

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

We have received the news that in the Hospital "Do Idoso" ("of the elderly") of Curitiba (Brazil), at 4:45 a.m. (local time), the Divine Master called to the house of the Father our sister:

MASIERO CECILIA sr MARIA HELENA
born in Barra do Ouro (RS, Brazil) on 27 February 1927.

She was proud of her beautiful and numerous family of Italian origin in which she was educated in the faith and in solid Christian principles. Fidelity was a very dear word to the young Cecilia who entered the Congregation at the age of twenty-three, in the house in Porto Alegre. This was on 23 January 1950. Very soon she learned to spend all her energy in the itinerant mission in the great metropolis of São Paulo. After her profession, on 25 January 1953, in São Paulo DM, she began to travel the roads of the immense country of Brazil, particularly in the states of Minas Gerais (Belo Horizonte), Paraná (Curitiba) and Rio de Janeiro, with bags full of books and a great joy in her heart. She was a tireless and very experienced driver, capable of reaching the most remote places with books and magazines. Because of her love for the Institute and her attentive concern for others, in 1972 she was called to assist the sick sisters in the communities of São Paulo DM and Brasília. Sr M Helena was truly a woman ready to *do-it-all*: ready to leave for the mission as well as to stay at home, to do household work or be out in the car to provide for the necessities of the community. Her company was pleasant because she loved to talk, to tell stories, filled with every detail of the Pauline life. Her robust voice surpassed and dominated that of the sisters, who jokingly and familiarly called her "the matriarch" because she was the one who always knew just a little more...: She had a decisive and determined character that at the same time was friendly and maternal.

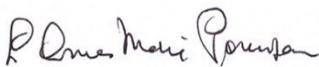
She had always wanted to be a Pauline missionary, following the example of the Apostle Paul and, as she confided to the Superior General in 1975 on the occasion of her profession, she had proposed not only to be a faithful Pauline, but a good and holy one, and for this, she asked for the grace to die rather than break her promises. With this radical desire in her heart, she carried out, attentively and enthusiastically, the pastoral work for vocations in Maringá. In this ambient, she was capable of using her determination to encourage a prompt decision in the young women who were in vocational discernment. She was indeed the *tireless daughter* of the *tireless apostle*.

In Belo Horizonte, São Paulo DM, Vitoria, São Paulo IA, Recife and Rio de Janeiro she was again called to administrative tasks and various services within the community. She took every care for the maintenance of the premises and to provide the sisters with what was necessary. She felt she had to live a Pauline poverty, which not only renounces but also provides and builds. Especially when she was in the COMEP community, where artists and associates of musical publications, often came, she shared her special ability and spontaneity by welcoming guests and immediately putting them at ease.

She spent the last five years in the community of Curitiba, serenely accepting her diminishing strength, and helping in many small community services. About a week ago, she was admitted to the hospital due to the consequences of *Covid-19*, which very soon hastened her encounter with the Father.

Indeed we can say that, like the Apostle Paul, Sr M Helena fought the good fight, she finished the race, she kept the faith (cf. 2 Tim 4:7). It is beautiful to remember that today, the ardent prayer she herself wrote forty-five years ago has been fulfilled: "I ask God for the grace to renew myself every day until I reach the eternal encounter with Christ." The faithful God has certainly kept his promise! Affectionately,

Roma, 24 febbraio 2021.


sr Anna Maria Parenzan