

ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
CASA GENERALIZIA
Via S. Giovanni Eudes, 25
00163 Roma
Tel. 06.661 3039 - Fax 06.661 57 208



Dearest Sisters,

At 4.30 p.m. (local time) yesterday, at Seasons Hospice Center in Milton, Massachusetts (USA), the merciful Father called to his joy forever our sister

**HAMM KAREN IRENE sr KAREN JOSEPH
born in Boston (United States) on 6 June 1954**

The broad smile that lit up her face expressed her enthusiasm, her pride in being a Pauline, her dedication to proclaiming the Gospel, and her commitment to ensuring that, even through her daily toil, the Word of God could spread everywhere. Paul's "doing all things for the sake of the Gospel" had become a way of life for her.

Sr Karen Joseph entered the Congregation in Boston on 22 August 1969, at the age of fifteen. After a period of formation, study and apostolic experience, she spent her novitiate in Boston, which she concluded with her first profession on 29 June 1975. During her junior years, she carried out propaganda in the communities of Staten Island, Saint Louis and Anchorage. After making her perpetual profession in Boston in 1980, she continued the ministry of diffusion so dear to the Founder. She felt the blessing of being the "postmistresses of Jesus, who bring the Gospel of love into every family," and she witnessed through concrete actions Alberione's profound desire "that the Gospel may speed on, expand and bring salvation" (FSP48, p. 543). She wrote: "I cannot thank the Lord enough for having called me to serve him in this special mission of spreading the Good News through the media."

Honolulu, Staten Island, Philadelphia and New Orleans were the cities that witnessed her missionary zeal. She also served in our communities in Boston and Miami, especially in the book centers, which she worked to make aesthetically pleasing, with functional and attractive displays. In Miami, she served two terms as local superior, and enjoyed the multicultural environment and opportunity to meet people of all nationalities who were searching for light. She then had the opportunity of a theological refresher course in Rome, and on her return she was entrusted with the management of the book center in Manhattan (NY), a crossroads of races and mentalities.

In 1999 she had the joy of being stationed again to Honolulu, Hawaii, a community she loved for its natural beauty and richness of cultures. For nine consecutive years she was daily engaged in the book center, and also served as bursar. In moments of relaxation she took delight in various types of tropical and wild birds. After another term as local superior in Los Angeles, and a time spent in the Toronto (Canada) book center, in 2014 she was assigned as manager of the busy Boston shipping department, a job that required generosity, a great amount of energy, and attention to detail. She made sure that deliveries were made on time and that there was no delay in getting the Word out to people thirsting for truth.

About two years ago, she was diagnosed with endometrial cancer for which she underwent surgery and cycles of chemo and radiotherapy. She hoped and prayed for healing, but when it became clear that her illness was a further call from God, she opened herself to this leap of faith with docility, serenity, and gratitude for the closeness of her sisters. She was especially grateful because the news of her condition had come on the Feast of St Joseph, patron saint of the dying and her special protector. She placed herself humbly in the hands of the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles, taking her consecration seriously and expressing the wish to die in the month dedicated to her. And Mary certainly will have welcomed her last breath and introduced her into the womb of the Trinity. Affectionately.

Rome, 26 May 2021


sr Anna Maria Parenzan