

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

At 7:30 p.m. today, as the first rays of the splendor of the night of Christ's birth illuminated the darkness of the world, a member of our Divine Providence community, Alba, Italy, was called to sing the song of the saved in heaven:

**RIVIERA CATTERINA – SR. M. CATERINA
born in Quinzanello (Brescia), Italy on 21 May 1930.**

Although Sr. Caterina had been a member of the infirmary wing of our Motherhouse community for the past 7 years due to her poor health, the Lord's call came suddenly, without giving her time to realize what was happening. After supper last night, she felt drowsy and dropped off to sleep, never to awake again on this earth.

Sr. Caterina entered the Congregation in Alba on 11 August 1949. After a period of apostolic experience in Como, she went to Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 19 March 1952. Immediately afterward, she was sent to Lugano, Switzerland, to join the two FSPs who had opened a community there just a few days earlier. She was asked to replace the Pious Disciples in serving our Pauline brothers and to also carry out the apostolate of capillary diffusion to the families.

Sr. M. Caterina spent her entire Juniorate in Lugano. After her perpetual profession in 1957, she was assigned to the cinema apostolate. For more than 30 years, except for a brief time in Pordenone, where she worked in the book center, and a period of ongoing formation in Asti, she dedicated herself to double-checking the films returned to our St. Paul Film Agencies in Udine, Reggio Emilia, Turin and Trent. She took several courses within the Congregation on cinematography so as to learn the "language" of films and felt that she was an apostle in every sense of the word through her use of this communications instrument for evangelization.

The ten years she spent in the Reggio Emilia Film Agency were among the most beautiful of her life. Remembering all the good done through the film apostolate there, she wrote: "In spite of the fact that the Emilia region is 100 per cent communist, the people of the area were very enthusiastic about our films, especially the religious ones! Among these, the film *Dal Peccato alla Gloria (From Sin to Glory)* and Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth* were very popular. One parish priest said with amazement that even though the Zeffirelli film was 3 hours long, all the people watched it to the very end, without moving, and they enjoyed it very much." She continued: "The communist circles of Carpi, Parma and Reggio Emilia preferred to rent films from us instead of from other distributors because they said our films were always in excellent condition and that they were also morally clean and formative."

After more than 3 decades of service in our St. Paul Film Agencies, Sr. M. Caterina was assigned to the book center apostolate. She carried out this mission with great joy in the dioceses of Bolzano, Pordenone, Mestre, Cagliari and Livorno successively. While in Livorno, her health began to decline notably and so in 2004 she was transferred to the St. Joseph community, Alba, and in 2010 to the Divine Providence community, located in the same compound.

Sr. M. Caterina was a simple sister who lived the Pauline mission with great zeal. When she celebrated her silver jubilee of profession in 1977, she told the Superior General that she was very grateful for the gift of her vocation and wanted to always strain forward, striving to use her life to the maximum. We are sure she fulfilled this aspiration in a particular way during her many years of suffering, characterized by continual, silent self-offering to the Lord, in the conviction that the seeds she had sown with great abundance in her youth would bear much fruit.

As we celebrate the feast of Christ's birth, let us thank this dear sister, who traveled the new and unfamiliar paths of the Pauline apostolate to announce the salvation of God with great simplicity, bringing his message of peace to everyone and witnessing through her life and the different languages of communications to the fact that "a Savior has been born for you."

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 24 December 2017