

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,

Today, at about 4:30 p.m. local time, the Father visited the emergency room of a hospital in Tokyo, Japan to call to himself our sister:

MIKI SETSUKO – SR. M. SEBASTIANA
born in Fukuoka, Japan on 9 November 1933.

Everything happened very unexpectedly, in the midst of the Christmas festivities. On 4 January, Sr. Sebastiana, who had been suffering from what she thought was a bad cold, was hospitalized with great urgency because it was discovered that what she actually had was pneumonia. She spent the last days of her life in a coma, perhaps carrying in her heart the words Maestra Thecla had written to her back in 1962, during her last trip to Asia: “Always see the will of God in every disposition. Always live in the presence of God. Think about the beautiful heaven that awaits us.”

Sr. M. Sebastiana entered the Congregation in the community of Tokyo on 19 April 1955, four years after her Baptism. She often recalled with gratitude the formation she received from Sr. Augusta Bernardini, who was the mistress of aspirants at that time. In fact, it was precisely her desire to bind herself more closely to this remarkable family that had given five daughters to our Congregation that Setsuko asked for the profession name of “Sebastiana,” in honor of Sr. Augusta’s brother Sebastian, a Franciscan priest.

Sr. Sebastiana underwent her initial formation in the community of Tokyo, concluding her novitiate with her first profession on 30 June 1959. In June 2009 she celebrated her Golden Jubilee of religious profession with deep gratitude to God.

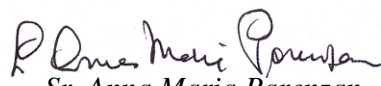
A very creative person, Sr. Sebastiana was quickly given the chance to place her talents at the service of the Pauline apostolate. As a young professed, she was first asked to write radio programs and then, after a short time in the Nagasaki book center, was assigned the work of illustrating children’s books. She earned a diploma in children’s literature and for many years afterward put her specialized training to good use not only through her illustrations but also by editing children’s books and a catechetical magazine, and by preparing audiovisual products for children. A good-hearted and generous person, Sr. Sebastiana was fascinated by the world of children and this apostolate helped to gentle her sometimes assertive personality.

With childlike simplicity, she would readily ask others to forgive her mistakes and would do her best to re-establish relations with others through dialogue. An intelligent and open-minded person, Sr. Sebastiana was receptive to new ideas and situations, which made her an interesting person to talk to. For more than 15 years, she was in charge of the province’s mini-media sector, which produced cards, stickers, calendars, etc. She was convinced that every message disseminated through this apostolate could be a vehicle of evangelization and human promotion. She also collaborated very willingly with the “Laudate” website, enriching it with her own illustrations and creative stories.

Sr. Sebastiana was devoted to the Queen of Apostles and turned to her with childlike simplicity and confidence. The sisters of our Tokyo community remember that she would pause at the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes every morning before Mass to entrust her most important intentions to her.

While we continue to contemplate the splendor of the Child of Bethlehem, let us place Sr. Sebastiana in the arms of Mary, asking this good Mother to lead our sister into the eternal light and peace of God.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 7 January 2010