

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

Shortly after midnight, the Father visited our James Alberione Community of Albano, Italy to call to himself our sister:

PIRRONE ROSALIA – SR. MARIA CANDIDA
born in Aidone (Enna), Italy on 6 May 1924.

A few years ago, Sr. Candida wrote: “When I get to heaven, I will ask God to help you feel all my gratitude and affection for you, as well as my great joy in the fact that during my life I was one of you—a *Pauline!*” We truly believe that Sr. Candida, with her big smile, will keep her word and continue to express in eternal life her gratitude for being given the chance to be, here on earth, a daughter truly worthy of the great Apostle Paul.

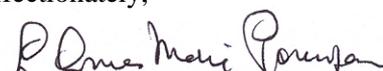
Sr. Candida entered the Congregation in the community of Rome on 27 August 1940. Looking back on her early years in the Institute, she wrote: “I have always been a happy, exuberant and joyous person. I love the Congregation as I love my mother. I have given her everything and in return I have received even more....”

As a postulant, she carried out the diffusion apostolate in Bologna and then the technical apostolate in Alba. She made her novitiate in Alba, concluding it with her first profession on 29 June 1946. Immediately afterward, she was asked to help open our first community in Spain. Records of the time tell us that Sr. Candida, Sr. Costanza Bianciotto and Sr. Fedele Milani left Italy on 16 August 1946. At the suggestion of Fr. Timothy Giaccardo, they made a short stopover in Lourdes and another in Bilbao. When they reached their final destination, Barcelona, they discovered that the house where they had expected stay was not ready to receive them—in fact, the tenants did not even know they were coming! The only unoccupied space in the building was a small, dank, bug-infested basement room. But this did not quell the enthusiasm of the young sisters, whose all-consuming desire was to take the Gospel to everyone, no matter what sacrifices were required. During her 4 years in Barcelona, Sr. Candida managed the book center and took care of vocation work—an experience that deeply influenced the rest of her life. In 1950, she returned to Alba where she was asked to serve as assistant mistress in the formation sector. Later, she worked in the book centers of La Spezia, Salerno, Cosenza, Mestre, Biella, Brescia, Verona, Ravenna and Treviso. Her outgoing personality and readiness to be of service to others made her a favorite with book center clients, who continued to remember her kindness and warm smile long after she had been transferred elsewhere. An intrepid Pauline apostle, Sr. Candida also held the office of local superior in the communities of Potenza, Mestre and Ferrara.

It was in Ferrara in 1986 that Sr. Candida was diagnosed as suffering from stomach cancer. She received the news with dignity and courage, calling the operation she underwent an “incredible experience.” Even though her strength began to slowly decline and she now had special needs with regard to food, her strong will to live helped her successfully resume the Pauline apostolate, even as her desire “to meet Jesus and finally see his face” steadily grew. In 2004, Sr. Candida was transferred to the James Alberione community of Albano and from there to the nearby Thecla Merlo community.

During the last period of her life, Sr. Candida began to lose her cognitive abilities and required the assistance of caregivers, all of whom remarked on her extremely kind personality and deep commitment to cultivating a profound spiritual life. Sr. Candida herself chose the song she wanted sung at her funeral liturgy, “Lord, I am returning to you,” saying that the words of this song encapsulated the whole thrust of her life. A few years ago she wrote: “I place all my hope in the mercy and love of God, whom I feel is carrying me in his arms.” Wrapped in the love of God, Sr. Candida lived the final stage of her life in great peace. She asked that the letter announcing her death be joyful, not sad, in tone. In fact, she suggested that this letter open with the words: “Sisters, it is with great joy that I inform you....”

With deep gratitude, we place our dear sister in the hands of the Father, asking him to grant her eternal rest and permit her to experience as of now the glory of his face. Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parezan
Vicar General

Rome, 26 July 2010