

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,

At about 7:30 this evening, God the Father visited our James Alberione (ex-IV Novembre Community) of Albano, Italy to call to himself a great Pauline apostle:

SPADA CHIARA – SR. MARIA ANNUNZIATA
born in Matera, Italy on 27 March 1926.

Sr. M. Annunziata entered the Congregation in the community of Rome on 4 May 1942. After a period of initial formation, followed by a year of novitiate, she made her first profession on 19 March 1946. Immediately afterward, she was assigned to carry out the propaganda apostolate in Naples, but the Lord soon called her to cross the ocean for the United States and Mexico. She was only 22 years old at the time. Chronicles of the period recount that on 26 May 1948, Sr. Annunziata, together with Sr. Bernardetta Ferraris, Sr. Diomira Trolli and Sr. Tecla Zilianti, arrived in Mexico City from the United States after a long and difficult trip (4 days by train, followed by a 22-hour bus ride). As in all our Pauline foundations, this first group of very young FSP missionaries began from Bethlehem, trusting in the help of the Lord. Before leaving the United States, they had received a letter from Maestra Thecla, in which she wrote with great affection:

“When you receive this letter, you will already have reached your destination. As you can see from the date, I am writing to you immediately after your departure from Naples. I am thinking of you, praying for you, and I will be close to you on your trip. Be courageous! The Lord will always be with you and the Blessed Mother will hold you close to her, defending you from all dangers. Trust her. Be happy and serene. Don’t get discouraged. Instead, look on high...to heaven! Our heart and all our thoughts should be directed there.”

On 11 May 1952, four years after the foundation of our Institute in Mexico, Sr. Annunziata and Sr. Tecla Zilianti opened another FSP community in the country, this one in Monterrey. The Bishop had urged them: “Come as soon as you can because your work is very important.” In just a short time, our Pauline presence in Mexico was enriched by local vocations and many different apostolic initiatives. In carrying out the apostolate, Sr. Annunziata diffused not only the Word of God but also her beautiful smile and witness of life.

In 1956, health problems made it necessary for her to return to Italy, where she spent a year in our Albano clinic. Once she had recovered her health, she was assigned to the book center apostolate in Messina and then in Palermo. From 1966-1972, she served as superior of our community in Valencia, Spain. Returning once again to Italy, she worked in the Salerno, Ariccia-Galloro and Reggio Calabria book centers successively. From 1985 on, she carried out various household services in the provincialate community and Arezzo. When her health began to decline in 2000, she was transferred first to the Naples Capodimonte community and then to the Thecla Merlo Community of Albano. Last May she was moved to the James Alberione Community, also located in the town of Albano.

In 1998, Sr. M. Annunziata joyfully participated in the celebration of the Institute’s Golden Jubilee of foundation in Mexico, where she was able to see how the seeds that she and her co-missionaries had sown many decades earlier had grown into a mighty tree. That experience sustained her during the long years of her illness. Afflicted with Alzheimer’s disease and tried in the crucible of suffering, she became sweeter and more fully surrendered to God day by day. Toward the end of her life, she was so thin that she was almost unrecognizable. Sr. Annunziata carried out the apostolate of suffering by offering herself completely to God for the salvation of her brothers and sisters, and we are sure that the sweet perfume of this offering was very pleasing to him.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 6 November 2009