, which she made on the Feast of St. Paul 1963.

Immediately afterward, she was sent to Piacenza, where she continued to carry out the diffusion apostolate. But she contracted a serious case of tuberculosis and was sent to our Albano community to receive the care she needed. The year was 1964 and from that time up until her death Sr. Raffaella remained a member of the Albano community. In 1967, completely cured of tuberculosis, she began to help out at the hospital's reception desk and at the same time she continued her studies. After receiving a teacher's diploma, she went on to study nursing and obtained a degree as a registered nurse. She quickly put her abilities to use serving the sick in hospital's various wards. For many years, she was in charge of the hospital's outpatient services, where she put to good use her innate qualities of welcome, closeness and support to all those in need of medical assistance.

The sick were reassured and won over by Sr. Raffaella's kind and gentle personality. The sweet smile that illuminated her face gave them a sense of security and tranquility. She was always ready to be of help, always considerate, always prompt to carry out any service needed, not only in the hospital but also in her community. In fact, the other sisters often proposed her name as Delegation Councilor (when Albano had this juridical configuration) or local councilor. For several years, she headed one of the groups into which this very large and dynamic community had been subdivided and was acknowledged by all to be a sister worthy of complete trust.

And precisely because of her patience and readiness to assist others, Sr. Raffaella served for more than 10 years as the point of reference for the various FSP communities of Rome when the sisters needed doctors' appointments at Queen of Apostles Hospital. She was always prompt to carry out this service, careful to ensure that no sister lacked the help she required.

Last September, Sr. Raffaella unexpectedly fell ill and the baffling features of her malady made it advisable for her to be hospitalized so as to undergo the appropriate medical examinations. It was quickly determined that she was suffering from a brain tumor, for which she underwent surgery at Gemelli Hospital, Rome, followed by radiotherapy. Sr. Raffaella accepted her situation and the medical procedures involved with her habitual docility, reinforced by a strong desire to live.

She spent the last months of her life in serenity and peace, with a smile on her lips, even though she knew that her situation was critical. The other members of the Albano community, who had lived with her for many decades, offered her their loving support up to the very end.

Sr. Raffaella died in the community in which she had lived for nearly 50 years—a community she loved and whose members loved her deeply in return. We are sure that now, from heaven, she is interceding for our Albano community and for the whole Congregation, especially its sick and needy members. With thanks to her from the depths of our hearts, we entrust her to the mercy of God our Father.

Affectionately,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 13 June 2019