

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

At 8:30 this morning, the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, God, our merciful Father, visited the infirmary wing of our Divine Providence community, Rome, Italy to call to himself a fervent Pauline apostle:

**PIROLI MARIA CARMELA – SR. MARIA TEODORA (DORA)**  
**born in San Donato Ninea (Cosenza), Italy on 8 May 1929.**

With full awareness and lucidity, Sr. Dora awaited the coming of her Spouse, saying ardently: “I am going to Jesus.” The last weeks of her life, in which her physical energy steadily declined, prepared her for this decisive moment and left us with the beautiful witness of a faithful apostle who used all her talents to the maximum for the Pauline mission.

Sr. Dora belonged to a very large family—in fact, she was one of 17 children! She entered the Congregation in Alba on 2 October 1940, at the age of eleven. She made her First Communion in the Motherhouse and spent her adolescence involved in academic studies and Pauline formation. After a year of novitiate in Rome, she made her first profession on 19 March of the Holy Year of 1950.

All too soon the Lord visited her with suffering: she was obliged to spend the five years of her Juniorate in our Albano community to cure a serious lung disease. Afterward, she had the joy of spending a long period of her life in the apostolate, especially book center service. She dedicated herself enthusiastically to this mission, becoming a true beacon to her companions—the model of a life dedicated wholeheartedly to the proclamation of the Gospel.

Kindness and cordiality, refinement and humility, combined with her willingness to step aside so that each sister could make the most of her talents: these were the qualities that distinguished Sr. Dora from the very beginning of her apostolic activities, when she was stationed in Udine and La Spezia. In a letter to her provincial superior in 1969 she revealed this constant tendency: “If I could express a desire,” she wrote, “it would be to learn to always see the good in my sisters; to be for others what I would like them to be for me.”

In view of the competence she was acquiring in the book sector, in 1970 Sr. Dora was assigned to the Generalate community to work in the Center for Non-Pauline Editions. Following this, she spent 8 consecutive years as an FSP book agent, diffusing our publications to secular book stores in the Lazio region. From 1982-1995, she had the joy of returning to her beloved book center apostolate, first in Lecce and then in Palermo. She welcomed customers with simplicity and warmth, expressing her inventiveness, creativity and openness to new forms of communication in the way she managed the book centers. She was a true teacher to our Congregation’s young apostles, always ready to remain in the background so that the gifts of each sister could emerge and be used to benefit the Pauline mission.

In 1995 she was transferred to the Divine Providence community, Rome, and for the next 25 years she collaborated with great zeal in the development and accompaniment of the book center network of the Italian province. It was a time of significant change in that many of our Centers were gradually being placed under the management of lay personnel in this period. The sisters working in the book center apostolate all over Italy found in Sr. Dora support, trust and prompt answers to their needs. And the Centers’ lay collaborators experienced her kindness and ability to be a messenger of peace everywhere. The expertise Sr. Dora had acquired in book center work over the years enabled her to offer timely and appropriate suggestions, especially with regard to the choice of books from other publishers. But above all, what emerged was her profound humanity, which made her a true communicator of the Gospel.

About 4 years ago, realizing that her strength was diminishing, Sr. Dora asked to be transferred to the infirmary wing of her community, from where she continued to carry out her apostolic service. As long as it was possible for her to do so, she worked as a liaison with other publishing houses, especially that of the Vatican, aware that her presence could favor a more attentive and more punctual service in this field. But at this point, her life was literally consumed and today her “candle” gently went out. She passed to eternity serenely, calling on the Virgin Mary, Queen of every apostolate.

Let us entrust to this dear sister our young apostles so that they may find in her the inspiration to confront the challenges they face in striving to creatively bring the good news of the Kingdom to everyone.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. Anna Maria Parenzan'.  
Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 15 November 2020