

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

While we were contemplating the radiant light that descended to earth today, the Divine Master visited the Thecla Merlo house of our Regina Apostolorum community, Pasay City, Philippines, at 10:47 p.m. (local time), to call to *new life* our sister:

PASTORFIDE LENY – SR. MARIA EDVIGE
born in Pinamalayan (Or. Mindoro), Philippines, on 21 April 1934.

Sr. Edvige entered the Congregation in the Regina Apostolorum community, Pasay City, on 5 October 1954 after she had finished high school and then obtained a diploma as a business secretary. From the very beginning of her Pauline life, she worked in the Pasay typography, where she revealed her organizational skills and her talent for using technical equipment for the Institute's mission. She made her novitiate in Lipa and concluded it with her first profession on 30 June 1959.

As a young professed, Sr. Edvige continued to dedicate herself with great zeal, precision and care to typographical work, pouring all her energy into this field and becoming an expert in it. Although small and thin in physique, she was exceptionally strong when it came to running the enormous offset printing press, especially when her work involved lifting and loading the heavy reams of paper needed by the machine. Our sisters say Sr. Edvige was always the first person in the department each day and the last to leave it at night, always careful to ensure that the machinery was clean and well-oiled, ready for the next day, very attentive to use the best and most suitable inks available. Above all, she was always concerned about the quality of the printing because she was convinced that every book she handled was, to some extent, the Word of God, and therefore should be dignified in appearance. For Sr. Edvige, the typography was a church and the printing press the pulpit from which she proclaimed the Gospel. She loved the *prayer for the technical apostolate*, composed by Blessed James Alberione, saying it helped her realize that she too was an instrument to be used for the glory of God. She was a true teacher for the young women in formation who worked in the typography and, later, for the department's lay employees, who became highly-skilled printers under her expert guidance.

The same scrupulous concern that Sr. Edvige devoted to printing equipment, she also devoted to the sick sisters under her care. In fact, in 1971 she obtained a diploma in nursing and carried out this mission in the large Regina Apostolorum community in Pasay. Apart from a few brief apostolic experiences in Lipa and Olongapo, she spent her life in the RA community where, with admirable commitment, she quietly channeled all her energies into the services entrusted to her.

Sr. Edvige is remembered by the sisters who lived and worked with her as not only a pillar of the apostolic organization of the province but also as a person who, at different times over a span of twenty years, devoted herself with much love and tenderness to the members of the circumscription in need of medical assistance, accompanying them to doctors' appointments and providing them with bedside care when they were hospitalized. She had the rare ability to combine the stressful and demanding work of printing with great tenderness toward anyone in need of help.

Due to asthmatic complications and severe anemia, Sr. Edvige spent the last few years of her life with the other sick sisters in the RA infirmary. But it seems that she was eager to celebrate the great feast of Christmas in heaven this year and our Divine Savior granted her wish by allowing a heart attack to hasten her meeting with him. So today, Christmas Day, Sr. Edvige was introduced for all eternity into the radiant light that is not overcome by darkness—the light that has no end.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 25 December 2020