

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

At about 5:00 p.m. today, Feast of the Transfiguration, Jesus Master visited the infirmary wing of our Divine Providence community, Alba, Italy, to call to dwell in “his tents” forever our sister:

**VAIRA IOLANDA**  
**born in Valle Talloria (CN), Italy on 1 June 1921.**

Sr. Iolanda’s life was both simple and extraordinary: simple because she lived among us in silence, discretion and daily generosity, obedient to whatever the superiors felt was best for her, but also extraordinary because of her love for the Pauline mission, her wisdom and her readiness to insert herself wholeheartedly into the new culture to which she was sent, truly becoming “French with the French.”

Sr. Iolanda’s goodness, industriousness, kindness and courtesy will always be remembered by our sisters of France, with whom she shared the Pauline life for almost 60 years.

She entered the Congregation in the community of Alba on 6 August 1945 at the age of 24, and even then her parish priest described her as an exemplary person. After several months of initial formation, she was sent to carry out the apostolate of capillary diffusion in Como. In 1947 she went to Rome to make her novitiate, concluding this stage of the formation process with her first profession on 19 March 1948. Less than a month after this, she was sent as a missionary to France, first to Lyon and then to Marseilles, where the Daughters of St. Paul had replaced the Pious Disciples several months earlier. Those were the difficult “pioneer years” of our foundation in that city, but the providence of the Lord worked miracles through our sisters.

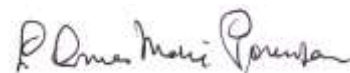
In the beginning, the apostolate of visiting the local homes and businesses was very difficult and tiring and yielded almost no results, but the faith and tenacity of Sr. Iolanda and the other members of her community slowly began to bear fruit. How many Gospel Days and book displays the sisters organized in that diocese!

In 1956, Sr. Iolanda was transferred to Paris, after which she returned to Lyon to take charge of the book center. She served as superior of our Paris community from 1962-65. From 1969-2007 without interruption, she lived in Marseilles, where she served as bursar of the book center and community. Sr. Iolanda’s precision, punctuality and dedication to the Pauline mission were proverbial, as was her positive outlook on life. Her conversations were always uplifting, reflecting her acceptance and esteem of the sisters and her efforts to build up the community. When failing health made it advisable for her to return to Italy, she responded to the Superior General’s invitation with the brief note: “In keeping with your decision, I will be arriving in Alba on 14 July after 59 years in France.... The Lord will help me take this step.”

Sr. Iolanda spent the last 9 years of her life in our Motherhouse, first in the main community and then in its infirmary wing. Up until yesterday evening, she participated fully in the life of the infirmary community, manifesting the Pauline spirit through her efforts to keep updated about what was going on in the Church and world by assiduously watching the news and regularly reading *Famiglia Cristiana* and the *Gazzetta d’Alba*. She carried in her prayers the many problems of society and the sufferings of all humanity. For her, the windows of the Alba infirmary were flung wide open to embrace the entire world.

This morning, an unexpected drop in Sr. Iolanda’s blood pressure signaled to her caregivers that her end was near and this evening the invitation of St. Anastasius, Bishop of Sinai, in the Office of Readings, was fulfilled for her: “Let us cry out with joy and gladness and exultation, for there is nothing in our hearts but peace, serenity and stillness,” since she now contemplates God face to face.

Affectionately,

  
Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan  
Superior General

Rome, 6 August 2016