

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

Just after midnight last night, the Divine Master visited our James Alberione community of Albano, Italy to call to himself a sister suffering from pneumonia:

REBELLATI ZORAIDE – SR. MARIA PASQUA
born in Castelfranco Veneto (Treviso), Italy on 17 January 1923.

Sr. M. Pasqua entered the Congregation in Treviso on 26 November 1936. She was 13 years old at the time. Soon after, she was sent to Rome, where she learned the craft of printing while waiting to reach the age required to enter the novitiate. She made her first profession on 19 March 1941 and for the next 5 years continued to make an important contribution to the large technical apostolate in the Via Antonino Pio complex in Rome.

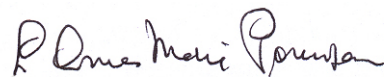
In 1947, Sr. M. Pasqua became one of the pioneers of the cinema apostolate through her work in the newly-opened St. Paul Film Agency of Udine. Together with other Daughters of St. Paul and in a spirit of great faith, she courageously helped to launch a completely new apostolate for which it was necessary to learn new organizational skills and a new media language so as to make the most of this new instrument of evangelization and use it competently.

After a time in Naples, Sr. M. Pasqua was asked to carry out the service of superior in the community of Potenza. In 1962, she was sent as a missionary to France. During her time there, she served as superior of our Marseilles, Lyons and Paris communities and also as Delegation Superior for 3 years. Sr. M. Pasqua and the other members of the delegation were aware that they were a tiny presence in a culturally-advanced country. But even though they felt like a drop of water in the ocean, at the same time they were urged on by their profound convictions, expressed in particular through the Bible missions they organized in many different dioceses, and summarized in the phrase: “The Word of God does not need a lot of noise. It needs silence and sacrifice.”

In 1975, Sr. M. Pasqua returned to Italy and was assigned to the St. Paul Film Agency of Rome. Afterward, she served as superior of the Grosseto and Campobasso communities and then worked for about 10 years in Alessandria. Sr. M. Pasqua was known for her goodness, serenity and ability to courageously overcome every kind of problem with great dignity. Declining health made it advisable to assign her to the Via Bosio community in Rome. From there she was transferred to Alba and then, successively, to the Thecla Merlo and James Alberione communities of Albano. Sr. M. Pasqua had fond and vivid memories of Maestra Thecla. She spoke about her with great joy and often re-read the small notes on the backs of holy cards that she had received from her over the years—M. Thecla’s way of assuring the sisters that she was close to them and also of reminding them that she was thinking about them and loved them personally, as members of the same family. We reprint here a Christmas message in which M. Thecla wrote to Sr. M. Pasqua in the name of Baby Jesus: “I am close to you and I want your heart to be completely mine. I see your good will, your sufferings and your problems and I am always ready to help you. Strive to become a saint—a great saint! I have already prepared all the graces you need for this and I will also prepare a beautiful place for you in heaven, close to me and my mother. Heartfelt blessings from your ‘Baby Jesus.’”

Sr. M. Pasqua lived the last stage of her life in simplicity and self-surrender to God, firm in her desire to do the divine will. In spite of the problems that often accompany advancing age, she maintained her serenity up to the very end, feeling herself to be truly in the hands of the Lord. Like John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus who gave up his life in witness to the Truth, Sr. M. Pasqua will continue from heaven to recount God’s wonderful deeds and witness to his fidelity to all human beings.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 29 August 2012