

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,

The Lord has visited us once again. At about 12:30 p.m., local time, he passed by Korea University Hospital, Seoul, Korea, to call to himself our sister:

PARK BYOUNG SOOK – SR. MARIA
born in Kyeong Ki Do (Suwon), Korea, on 20 July 1947.

For several years, Sr. Maria had been undergoing dialysis following the failure of a kidney transplant undertaken to correct a serious form of nephritis (inflammation of the kidneys). This morning she left for the hospital as usual for her dialysis treatment, accompanied by the sister in charge of her sub-group in the community and the community's nurse. But an unexpected heart attack precipitated her into a coma and from there into the arms of God.

Our sisters of Korea shared with us their sadness at Sr. Maria's sudden death but also their gratitude for her fidelity to the Pauline vocation and her self-donation in different forms of apostolate.

Sr. Maria entered the Congregation in Seoul on 25 March 1971. She made her novitiate in Seoul, concluding it with her first profession on 25 March 1974, the Feast of the Annunciation. In fact, Mary's "yes" left an important mark on her entire life and she was very happy to bear the name of the Mother of God. Sr. Maria spent her Juniorate in the communities of Jeon Ju, Pusan, Seoul/Miari and Daegu, where she worked in the book center and shipping departments. After her perpetual profession, she was immediately assigned to positions of responsibility in the stockroom, in house maintenance and in the local bursar's office in Seoul.

In 1981, at the age of 34, she was appointed provincial bursar—a service she carried out for four non-consecutive mandates with commitment, competence and a great sense of belonging to the Congregation. During that time, she also refined her professional skills by taking a 4-year correspondence course in bookkeeping conducted by the National University of Korea, which awarded her a diploma in the field.

Afterward, Sr. Maria dedicated herself to biblical animations and to teaching the younger members of her circumscription. In 1998, before it was discovered that she was suffering from a serious form of nephritis, she served as local superior of the Daegu community. The last twelve years of her life alternated between the sufferings caused by her illness and hope that a kidney transplant would resolve her difficult situation. Sr. Maria never gave up: in spite of her health limitations, she continued to work in the administration department, in the library and to answer phone calls from subscribers to the magazine "Jacob's Well."

She underwent a kidney transplant in 2008, but her body rejected the donor organ, causing her so much pain that it had to be removed and she was placed on dialysis.

Sr. Maria's life was marked by physical and moral difficulties but in spite of this her companions remember her as a quiet but witty person, capable of creating around herself a tranquil and serene atmosphere in which everyone who drew close to her experienced great freedom. Although reserved by nature, she was gifted with deep sensitivity to others and a human warmth that enabled her to establish profound friendships.

Sr. Maria is the third Korean FSP called to the House of the Father. Let us entrust to her the spiritual and vocational progress of this beautiful Asian country, which is so open to the Pauline charism and to the dissemination of the Gospel through all the forms and languages of communication. May her witness of life encourage many young women to allow themselves to be captured by the gaze of Jesus Master and seek him every day without stopping.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 30 January 2014