

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

At about 8:15 this evening, while the Sunday Liturgy directed our gaze to Jesus ascending to heaven in glory, the Father welcomed into his loving embrace one of the members of our Divine Providence community of Alba, Italy:

MARRAS SR. PIERA (Pierina)
born in Nuoro, Italy on 25 August 1932.

The sisters who accompanied Sr. Pierina during the last, very difficult stage of her life say that she insistently asked the Lord to allow her to make her purgatory here on earth so that, purified from every sin, she would be able to enter heaven immediately after her death. The sufferings this dear sister bore during these last years lead us to believe that the Lord granted her prayer to the full. She was first diagnosed as suffering from cancer of the lymph glands and then she developed leukemia, which further weakened her. But Sr. Piera never complained about her sufferings. Instead, she continually offered herself to God, calling him her “good Father.” Indeed, she was more concerned about the health and well-being of the sisters who assisted her, to the point that these caregivers unanimously called her an “angel.”

Sr. Pierina was known for her simplicity, humility, spirit of service, and ability to defuse tense situations by telling jokes and funny stories. She delighted in making other people smile. When Sr. Pierina made her perpetual profession, Sr. Concettina Borgogno described her as: “generous, energetic, always ready to do whatever is needed, docile, serene and very sociable (in fact, she keeps everyone laughing during our recreations).”

Sr. Pierina entered the Congregation in the community of Nuoro on 16 August 1950. She made her initial formation in Rome, where she worked in the typography and became an expert printer. She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1954. Afterward, she carried out the propaganda apostolate in Reggio Calabria, Naples, Cagliari, Nuoro, Sassari and Palermo. From 1965-1982, she worked in the St. Paul Film headquarters in Rome. Following this, she was assigned to the Via Antonino Pio shipping department and post office, where she carried out different services as an officially-recognized delegate of the national postal system. Later, she was assigned to Cicogna, where she carried out the service of welcoming and seeing to the needs of the many FSPs who made their spiritual exercises in this House of Prayer. Her generous and joyous presence in the community was a gift to everyone. In 1996, Sr. Pierina was transferred to Alba so that she could receive the care her declining health required. As long as she was able, she also worked in the technical apostolate and dedicated herself to serving her sisters, especially the younger ones. The novices who spent periods of time in the Motherhouse during their apostolic experiences all loved Sr. Pierina and her unique ways of being present in the community.

On the day of Sr. Pierina’s first profession, Fr. Alberione had likened the occasion to the last day of a person’s life, the day of his/her “eternal profession,” urging the neo-professed: “When Jesus says: ‘Come, spouse of Christ,’ you should respond with a ‘yes’ as generous as the one you made when you corresponded to your vocation.” It is very consoling to think that the “yes” Sr. Pierina said today, Saturday, was the crown of all the “yesses” she had said to God throughout her life. Today her “yes” is united to that of the entire Church which, in celebrating the Feast of the Ascension, witnesses to its hope of one day joining Christ, its Head, in the glory of heaven.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 23 May 2009