

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

At about 11:00 a.m. this morning, the Lord visited the infirmary of our Divine Providence community of Rome, Italy to call to himself our sister:

**SANSON CATERINA – SR. NATALINA MARIA
born in Mareno di Piave (Treviso), Italy on 30 September 1913.**

Sr. Natalina was eagerly awaiting the arrival of her Spouse. Several times during this past month, it seemed as if the long-for moment had arrived but, to the surprise of her caregivers, her strong heart continued to beat. But with each near-brush with death, Sr. Natalina's yearning for the Lord strengthened, and she cried out: "Call me!" In fact, just yesterday she asked that two lamps be lit in her room, symbolic of the lamps of the prudent virgins awaiting the coming of the Bridegroom.

Sr. Natalina entered the Congregation in the community of Treviso, Italy on 28 March 1933. After a period of formation in Alba and Trieste, she was sent to Rome in 1937 to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 20 January 1938. Immediately afterward, she was sent to a local community to carry out the "propaganda" apostolate. World War II had just begun and over the next few years she visited the families of Salerno, Palermo, Alba, Foggia and Campobasso, her propaganda bag overflowing with books. On many occasions she had the chance to directly experience God's protection. In 1943, while she was stationed in Foggia, the community had to flee the city due to repeated bombings but our book center remained undamaged thanks to Sr. Natalina's suggestion to entrust it to the protection of St. Paul. Before the sisters left, she placed a statue of the Apostle in the middle of the book center and said: "Take care of this place while we are gone!" And St. Paul was truly a dependable guardian because the book center survived the war without either damage or looting.

In 1948, Sr. Natalina willingly accepted a transfer to the St. Paul Film Agency of Naples and then to the Bari Agency. Her work "behind the scenes" was enriched by many prayers and self-offering because she firmly believed in the grace of her vocation and in the sanctifying power of every instrument placed in our hands. In 1953, she was sent to the St. Paul Film headquarters in Rome to carry out a very tiring technical work that called for great precision. Fr. Alberione, who well knew the "arid" and monotonous nature of this aspect of the apostolate, encouraged the sisters in this sector by inviting them to place their equipment under the patronage of various mystics who could offer them inspiration.

From 1953 up until her death, Sr. Natalina lived in either the Divine Providence or the Divine Master communities of Via Antonino Pio, Rome. She was happy to dwell in the shadow of the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary and rejoiced in the presence of Prima Maestra Thecla, to whom she was deeply attached. In 1972, Sr. Natalina was assigned to the large sewing room of the Via Antonino Pio community. During those difficult post-Council years of "updating," everything was undergoing change: not only the Institute's structures but also its wearing apparel. Sr. Natalina found it hard to put aside the model of the habit she had worn since her vestition, but as time went by the sisters noticed that she was able to face every new situation and "change" with great peace. Up to the end of her life, she never wasted a minute of time and so it was common for her to carry out several jobs simultaneously. Her expertise at handling needle and thread was matched by her equal expertise in sliding the rosary beads through her fingers. She also delighted in preparing little sartorial "surprises" for the sisters from the leftover bolts of material—a work she carried out with great creativity and love, her eyes shining with the light of God.

In her simplicity and humility, Sr. Natalina was truly a "light" for us all—a light that has now been set on a lampstand to irradiate warmth and apostolic fecundity everywhere.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan".

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 9 June 2009