

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

At 7:00 this morning, our good Father visited the San Raffaele wing of our Albano, Italy community to call to himself after a long and painful agony our sister:

ZUCCHI AGNESE – SR. MARGHERITA MARIA
born in Sarcedo (Vicenza), Italy on 6 December 1935.

The life of this dear sister was “tested” in the crucible of physical, psychological and spiritual suffering. She entered the Congregation in the community of Alba on 8 Dec. 1955. After a period of formation in the Motherhouse, she was sent to Ivrea to carry out the propaganda apostolate. She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding this stage of her formation with her first profession on 30 June 1959. She spent almost her whole Juniorate in the community of Verona, where she continued to carry out the apostolate of capillary diffusion of the Word of God.

From her earliest years in the religious life, Sr. Margherita was tormented by scruples, which gave her no peace on the spiritual level and which caused her profound suffering. But in spite of this she sincerely sought the will of God and was fired by an ardent desire to become holy. Requesting permission to renew her vows in 1961, she wrote to Maestra Thecla: “I know that I am asking you for a grace and a privilege that I feel very unworthy to receive due to my many defects, but I feel that it is here, among the Daughters of St. Paul, that the Lord wants to sanctify me and only if I remain faithful to that call will I have the grace to achieve my goal. Therefore, on my part, today more than ever, I have made up my mind and want to remain faithful to my vocation and to the ideal I have embraced. I am sure that the Queen of Apostles will always be close to me in my struggle and will not allow me to forsake my ideal of becoming holy.”

Sr. Margherita made her perpetual profession on 30 June 1965, the Feast of St. Paul. On that occasion, she said to the Superior General: “I am happy to take this step. I want to serve the Lord wherever he wants, in whatever house and work he knows is best for me....”

Already in 1964, Sr. Margherita had spent some time in the Albano community, where she had received the medical care she needed due to her frail health. While there, she also helped the community with cleaning jobs and the preparation of meals, which at that time were cooked in the small kitchenettes located in each wing of the Clinic. Sr. Margherita remained in the Albano community for the next 52 years, dedicating all her energies to various hospital services and later to communitarian services, especially in the kitchen and laundry. She was a hard-working, good-hearted sister who silently accepted the sufferings that went hand-in-hand with depression—an illness that marked her entire life.

For the last 10 years of her life, she was a member of the San Raffaele wing of our Albano community—the infirmary wing set up to care for the needs of the sickest members of the community. Sr. Margherita’s character “softened” with the passing of time and she never failed to thank her caregivers for every small gesture of affection offered her and even the smallest service performed for her. She kept updated about what was going on in the Pauline world, joyfully welcoming the opportunity to broaden her prayer intentions and daily self-offering to the Lord. She was a person who truly edified the other members of her community.

In the last months of her life, the Lord united Sr. Margherita more intimately to his passion by means of intense physical sufferings caused by intestinal cancer, which then metastasized into brain cancer. We can well say that she was called to share the sufferings of St. Lawrence, whose feast we celebrate today. The life of this dear sister was truly a “grain of wheat” that fell to earth so as to produce abundant fruit for the Church, the Congregation and the Pauline Family.

Affectionately,

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 10 August 2016