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FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
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Dearest Sisters,

Yesterday evening at about 9 p.m. (local time), at the Regina Apostolorum Hospital in Albano, one of our sisters was called to eternal life:

BUGNOLA GIOVANNA sr MARIA DONATA
born in Selva di Progno (Verona) Italy on 10 July 1926.

The life of this dear sister was full of many beautiful surprises from God and of a continuous, faithful, loving response to a diversity of calls. She entered the Congregation in Alba on 29 June 1948. She was soon considered mature enough in her vocation to carry out the propaganda apostolate in the cities of Turin and Verona. She then spent her novitiate in Rome and a few months after her first profession, made on 19 March 1951, she was ready to go as a missionary to the Philippines.

In Lipa and Pasay City, she learned English and was assigned as a driver. The Filipino sisters remember her simplicity and joy, her love for the people, which manifested itself also in learning folk songs in the Tagalog language. And when, in 1959, Maestra Thecla willingly gave her consent for the opening of the house in Kaoshiung (Taiwan), the Pasay City community welcomed the decision with indescribable joy. They all wanted to leave for China. But the chosen ones were: Sr Maria Donata Bugnola, as superior, Sr Maria Costanza Justo, Sr Maria Giovanna Abuda, and Sr Maria Timotea Villaram. They arrived in Taipei on 5 May 1959, and continued to Kaoshiung by train, awaited and helped by the Apostolic Prefect. They began to study the Chinese language with enthusiasm and on 30 June were ready for their first experience of diffusion: reading to people short sentences written on slips of paper in Chinese. From the Philippines, the sisters helped the small community with all its needs.


The following year, another act of faith awaited Sr Donata: the foundation of the house in Taipei, of which she was also the first superior. But the surprises were not over... In 1965, overcoming difficulties that seemed insurmountable, she obtained a visa, together with two other sisters, in order to open the community in Karachi (Pakistan), reaching out within a new culture, almost entirely Muslim. The morning was spent at the printing press helping to print the Catholic weekly and the afternoon at school, learning Urdu, the national language. Soon those courageous sisters began to spread the word to English-speaking families and schools. At first, they visited the Catholics, then gradually they widened their range of action as they made preparations to open the book center, prompted by constant requests from the missionaries.

After two terms as superior in Karachi, Sr Donata returned to Rome in 1972 to begin a new phase of her life, serving the universal Church at the Congregation for the Clergy, while residing in the communities of Via dei Lucchesi and Borgo Angelico. When she had to retire in 1997 having reached retirement age, she received the honor, *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*, for 25 years of quality service to the Apostolic See.

With simplicity and abandonment to the will of God, she then joined the community of Albano where she worked in the administrative offices and other community services. In 2011, on the occasion of her 60th anniversary of profession, she wrote: "I give thanks to the good Lord who in his faithfulness and love has accompanied me throughout these years of various experiences in the Pauline life. I give thanks for my renewed 'yes' that has enriched my life with so many experiences."

For some years now, she had been in the San Raffaele wing, an environment suited to her physical situation, which had become increasingly fragile, especially in recent times. She lived in silence, in peace, radiating around her the fragrance of her goodness, in abandonment to the Lord's will. The *Covid19* that struck her after Easter required of her a long stay at the Regina Apostolorum Hospital where she ended her long journey. We entrust her into the arms of our Good Father and accompany her with the song of her mountains, expressing our gratitude for her beautiful and precious Pauline missionary life.

Affectionately,


sr Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 26 May 2021