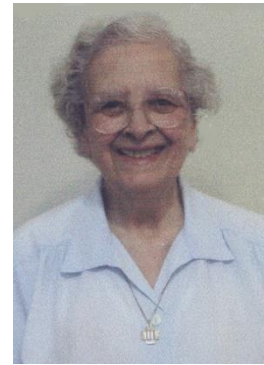




ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
CASA GENERALIZIA
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Dearest Sisters,

We received the news that at 4:00 a.m. today (local time) one of our sisters resident in the Cardinal Freeman Aged Care Facility Home in Sydney, Australia, concluded, like the Apostle Paul, her journey here on earth:

CARUANA CARMEL – SR. M. THECLA
born in Cairo, Egypt, on 4 November 1929.

Of Maltese origin, Sr M. Thecla lived her childhood in Egypt and her youth in Australia. Her experience was truly multicultural and multiethnic: besides English, Italian and French, she also knew Maltese, Arabic and Greek. She was the first FSP vocation from Australia, having entered the Congregation in Sydney on 30 Nov. 1955, a few months after the arrival of our sisters on that vast continent, accompanied by Master Thecla and Fr. Alberione. She lived the difficult time of the beginnings carrying out diffusion to the families and helping to organize book exhibits in parishes and communities. In the evenings, in a large shed built for the apostolate, she helped with the binding and packaging of books printed by our Pauline brothers. It was a climate of sacrifice and responsibility to which she was accustomed, having left her family at a mature age. The separation from her mother, who died a few months before her departure [for Italy], had been very painful. Maestra Thecla, who had the opportunity to get to know Carmel before she entered the community, always followed her with motherly solicitude, sending her affectionate letters of encouragement from time to time. She wrote to her in January 1956: “Your sacrifice was a big one. Be courageous! The Lord has called your mother to himself. Let us pray for her. Now she sees things differently; she is happy and will certainly help you to become a Pauline saint.”

In 1957, Carmel arrived in Rome to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 30 June 1958. Now known as Sr. M. Thecla, she was back in Sydney a few weeks later, where she carried out the diffusion and vocation apostolates, and then, in 1962, contributed to the foundation of the Adelaide community. Five years later she was sent to Melbourne to devote herself to diffusion. In 1972, she was called to the National Catholic Radio/TV Center in Sydney to collaborate with another sister in secretarial work and with the reviewing and shipping of films and radio tapes. In 1976, after a brief experience at the St. Paul Film Agency of Castro Pretorio, Rome, Sr. Thecla returned to Australia, where she was assigned to the Sydney community and placed in charge of the stock room. From 1987-2008, she worked in our beautiful and well-stocked Sydney book center, striving to acquire true professionalism in the field of books. Attentive to the needs of the territory, the Church and families, she sought to provide book center clients with material suitable for Christian growth and, together with the other sisters, constantly searched for new ways to reach wider audiences.

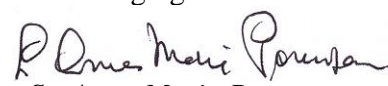
In 2008, Sr. Thecla’s increasingly fragile health forced her to remain at home and dedicate herself to domestic services until, in 2014, the onset of senile dementia made it necessary for her to be admitted to a care center for the elderly near our Sydney community. On 15 June 2020, she suffered a stroke from which she was not able to recover.

In asking to be admitted to perpetual profession, Sr. Thecla had written: “I want to die in my Congregation so as to one day be admitted to eternal joy with my Pauline Family because our appointment is up there!” Our heavenly Father fulfilled her desire and we are sure that Maestra Thecla was at the gate of heaven to welcome her, just as she had welcomed her into the Congregation in her youth.

Let us entrust the vocation apostolate to the prayers of this dear sister, who lived the entire story of our FSP presence in Australia, asking through her intercession that many new vocations will bud and that fresh paths for evangelization will open up on this variegated and challenging continent.

Affectionately,

Rome, 30 June 2020
Feast of St. Paul


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan