

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
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Dearest Sisters,

We received the news that yesterday, at 8:30 p.m. local time, the Father of Light visited the Nakai Fujisiroen Assisted Care Center in Japan to call to live in eternal light our sister:

TOKUTAKE HATSUE MARIA – SR. MARIA ELETTA
born in Ueda (Nagano), Japan on 5 August 1922.

Sr. M. Eletta received the sacrament of Baptism as an adult on 27 March 1948 and after several years of living the Faith she entered the Congregation in the house of Tokyo on 4 January 1952 at the age of thirty. Together with our first FSP missionaries to this country and the many young women who were flocking to the Institute in great numbers, she lived the joys and difficulties of the first years of our Japanese foundation in a climate of poverty and apostolic enthusiasm. When Maestra Thecla visited the community of Tokyo in 1953, she wrote: “There are many fine young women here. Between the Italians and Japanese, there are more than 60 sisters. It is not easy for us to communicate with each other but there are interpreters. The sisters are having a house built. They have many debts to pay and not enough money...just like Rome! The hand of God is evident in everything: beautiful vocations who grew up in paganism and are now thirsting for the good.... The Japanese FSPs sing so beautifully that everyone is charmed....”

After a time of formation and apostolic experience, Sr. M. Eletta was admitted to the second novitiate of the Institute to be held in Japan. She made her first profession in Tokyo on 30 June 1955. Afterward, she carried out the diffusion apostolate in Tokyo and Osaka, unafraid of the poverty she was called to live first hand: in fact, in Osaka the sisters lived in a single room, which served as their dormitory, refectory, kitchen and community room.

From 1959-1967, Sr. M. Eletta was assigned to the editorial staff of the “Japanese Cultural Radio,” founded by Fr. Paolo Marcellino, ssp, in 1951. She was happy to be able to broadcast messages of faith and hope through the radio station, which in those years reached over 15 million people. The radio was truly her “pulpit,” even though every word broadcast by the station was like a tiny drop in the ocean, but a drop made fruitful by prayer, love and daily self-offering.

Afterward, Sr. M. Eletta was assigned to the editorial staff of the “Pauline Family Magazine,” produced by the Society of St. Paul. In 1976, she was transferred to Sendai to manage the FSP book center there and later made a contribution to various diocesan offices. She worked in the Tokyo stock room for about ten years and when this service was transferred to Hiratsuka in 1996, she too was transferred there. She continued the same work in that community up until just a few years ago, when she was admitted to a local nursing home due to Alzheimer’s disease.

In the last few months Sr. M. Eletta’s condition steadily worsened but her face was always illuminated by a beautiful smile. Two days ago, on the Feast of the Annunciation, our sisters received special permission to visit and pray with her. But at that point her life was drawing to an end, completely consumed as an offering pleasing to the Lord.

During this time of prolonged suffering and solitude, accentuated by the coronavirus epidemic, our dear sister was truly “elected” by God to participate more intimately in the sufferings of his Son, to intercede like Moses for her people, to remind the Lord to remain faithful to his covenant, and to ask him to bestow on everyone his mercy, forgiveness, peace and love. And now she has been “elected” to celebrate the joy of the Resurrection in the kingdom of heaven.

Affectionately,

Rome, 27 March 2020


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan