

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

Yesterday evening, at 6:20 p.m. local time, the Lord visited the infirmary of our Boston Provincial house, USA, to call to himself our sister:

RIZZITANO ROSE – SR. MARY VERONICA
born in Boston, Massachusetts, United States, on 3 May 1930.

Sr. M. Veronica entered the Congregation in the community of Derby, New York, on 17 September 1955. She was transferred to Boston in 1956 to make her novitiate, concluding this stage of her formation with her first profession on 30 June 1957. After her profession, she worked in the book centers of Fitchburg, Youngstown, Alexandria and Buffalo, and also carried out the “propaganda” apostolate in these dioceses. After her perpetual profession, she returned to Youngstown and subsequently worked in the New York and Bridgeport book centers.

Before entering the Congregation, Sr. M. Veronica worked in a sewing factory and was, in fact, an accomplished seamstress. Thus in 1973, after serving as local superior in Bridgeport for 3 years, she was transferred back to Boston to serve as seamstress for the province, a role she would carry out for the next 12 years. Some of the older sisters still talk about Sr. M. Veronica’s “golden hands” in reference to both the habits she sewed and also to the exquisitely embroidered dresses she made for the Infant of Prague statues that were sold in our FSP book centers (a devotion very popular in the USA, especially at that time). Those Infant of Prague dresses, veritable works of art, were coveted by many people across the country.

In 1985, Sr. M. Veronica returned to Bridgeport, a city she loved, and in the following years also worked in the New York, St. Louis and Philadelphia book centers. A person who communicated easily with others, she is still fondly remembered by many who came in contact with her. On her part, she prayed faithfully for the intentions and needs of her friends and of the many benefactors who assisted the Congregation.

In 1992, while stationed in Philadelphia, Sr. M. Veronica was diagnosed with malignant lymphoma and underwent aggressive chemotherapy. The cancer went into remission, leaving her a little disappointed because she had been certain she would die and had prepared herself for her meeting with the Lord with great fervor. She returned to Boston and for the next fifteen years continued to sew Infant of Prague dresses, to work at the reception desk and to help out with the hospitality apostolate.

Eventually, Sr. M. Veronica’s eyesight began to diminish and she was no longer able to do the fine needlework she was known for. It was only one of many sacrifices that the Lord asked of her, but she did not remain idle. She continued to help with various household services, including that of receptionist, for another 4 years. In the last 4 years of her life, she dedicated her time to putting the finishing touches on the handcrafted cards produced by our sisters in the “Caritas Cards” sector.

On 16 October 2016, Sr. M. Veronica experienced difficulty in breathing and felt very ill. She was taken in haste to the emergency room of the local hospital, where it was discovered that she had suffered a heart attack. She was admitted to the hospital immediately and underwent bypass surgery. The operation went well but a few hours later she suffered a stroke. This first stroke was followed by numerous small ones, which made it necessary to transfer her to a rehabilitation center for further care and therapy. On 23 January, she returned to the provincial house because nothing more could be done for her on the human level and she ardently desired to “die at home,” in the midst of her community.

After a long agony, Sr. M. Veronica died very peacefully, surrendering herself to the Father quietly, like a candle going out, surrounded by her sisters just as she wished. We are sure that she is already presenting to the Father the many prayer intentions that enriched and gave meaning to her whole life.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 30 January 2017