

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

At 10:30 this morning, one of our sisters of the Divine Master community, Alba, Italy, concluded her long Pauline life:

SARTOR MARIA – SR. CLAUDIA
born in Villanova Istrana (Treviso), Italy on 22 January 1920.

A few weeks ago, surrounded by the affectionate presence of her relatives and the members of our two Alba communities, she celebrated her 100th birthday with praise and gratitude to the Lord. On that occasion, the Bishop of the diocese, Marco Brunetti, also came to see her and bless her beautiful life, marked by fidelity, goodness and joy.

Prompted by a great love for God and the desire to offer herself to him, Sr. Claudia, the seventh of ten children, entered the Congregation in the house of Treviso on 6 January 1932 at the age of twelve.

Her life was very simple: except for a brief period in Alessandria in 1935, she spent her entire life in the Motherhouse. She underwent her initial formation in Alba, made her first profession there on 15 January 1939, followed by her perpetual profession 6 years later. From Alba, she proclaimed the Word silently through her tireless industriousness. When she celebrated her 70th anniversary of profession in 2009, she wrote: “I am happy and content. I lack nothing; I have everything. Jesus looks at me and I look back at him with vibrant simplicity, striving to live in his presence. Sincere thanks for all that I have received in the Congregation. I have always worked at a table, which I consider my ‘pulpit.’ From there I have preached the Word with simplicity and dedication.”

Always involved in bindery work, her ‘pulpit’ of announcement, Sr. Claudia helped to launch a book-binding process that had important apostolic ramifications because it enabled the Motherhouse to produce texts that were very high in quality from the technical perspective. She specialized in binding prayer books in plain leather, padded leather or silk. She also gilded them and made book covers embossed with religious symbols.... In short, she was an expert at putting the finishing touches on the books that passed through her hands. Her whole being radiated goodness, attention to others, acceptance of them and love for the Pauline mission. The sisters of her department felt united to her—all involved and co-responsible for every result of their apostolic efforts.

Precision, accuracy in details, punctuality, kindness and generosity were the human qualities that characterized Sr. Claudia, enriched by her perpetual warm and bright smile, which captivated everyone and continued to shine even during the years of her infirmity.

In Alba, she taught the art of bookbinding to hundreds and hundreds of young Paulines, whom she treated with great kindness and who learned from her how to live apostolic mysticism, the offering of their prayers and the fatigues of the technical apostolate for the salvation of humanity, in the concreteness of everyday life.

In 1999, on her 60th anniversary of profession, she offered this testimony: “I am in profound peace and I rest tranquilly in the will of the Lord, the sole Good of my entire existence. All my desires and my whole being are conformed to his will and I serenely offer my sufferings for the Congregation I have always loved as my mother. I am happy that I have been a Daughter of St. Paul since I was very young. Now I offer God whatever he asks of me, yearning only to unite my will to his.”

From 2013 onward, Sr. Claudia’s bed became an *altar* on which she continually offered herself to God for the many intentions she carried in her heart. From a faithful Pauline apostle, including in this period characterized by enforced silence, she was transformed into a living communication of God to all those who assisted or visited her. In this time of infirmity, she continued to proclaim what she had always believed: that Jesus Master is the Lord of life, not of death; of joy, not of sadness.

Remembering Sr. Claudia, we praise our Master because he carried out marvels of grace in this very dear sister who, in her littleness, simplicity and Gospel-based wisdom, revealed to all of us the wealth and depth of the mysteries of God’s kingdom. Affectionately,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 16 February 2020