



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

We received the news that at 6:48 a.m. today (local time), our good and merciful Father visited St. John of God Hospital, Pasay City, Philippines, to call to himself our sister:

QUIRUZ FRANCISCA – SR. MARIA RUFINA
born in San Vicente, Bacolor (Pampanga), Philippines, on 9 March 1926.

Sr. M. Rufina belonged to a large family and from an early age was educated to a strong sense of responsibility in caring for her younger brothers and sisters. After the death of her parents, she was obliged to take care of her loved ones to an even greater degree, developing those qualities of welcome, goodness, selflessness and concern for others that would also mark her Pauline life.

She entered the Congregation in Lipa on 30 June 1949 and was assigned to the sewing room, where she placed her talent as a seamstress at the disposition of the community. She underwent her initial formation and novitiate in that house, concluding this stage of her Pauline journey with her first profession on 29 June 1953. She remained in Lipa until 1959, happy to be able to help make the vestition habits of the many young women who flocked to that first FSP Filipino community. She was later transferred to Pasay City, where she continued to work as a seamstress for almost her entire life. From time to time, she had the opportunity for a change of apostolate in the branch houses of Cebu, Davao, Quezon and Olongapo, where she learned the book center mission. However, even then she never put aside the art of sewing, so necessary to adjusting the clothes of the sisters.

In 1995, Sr. M. Rufina felt compelled to ask, with deep suffering, for a leave of absence so as to take care of her younger sister, who was gravely ill with brain cancer. A few months later she returned to the community, where she continued to donate herself with generosity, delicacy, dedication and precision to work in the sewing room of the big Regina Apostolorum community or that of the Fr. Alberione community in Pasay City.

Sr. M. Rufina was a sister who charmed everyone with her kindness, cordiality and ability to understand and meet with great faith the challenges of even very difficult moments. Her fidelity to prayer was proverbial: she was in chapel before 5:00 a.m. every day to make her meditation and entrust to the Divine Master the many intentions she carried in her heart, asking him in particular for the gift of vocations. Her demeanor was unassuming and she did not speak much but she participated fully and joyfully in the life of the community: *lectio divina*, ongoing formation sessions, and the duty of guiding community prayer whenever it was her turn.

The sisters who assisted Sr. M. Rufina in these last years testify to her openness to the Holy Spirit and her desire to let him work in her and form her so that she could live the holiness to which she felt called. She wrote in her notebook: “Holiness consists of a constant struggle against my passions and against all the means the devil uses to snatch my soul from God.”

Like a small child, she placed herself with great docility in the hands of the Father, asking him to make her “beautiful” for her great encounter with him. She had been battling various health problems for the past several years, and two years ago she suffered a stroke. The immediate cause of her death was acute pneumonia, resulting in a pleural effusion (an excess of fluid in the lungs).

We bless the Lord for the marvels of grace he worked in our sister and place her with great hope in the arms of the Father. May the offering of her life enable “justice and peace” to reign in our world, which is thirsting for redemption and liberation.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 18 December 2019