

A PATH MARKED OUT FOR ME



My name is Sr. Teresa Marcazzan and I am the third of four sisters who became Daughters of St. Paul. I also have two brothers who became priests and another sister and two brothers who got married. And finally, our family included a young sister whose death at the age of 11 left a profound mark on all of us. Our parents transmitted to us the Faith and human and Christian virtues, which, together with the actions of our parish priests, shaped our characters and lives.

When I was 11 years old I went to Alba to visit my two sisters, Caterina and Federica, who were at that time aspirants in the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Paul. Once there, I didn't want to go home. I wanted to stay with them. Maestra Amalia, the superior of the community, told me I was too young, even though I pointed out that some of the sisters of the community had entered the Institute when *they* were eleven!

Nevertheless I returned to my family and resumed my studies. When my brother Giuseppe, at that time a seminarian, also went to Alba to visit our sisters some time later, I made him promise that he would promote my cause. I still remember our first meeting after he returned. As we were leaving the parish church after evening prayer, he told me that the Daughters of St. Paul would accept me but only under the conditions set down by our parents, namely: that I would continue my education, return home for summer vacations and not wear a uniform. The reason for all these provisos was that my parents wanted to be sure I was making a free and mature decision. I ran back into the church to thank the Lord and the yes I said to him at that moment was for all my life, even though I had not yet turned fourteen.

After a long period of formation, followed by an experience as formator of the FSP aspirants in Rome, my superiors asked me if I would be willing to go to Uganda as a missionary. My sister Federica had already left for

Chile and my sister Gabriella for Japan, both as Pauline missionaries. I sought the advice of my brother, now Fr. Giuseppe, who simply said: Go! It was 1972. I remember what Primo Maestro wrote to me before my perpetual profession: "Receive my blessing and live in faith. Your way to holiness lies in your Constitutions and in the dispositions of your superiors." My path had been marked out for me.

My life in the missions opened before me unimaginable doors in the apostolate and was filled with a wealth of experiences, which I lived in the spirit of the *Pact*. My Pauline activities ranged from work in the formation sector in Italy, to 12 years of book center work in Uganda, to 33 years of publishing activity in Kenya. I think the greatest gift of this last, very long stretch of my life was the publication of our *African Bible*—the tangible sign of an initiative that emerged and developed in our community, in the climate of an ecumenical Church and with the help of many people.

Publication of the *African Bible* was, for our circumscription, the fulfillment of the invitation of Blessed James Alberione, who urged the Daughters of St. Paul to "offer everyone the truth in love." The Truth is Jesus Christ, but in printed form it is the Bible. The Pauline vocation makes us multipliers of the truth, "which transcends all boundaries and transforms us into its collaborators" (Pope Benedict XVI).

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