

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

At a little after 1:00 a.m. last night (local time), God our good Father visited St. John of God Hospital in Pasay City, Philippines, to call to remain with him forever our sister:

BAUTISTA SR. LEONITA LEONA
born in Tacloban, Philippines on 25 August 1937.

Just two days ago, Sr. Leonita was hospitalized due to a lack of appetite and a bad cough that turned out to be a serious case of pneumonia. But Sr. Leonita had been sick for more than 10 years; in fact, she had been living in the infirmary wing of the Pasay community ever since 2003.

She was a very good sister, who gifted the Philippine province with her deep love for the Pauline mission and her yearning to reach as many people as possible through the proclamation of the Gospel.

She entered the Congregation in the community of Pasay on 26 May 1958. After a period of initial formation, she made her novitiate in the Lipa community and concluded it with her first profession on 8 December 1962. Soon after this, she was asked to carry out the Pauline mission in Kota Kinabalu (Sabah), Malaysia. She remained there for almost 10 years, channeling all her energy into the apostolate of capillary and collective diffusion. Saying that she was very happy to dedicate her life to her eternal King and expressing her desire to continue in the religious life, she made her perpetual profession on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception 1967.

At the beginning of the 1970's, the Malaysian government stopped issuing residence visas to men and women religious and so, on 20 June 1971, Sr. Leonita and Sr. Pierluisa Albini left for the Philippines with two local vocations: Rosalie Lojiu and Mauricia Tangit. The FSP Sabah community was officially closed the following day.

In the Philippines, Sr. Leonita was assigned to the Davao community, where she continued to devote all her energies to the "propaganda" apostolate, which she carried out with great love, zeal and creativity. She was continually looking for new ways to disseminate the Word of God in parishes, through the book center and via book displays.

When the visa problem was resolved in 1975, Sr. Leonita returned to Malaysia, thanks to the fact that she spoke the local language (Bahasa). This time, she was assigned to the Kuala Lumpur (Selangor) community. But after just a year in this almost completely Muslim region, she went back to the Philippines, where she continued to carry out the diffusion apostolate in Cebu and then was asked to serve as cook for the big Pasay community.

She served as superior of the Tacloban community for two consecutive mandates and after this returned to Pasay as cook. A few years later, she was appointed superior of the Zamboanga community.

In 1992, Sr. Leonita willingly accepted a transfer to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where the newly-opened community was experiencing all the difficulties of its foundation period. Here she carried out the office local bursar. In 1996, she went to Olongapo, to serve as coordinator of that community, which was in the process of closing. 1997 found her once again in Pasay, where she served as book center manager, after which, in 2000, she was appointed superior of Legaspi. It was as she was concluding this term of office that the Lord asked her to accept the illness that would bring her Pauline mission to completion through long years of suffering lived in serenity and peace.

Like the Apostle Paul, Sr. Leonita "fought the good fight" to proclaim the marvels of the Lord and the riches of the mystery of Christ to a multitude of people. And we are sure that now her name too is "written in heaven" and that she has received the reward Christ promised to his faithful apostles.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General

Rome, 24 September 2015