

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

Yesterday at 8.40 p.m., on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, in the Tecla Merlo community in Albano, one of our sisters was called home to the Lord:

**SAITTA sr ITALIA**  
**born in Messina 18 July 1936.**

Sr Italia was a sister who gave the Congregation her cheerful and sociable personality, one rich in gifts of communication together with a deep spiritual sensitivity.

She entered the Congregation in the house in Rome, on 2 January 1958 after having obtained her diploma in teaching and having attended two years of teacher training in pedagogy. She experienced the book center apostolate in the house in Palermo and then spent her novitiate in Rome, which ended with her first profession on 30 June 1961.

As a young professed she had the opportunity to collaborate in the diocesan offices for communication in Taranto. After a brief experience in the book center in Siena, she was able to perfect her apostolic formation by joining the editorial staff of the magazine *Così*. When the magazine closed down in 1966, she helped in the book editorial department. She was then able to benefit from extensive training in filmmaking, working for fourteen consecutive years at the *Centro Studi San Paolo Film*. She attended residential courses led by Fr Nazareno Taddei, SJ, and the course in the Sciences and Techniques of Public Opinion at the "Pro Deo" University, which she completed with a thesis published by Pauline Editions, entitled: *La crisi dell'uomo e della società nei film di Antonioni* (The crisis of man and society in the films of Antonioni). She confided, "When I was asked to make the transition to the apostolate of cinema I suffered greatly because I did not understand the precise nature of cinema in our mission. However, I soon realized that it was quite enriching from a human, cultural and spiritual point of view. In addition, this apostolate made it possible to promote many interesting initiatives.

She recounted in great detail the wonderful experience she had lived through: "I began by editing the filmographic files, integrating this work with *film forums* in parishes, cultural circles and schools at various levels. For ten years I taught systematic courses on social communications and interpretation of images at USMI [Union of Major Superiors of Italy]. I gave many conferences on the theology of communication in Rome and in various cities in Italy." Sr Italia also had the opportunity to offer professional development courses to the sisters in charge of the "San Paolo Film" Agencies, conduct seminars, and write articles for specialized magazines. She felt great trust on the part of her superiors, a trust that, as she herself admitted, made her responsible and creative.

In 1979, in order to respond to a need to deepen her spirituality and to be more open to God's plan for her life, she was assigned to the house of prayer in Cicogna (Arezzo). She then returned to the Study Center, working for some time in Rocca di Papa and in the community of Rome, Castro Pretorio. In 1987, she was appointed superior of the community of Reggio Calabria and later in the community of Taranto, never neglecting her commitment to catechetical animation. From 1993 to 2016, she made a valuable contribution to the administrative offices of the province while residing alternately between the Divine Providence and Divine Master communities.

For several years, Sr Italia had been living with an endometrial tumor for which she had undergone all the necessary treatment in Rome. In 2016, due to the worsening of her physical situation, she was transferred to the Tecla Merlo community of Albano where she lived serenely, in abandonment and full awareness of the slow progress of the disease. She offered the community her positive attitude, her constructive spirit and a great love for the Word. She had prepared herself carefully, with the heart of a bride longing for the Lord's visit. And it was yesterday evening that the Bridegroom arrived, spoke to her the *Ephphatha* that loosens and frees one of the bonds of the body, and opened her life to eternal joy. Affectionately,

Rome, 12 February 2021.

  
sr Anna Maria Parenzan