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CASA GENERALIZIA
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Dearest Sisters,

At about 10:00 this morning, the Lord visited the James Alberione community of Albano, Italy to call to the eternal wedding feast our sister:

VENTRESCA ELDA – SR. M. LILIANA
born in Bugnara (Aquila), Italy on 16 September 1920.

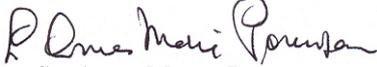
Sr. Liliana entered the Congregation in the community of Sulmona on 13 April 1944, at the height of World War II. As soon as the situation allowed, she and her friend Sr. Teresa Vitalini were sent to Rome. Sr. Liliana said they lost the bus they were supposed to take but were able to catch a ride with a truckdriver headed for the capital with a load of apples. They had to sit among the apples in the back of the truck and by the time they got to Rome they were coated so thickly with dust that the FSP formator thought they were two old ladies! Only after they had washed themselves and put their clothes in order were they recognizable as two young women....

When the war ended in 1945, Sr. Liliana was sent to Naples to carry out the diffusion apostolate. She returned to Rome for her novitiate, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1947. Even as a young professed, Sr. Liliana's decisive character and her desire to respond wholeheartedly to the Lord emerged with great clarity. In 1948, while carrying out the propaganda apostolate in Ascoli Piceno, she wrote to Prima Maestra: "I would like to ask you a very big favor. Would you please send me to the missions if this is not a problem for you? However, I want to do what you want not what I want, because your will is God's will for me." But it turned out that the Lord was preparing this dear sister for a mission perhaps even more demanding than that "ad gentes." In 1980, after more than 30 years as a propagandist in the communities of Ancona, Ferrara, Livorno and Aquila, Sr. Liliana was obliged to ask for a leave of absence from the Congregation so as to take care of her elderly parents. During those years at home, she also participated intimately in their calvary, as they waited in vain for the return of her brother, who had disappeared from home without a trace many years before. For Sr. Liliana, this prolonged period away from the Congregation was a time of great suffering. She wrote: "The Lord is permitting me to suffer so deeply that I can't explain it. It's a mystery. I was hoping to return to my community quickly but it's just not possible. I can't see what the future holds. Everything is dark, very dark."

Sr. Liliana spent 10 years assisting her parents. Her father lived to the age of 105 and it was only after his death that she was able to return to the Institute, determined to dedicate all her energies to her sisters and to the Pauline apostolate. In Catanzaro, she carried out various community services and also visited solitary people in need of assistance. But by now she too was aging and in need of care. In 1999, Sr. Liliana was transferred to the Thecla Merlo community of Albano and from there to the nearby James Alberione community. Up to the end of her life, she continued the apostolate of knitting, at which she was an expert, using her talent to create a wide variety of garments (sweaters, shawls, slippers, pullovers, etc.) for the sisters and for the missions. But in spite of her busy days, Sr. Liliana never neglected her self-formation. She was very faithful to the *lectio* of the liturgical readings of the day and her well-worn missal bears mute testimony to her assiduous use of it. She also read widely—books, newspapers, magazines—and the titles in her bookcase reveal her wide-ranging interests. The other members of her community considered her an example of spiritual wisdom, moderation in living and love for the Pauline vocation.

Two months ago Sr. Liliana suffered a heart attack which caused her already poor health to decline even more rapidly, although her death today was due to intestinal complications, not a weak heart. A short time ago she was admitted as a patient to Regina Apostolorum Hospital, but she returned home yesterday because the doctors said that nothing more could be done for her. When her father celebrated his 100th birthday, he composed a prayer that he recited every day: "Grant me a good death, Lord. Help me make a happy transition from this world to the next. Remember me, my God!" We are sure that Sr. Liliana, dressed in her wedding finery, welcomed the call of her Spouse with these or similar words today.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicar General

Rome, 19 August 2010