

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

I am writing to let you know that at 10:30 p.m. yesterday (local time), the Divine Master visited Assumption Clinic in Barranquilla, Colombia to “call to the other shore” our sister:

**GUZMAN SR. ESTHER**  
**born in Arcabuco (Boyaca), Colombia, on 16 June 1931.**

Sr. Esther was a good and generous sister who dedicated all her energies day after day to evangelization and to serving her community.

She entered the Congregation in Bogota on 18 August 1952. It was in this newly-built house, which was rapidly filling with young women and equipment for the apostolate, that she enthusiastically underwent her initial formation and made her novitiate, concluding this stage of her formation with her first profession on 19 March 1957. These were the years in which our sisters were printing their first books, geared to the formation of young people, parents and families. Sr. Esther began to joyfully carry out the book center apostolate, which gave her the chance to meet many people and reach their hearts through publications filled with faith, consolation and hope. She carried out this apostolate in Manizales and Barranquilla for 15 years consecutively, firmly convinced that the book center was a church, a pulpit from which to preach the Gospel to the poor.

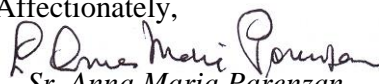
Sr. Esther’s life overflowed with love for everyone, especially the sisters in the communities where she served as superior. Barranquilla, Bogota and Medellin were the first branch houses in which she held this office, carrying out her responsibilities tirelessly, joyfully and tenderly.

After a short period in the Bogota stock room, in 1987 Sr. Esther arrived at the Generalate in Rome for a period of updating. When she returned to Colombia the following year, she was once more asked to carry out the service of superior, first in the large Bogota community and then in Barranquilla. In 1996, she was transferred to Cucuta, where she served as community bursar and also as book center manager. Her generosity and open-heartedness often caused her thoughts and yearnings to fly beyond the borders of Colombia and prompted her to ask the Superior General to assign her to the Thecla Merlo community of Albano to help care for the sick sisters of the Italian province but her request was not granted due to other pressing needs.

In 2001, Sr. Esther was transferred to Barranquilla, where she spent the rest of her life, dedicating all her energies to her sisters and to the apostolate. She was deeply loved by the members of her community and also by the bishop and priests of the diocese, who often dropped by to see her. Sr. Esther’s ankles were swollen due to diabetes and serious heart problems, but she was constantly on the move, serving others without pause and actively participating in the life of the community. She wrote: “My greatest yearning has always been to love Jesus with my whole heart. I thank him for the great gift of my vocation, for having chosen me as an instrument to proclaim his Word, and for having guided my life as a Daughter of St. Paul. I have always tried to be docile to his will, as manifested through my superiors, and I have tried my best not to be a burden to my sisters.” Sr. Esther deeply loved her superiors and each day she entrusted to the Lord the intentions of the Superior General.

Last August, Sr. Esther’s heart problems intensified, complicated by the onset of kidney problems, which obliged her to undergo dialysis and frequent periods of hospitalization. Her dying wish was to be taken back to Bogota and buried in the cemetery alongside the deceased sisters with whom she had shared a large part of her life.

The words of the Liturgy for the 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time summarize Sr. Esther’s last moments on earth: the love of Christ truly possessed her, made her a new creation, calmed every storm within her and freed her from all fear. And we firmly believe that that same love has now brought her to *the other shore*, where she now enjoys peace and joy to the full. Affectionately,

  
Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan  
Superior General

Rome, 22 June 2015