

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

We received the news that at 4:33 a.m. (local time) on this 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Lord visited St. John of God Hospital, Pasay City (Manila), Philippines to call to the Paschal Banquet of new life our sister:

**SAHAGUN LOURDES – SR. MARIA CANDIDA**  
**born in San Antonio Zambales, Philippines, on 11 February 1936.**

Sr. M. Candida entered the Congregation in Lipa, Philippines, on 2 May 1953 at the age of 17, after finishing high school. She underwent her initial formation in Pasay City and from the very beginning was noted for her spirit of prayer, kindness and love for the Pauline mission. She made her novitiate in Lipa, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1957, almost the vigil of our Institute's first General Chapter. It was a period in which zeal for the charism consumed everyone, resulting in a rich flowering of vocations and a succession of apostolic activities in many different parts of the world.

As a young professed, Sr. M. Candida carried out capillary and collective diffusion in the huge Manila diocese and also became an expert bookbinder thanks to the time she spent in the Pasay City technical apostolate.

In 1967, she helped to open an FSP community in Dagupan, a small city north of Manila. Asked to carry out the service of local superior, she remained there until the closure of the house in 1974. At different times over a period of about 4 years, Sr. M. Candida served as manager of our book center in Vigan (Ilocos), and also worked with great enthusiasm to organize book displays, Gospel Weeks and other forms of evangelization and contact with the people. In 1974 she also had to chance to take classes in practical nursing at St. Thomas University, Manila.

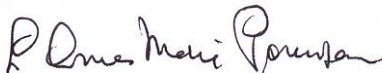
In Olongapo, Tacloban, Selangor (Malaysia), Pasay City and Tuguegarao, she dedicated herself with wisdom and love to diffusion of the Word of God to families and collectivities, to book center management and to the promotion of our editions. Even though she was a shy person by nature, Sr. M. Candida's serene and gentle demeanor favored contact with the people, who were drawn to her welcoming attitude and readiness to help them. Her name "Candida" was a program of life for her: she was always smiling and joyful, a true Pauline in carrying out her mission with great diligence, yearning to make the Good News of salvation known to everyone.

Sr. Candida spent the last 10 years of her life in the Thecla Merlo House, Pasay City—a community established to serve the needs of our sick and elderly sisters. There, she fervently carried out the apostolate of prayer and suffering in keeping with her habitual style of life, which was characterized by temperance and poverty. She never asked for anything in particular for herself; instead, she continually thanked the Lord and her sisters for even the smallest service done for her. Her face, illuminated by a gentle smile, made it clear that she was already immersed in the peace of God.

Hospitalized due to a severe case of pneumonia, Sr. Candida was nevertheless able to welcome with great pleasure a group of sisters who stopped by to visit her just yesterday.

The Gospel reading for today urges us to pass through the "narrow door" in order to participate in the heavenly Banquet. This morning Sr. M. Candida was invited to partake in this feast, where she now enjoys full intimacy with her Lord and Master, the sole Door and Way to the Father.

Affectionately,

  
Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan  
Superior General

Rome 25 August 2019