

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

In the first hours of this morning, in the “James Alberione” community in Albano, the Lord gently called to Himself at the beautiful age of 102, our sister

BELLI GIUSEPPA Sr ELIANA
Born in San Giustino (Perugia) August 1, 1909

Sr. Eliana entered the Congregation in the house of Rome on December 29, 1932. She lived her initial years of formation and novitiate in Rome, up to her first profession on February 12, 1938. After a time of intense propaganda in the Eternal City, she went to Terni, together with Sr. Concetta Marongiu to begin the community there. The stories of the beginnings of the Pauline presence there have the flavor of *The Little Flowers (of St. Francis)*. Mindless of the cold, the Sisters did not leave behind one house in order to bring the Gospel to everyone. And how many, terribly cold themselves, opened the door to the courageous missionaries, and were left delighted by the gentleness and the smile of Sr. Eliana. Poverty reigned supreme in that first little house in Terni. The two Sisters even took turns using the eating utensils. They used to share: «We were almost saddened when the furniture arrived because we were so happy in our poverty. We didn't buy anything but waited for everything from Divine Providence. One piece at a time, the furniture arrived—just what we needed yet so varied in style and form that we could have begun a museum ...».

Having established our presence in Terni, Sr. Eliana returned for a time to Napoli and then was inserted into the community of Rome to work in the typography. From 1951 and for 33 consecutive years, until 1984, she carried out the service of checking the films that were returned from the movie houses to the San Paolo Film Agency in Napoli. It was a beautiful time for her in which she was in contact with various apostolic and pastoral realities. After having been asked to share about her experiences she gave this testimony: «I have joyfully accepted this work, aware that with film so much good can be done. Several priests have confirmed this for me and some have assured me that even from the chair where I verify the films I can do so much good, because I am offering my contribution to such a marvelous apostolate. Never was I so convinced of this as when I experienced the sacrifices that it required of me». And when asked if she had any regrets about those years, Sr. Eliana affirmed with pain: «Primo Maestro wanted a production of our own, purely apostolic, and in this sense we did very little». In her simplicity, she had perfectly understood the charismatic intuition and the need to value every means of progress to reach an always greater number of people.

In Napoli, Sr. Eliana offered all her strength day after day for almost 65 consecutive years. After the closing of the St. Paul Film Agency, she continued to help in various community services, in the preparation of the hosts, in the care of the garden, in raising the chickens to which she gave particular attention. Her long life was characterized by simplicity, by a great love for poverty and for the Pauline mission and by charity that was witnessed to by all. The Sisters who shared so many experiences with her, recall having heard from her lips only words of goodness, apology and forgiveness. Sr. Eliana loved life and knew how to enjoy everything, even the soccer games for which she had a real passion. Her company was sought after because she never missed an opportunity for a playful argument or for sharing common wisdom contained in countless witty proverbs. But above all, her heart was constantly united with the Lord in unceasing prayer, in a fidelity that was at times heroic: up until her final days, she punctually arrived in chapel and did not miss any community activity.

A few days ago, due to a broken femur that made her unable to walk, she was transferred to the “James Alberione” community in Albano. And this morning, without disturbing anyone, in the silence of her room, she repeated with joy the “*Here I am Lord*”, that she lived throughout her entire, a life rich in love and in self-giving. We entrust our Sister to Mary, that she may welcome her into Paradise and embrace her in her loving arms. With affection,

Sr Anna Maria Parenzan
Vicaria generale

Roma, 25 febbraio 2012.