

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

At about 5:00 a.m. today, one of the members of our James Alberione community, Albano, Italy, serenely fell asleep in the Lord:

MAURO CARMELA – SR. MARIA EMILIA
born in Olevano sul Tusciano (Salerno), Italy on 14 February 1925.

Affirming this sister's suitability for perpetual profession, the superior of the Naples community wrote: "She is a person who fulfills her duties quietly and well, pouring her whole being each day into the apostolate and into service of the others. She is obedient and possesses a crystal-clear sincerity." The sisters who lived with Sr. M. Emilia over the years say with conviction that she was "goodness personified," a person of peace who always tried to live in profound communion with the Lord and who disseminated in the communities an abundance of love and a strong sense of belonging.

She entered the Congregation in the house of Salerno on 29 October 1945, at the age of 20. After a period of initial formation and concrete experience of the Pauline mission, she made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1949. Immediately afterward, she was sent to Taranto to carry out capillary and collective diffusion. In 1951 she was transferred to Naples, a community she came to love very much and in which she spent and overspent herself for more than 30 consecutive years in the book center, dedicating the wealth of her heart to this apostolate. Afterward, except for a brief period in Alba, she lived for another 36 years in Verona.

The dioceses of Naples and Verona testify to her self-donation not so much from behind the service desk in the book center as from behind the cash register—a place that at first glance might appear arid and cold. But Sr. M. Emilia embellished that service with her humility, spirit of poverty, goodness, kindness, discretion and the radiance that shone from her beautiful gaze. Her attention and hospitality toward everyone drew not only simple people but also teachers and priests, all of them seeking a word of wisdom and hope from her. She also attracted young women, who through her witness of life discovered a new vocation with a strong Gospel flavor. The words of the Founder, inviting the FSPs to transform their book centers into "centers of light, love and prayer," and to sanctify them through "industrious silence, modest behavior and evangelical attention to others," had penetrated her heart profoundly.

In 2007, Sr. M. Emilia broke her leg and was obliged to cease her service in the book center but she made this detachment with great simplicity and a spirit of complete availability, accepting the proposals of her superiors as a new call from God. She lovingly dedicated herself to the chapel and to helping out in the kitchen, while continuing to cultivate a heartfelt commitment to the spiritual life and profound intimacy with her Master. On her 70th anniversary of profession, she wrote: "I praise the Lord for everything and thank the Congregation for all the aid I have received to live my Pauline vocation well. At my age, my daily 'work' is prayer and self-offering for all humanity, and in a special way for the Congregation, which in this time is preparing to celebrate its General Chapter. May the Divine Master help me to be a presence of peace among my sisters and in communion with them."

Last October, Sr. M. Emilia was obliged to leave her dear city of Verona. She was transferred by ambulance to our James Alberione community, Albano, following a fall that had triggered a brain hemorrhage, leaving her in rather serious condition. At this point, she rarely spoke, silently preparing herself to live the new life to which the Lord was calling her—the new heavens and the new earth in which she will now rejoice forever.

With deep affection,

Rome, 23 March 2020


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan