

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

On the eve of the Feast of St Joseph, the “just man”, the good Father has called to himself a “just woman” who has made the will of God the beacon of her whole life. At 12.50 p.m. (local time), the Lord summoned one of our sisters from the community of Thecla Merlo in Albano:

**NAVELLI Sr MARIA**  
**born in Moscufo (Pescara) on 11 August 1926.**

She belonged to a beautiful, very hard-working family from Abruzzo, a family rich in Christian values, and which also gave to our Congregation Sr. Olimpia, a younger sister, who died in 2014. Regarding her father, Sr Maria wrote that she venerated him and prayed to him as a saint. And she followed in his footsteps, growing day after day in a journey of faith, self-giving and love.

She entered the congregation in Alba, on 2 December 1948. After a short time of formation and apostolic experience in Turin and Milan, she was soon sent to Rome for her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 19 March 1951, exactly seventy years ago. For about thirteen consecutive years, she devoted herself, to propaganda in Brescia, contributing to the launch of the magazine *Così*, to the organization of the Bible Days, to the large-scale distribution of *Famiglia Cristiana*, to the opening of many libraries that were very dear to the Founder's heart in view of *establishing permanent centers of light* in schools, institutes and families.

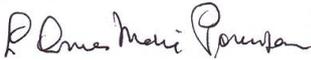
In 1964, she was assigned to the *San Paolo Film* agency in Messina and later in that of Trent. With regard to this apostolic service, she confided that she felt unprepared and expressed the desire to participate in some in-house courses, especially orientated towards improving human relationships. She wanted to put all her efforts into improving community relationships because, she said, “we need this more than the air we breathe.” And throughout her Pauline life, Sr. Maria did her utmost to transmit peace, communion, and mutual goodwill. She communicated love, fidelity to the Pauline life, missionary enthusiasm, first, during the times of her mandate as superior in the communities of Trieste, Livorno, Crotone; and then during her time in the *San Paolo Film* agencies of Bologna, Cagliari, Sassari and in the book center in Sulmona. With humility, she promoted the sisters rather than herself, and she became particularly enthusiastic when she had opportunities to present the values of Pauline consecration, the welcoming of diversity and the seeking of the good of one another. She remembered with gratitude the renewal experience in which she had participated in Alba: it had been for her another opportunity to live the Gospel and the vow of poverty in a more radical way.

In 1989, she was assigned to the various services in the community of Rome-Via Bosio and later in the community of Castro Pretorio. She was then called to the service of driver and running errands in the community of Galloro (Ariccia) and that of Giacomo Alberione in Albano. For almost ten years she carried out an attentive, precise and tireless service in the Divine Providence community in Rome, where she was a point of reference for the sisters who needed to go to Albano for medical treatment. In cold or hot weather, she would drive the car from Rome to the Castelli Romani, even several times a day, with absolute availability and dedication, to respond to the various needs. She always put the needs of each person before her own personal needs.

With her characteristic gentleness and meekness, she spent the last ten years of her life in the Tecla Merlo community in Albano. Her physical strength was declining, but Sr Maria did not let her situation become a burden to others; on the contrary, she tried to make it as light as possible. Never a complaint, never a demand, never an inappropriate request came from her lips. She spent her days in silence, in prayer, in daily offering, radiating great goodness. She had no particular illnesses: her long and beautiful life was slowly consumed, making us understand that “all those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation” (Pope Francis, *Patris corde*). And today, together with St Joseph, patron of a good death, she has been called to contemplate the ineffable Mystery of the Redemption, in the glory of the saints.

Affectionately,

Roma, 18 marzo 2021

  
sr Anna Maria Parenzan