

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,

At 9:30 this morning, local time, the Father visited our Cidade Regina community in Sao Paulo, Brazil, to call to himself, after a long and painful illness, our sister:

PRITSCH SR. ELVIRA DEONILA
born in Vera Cruz (RS), Brazil on 4 April 1942.

It comes spontaneously to us to thank the Lord for having liberated this dear sister from a particularly severe case of Alzheimer's disease, which had progressively immobilized her over the past ten years and made her totally dependent on heavy medication. In her own flesh, Sr. Elvira shared the passion of the Lord for the salvation of many people; her life and sufferings were a great mystery, incomprehensible to human logic.

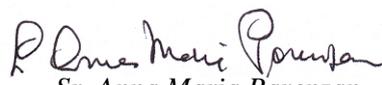
Sr. Elvira entered the Congregation in the community of Porto Alegre on 16 Feb. 1963. After a time of initial formation, she made her novitiate in Sao Paulo, concluding it with her first profession on 30 June 1968. Afterward, she was assigned to our Salvador book center. Sr. Elvira deeply loved her Pauline vocation and placed her entire being in the hands of her Lord and Master. When she made her perpetual profession, she wrote: "I firmly believe in God's love for me and in his infinite mercy. The more I surrender myself to him, the stronger and more peaceful I feel." She was very grateful for the chance to pursue higher studies in theology in Curitiba, writing on that occasion: "I want thank the Congregation for giving me this opportunity to study theology. It is truly a profound field and I feel very small in the face of it. Ever since I began my studies, I have felt the need to pray more. I don't know why, but that's the way it is...."

In 1977, Sr. Elvira was sent as a missionary to Spain. Aware of the problems there, she wrote to the Superior General at Easter: "I've been in Spain for two months now, learning the language and trying to adapt to the rhythm of life. It's not easy. I am realizing more and more every day how necessary it is for me to die to self so that the community can grow. The Paschal Liturgy prompts me to reflect on how we must die with Christ in order to rise with him.... I feel that I have been given a mission to accomplish, even though I can't clearly see what to do. I am intensifying my prayer life."

In Spain, Sr. Elvira served as superior of our Valencia community and then that of Valladolid. Her wisdom and her love for the Pauline charism led to her appointment as Delegation Superior in 1984. She was always grateful to the sisters for their trust in her, saying: "I have learned a lot in these years. I have seen how God is guiding me with a firm but gentle hand for the good of the sisters. The Lord is capable of moving heaven and earth to reveal his love for every person." When her term as Delegation Superior ended, Sr. Elvira worked for a brief time in our Madrid book center and then was reappointed superior of Valladolid for two terms and then once again of Valencia. She celebrated her 25th anniversary of religious profession in Valladolid in July 1993, writing on that occasion: "I am happy even though I feel that I am still not as good as I should be. The Pauline vocation is immense and marvelous. I am awed more and more each day by our spirituality and mission. I realize that it is not easy to live the Pauline charism because Jesus Master, Way, Truth and Life is infinite...."

The Divine Master was preparing Sr. Elvira for other opportunities to live in greater intimacy with him and share his unfathomable plan, transforming her into an apostle in the fullest sense of the word. In 1998, she began to show the first signs of health problems. Returning to Brazil, she was diagnosed as suffering from Alzheimer's disease, which rapidly advanced, rigidifying her entire body. She lived the last 13 years of her life in the Cidade Regina community, lovingly assisted by the sisters and lay staff. Today, a pulmonary embolism opened to her the gates of heaven, where we are sure she is rejoicing with all the saints. Now Sr. Elvira can race unencumbered to meet the Lord to whom she had offered her whole life. And we know she will continue to be a "lightning rod" for her province and for the entire Congregation.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 20 July 2012