

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
CASA GENERALIZIA
Via S. Giovanni Eudes, 25
00163 Roma
Tel. 06.661 3039 - Fax 06.661 57 208



Dearest Sisters,

On this Sunday on which we contemplate the providence of God, another of our sisters was called home to heaven. At dawn this morning, our Father unexpectedly visited the James Alberione community of Albano, Italy, to call to himself our sister:

MASUZZO LINA MARIA – SR. MARIA GEMMA
born in Valguarnera (Enna), Italy on 15 August 1925.

Sr. Gemma entered the Congregation in the community of Rome on 16 October 1938 at the age of 13. After several years of formation, she was sent to carry out the diffusion apostolate in Genoa and Chiavari. When she returned to Rome, she worked in the bindery and typography of the Divine Providence community. After another period as a propagandist, this time in Modena, she was sent to Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 30 June 1946. Following this, she was assigned to the Cesena community and then to the St. Paul Film Agency of Catanzaro.

In 1954-1955, she spent 20 months at Albano, receiving the necessary treatment for a serious form of tuberculosis. After this, she was transferred to Rovigo and then to Genoa to work in the catechetical offices of those dioceses.

From 1960-1977, Sr. Gemma's fragile health made it necessary for her to alternate prolonged periods of recovery in Queen of Apostles Hospital with apostolic work in the communities of Genoa, Siena and Rome. During this time she also asked for a year's leave of absence from the Congregation to assist her brother, a priest, who was ill.

From 1977 on, she was assigned to various FSP communities in the Albano area: first Rocca di Papa, then Ariccia/Galloro and finally the James Alberione community, Albano.

Sr. Gemma was one of the Lord's "little ones." She yearned to "disappear" in the community so as to dedicate herself to prayer, meditation and contemplation of the mysteries of God. She loved to reflect on God, the Sun of our life, on Jesus Truth, and on his "breath," the Spirit. A few years ago she wrote: "I want to breathe and speak the Word of God in human words. How much light, how much peace, how much profound joy he gives us!"

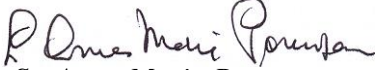
And on another occasion: "God has spoiled me with so many graces. From the Tabernacle and the Crucifix, he provides me with guidance. He fills me with faith at the foot of his cross, as he did with Mary, our Queen.... He satiates me with suffering and heavenly bliss simultaneously...."

Sr. Gemma took advantage of colors, images, graphics and delicate embroidery work to externalize the truths she visualized interiorly. Her sole desire was to make Christ the center of her life. She carried with her at all times the Founder's words to her, which she transcribed into one of her notebooks. He said: "Offer your life for the unity of Christians, for the Universal Church and for the Congregation. The Lord is pleased with your self-offering and is preparing you to face many sufferings, but don't be afraid. It is not you who are suffering but he who is suffering in you. From now on, live each day as if it were your last. Receive each communion as if it were your last. I send you my blessing."

Because Sr. Gemma's apostolic heart wanted to communicate to everyone the joy of the Gospel, she had a special love for the programs aired by Vatican Radio and for the journalists who carried out that apostolate. She was always very happy when the broadcasting station promoted the Pauline spirituality and the biographies of our Founder and Maestra Thecla.

The Lord called Sr. Gemma to himself unexpectedly this morning, in the silence of her bedroom. Her heart stopped beating on this earth and now beats in God as she contemplates the three divine Persons, immersed forever in the *All* that she had always yearned for.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 26 February 2017