

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,

Yesterday, at 10:10 p.m. local time, one of our sisters, a patient at the Jewish Rehabilitation Center in Boston, USA, was called by the Lord to participate in the glory of the saints in light:

**SABIA DOMENICA – SR. MARIA DOMENICA
born in Ferrari di Serino (Avellino), Italy on 20 April 1931.**

How wonderful that precisely on the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Universe, Sr. Domenica Sabia accepted with great joy the invitation to return to the house of the Lord to be gifted with his fullness and live in intimacy with him forever, which was what her heart had always desired.

She entered the Congregation in Naples, Italy on 9 May 1948, at the age of seventeen. After a period of initial formation and apostolic experiences in Naples, Rome and Reggio Emilia, she was sent to Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 19 March 1952.

As a young professed, Sr. Domenica carried out capillary diffusion in Campobasso, worked in the Nuoro book center, and assisted our sick sisters in Rome. For several years, she helped to carry out various community services in Grottaferrata, after which she dedicated herself with love and enthusiasm to visiting families, schools and businesses in the dioceses of Bari and Matera, taking “the joy of the Gospel” everywhere, along with her witness to a simple and good life.

In 1966, she left for the United States as a missionary. A new culture awaited her and she soon became part of it, dedicating herself with generous self-sacrifice to the book center and “propaganda” apostolates in the communities of Staten Island, San Francisco, New Orleans and Charleston.

For over 20 years she was stationed in Boston, where she worked in the laundry room and carried out many errands as a driver. But above all she was called to represent to the sisters the goodness and benevolence of God, our ever-provident Father. Every morning she would leave the house in her old van and return home after a few hours with fruit, vegetables, frozen foods and many other goods that storekeepers heaped on her copiously. She was a genuinely poor person and this drew down upon her an abundance of blessings from heaven. Storekeepers and workers in the city’s big markets felt compensated by her goodness, by her uplifting words inspired by the Gospel, and by her simple smile. Sr. M. Domenica established friendly relations with them all: she knew their families, prayed for their intentions, reciprocated their generosity by bringing them gifts of books suited to their needs, wrote to them for the holidays.... This contact with benefactors was for her a unique chance to evangelize and to communicate to everyone a word of wisdom.

Sr. M. Domenica was also a joyous, generous and humorous presence in the community, where her conversations were always sprinkled with witty come backs. Her idiomatic and truly original way of speaking—a blend of English and Neapolitan—revealed her love for her native land and her pride in feeling that she still belonged to it. When Halloween rolled around, she delighted in dressing up in brightly-colored costumes, which afterward she carefully preserved.

In 2012, Sr. M. Domenica was assigned to Boston’s Queen of Apostles community, established for the province’s sick and senior sisters. Yet in her heart, she continued to consider herself a “propagandist”: in fact, every morning she would invent a new way to leave the nurses a Gospel message so as to express her gratitude to them and help them draw nearer to God. She often said: “If Jesus comes, I’m ready!” And when he *did* come, it was unexpectedly. About two weeks ago, she underwent hip surgery, but complications set in, leading to her death. But Sr. M. Domenica was truly ready for her definitive meeting with her Lord, whose Face she now contemplates in all its radiant beauty.

With deep affection,

R. Anna Maria Parenzan
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r. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 24 November 2019

Feast of Christ, the King of the Universe