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Dear Sisters,

Just a few days after the golden jubilee of religious consecration, yesterday evening at 9:50 p.m., (local time) at the Jubilee Memorial Hospital in Trivandrum (Kerala, India), the good and merciful Father called to live forever in his peace, our sister

PANDANATTU ALEYAMMA Sr ELIZABETH
born in Marangattupally (Palai, India) on 6th April 1947

Last May, while she was with her family for a holiday and to celebrate with her loved ones, Sr Elizabeth was struck by a rare disease, Guillain-Barre syndrome, a form of acute inflammatory polyneuropathy which in a few months led her to a spousal encounter with her Lord and Master. At first cared for with great love by her family, who did everything humanly possible for her, she then returned to the community of Trivandrum. There she was admitted to the hospital and lovingly cared for by the sisters when suddenly yesterday, her condition worsened, but she was now ready for the final meeting with the Bridegroom to whom she had consecrated her whole life from her youth.

Sr Elizabeth entered the Congregation in the house in Mumbai (India) on 18 June 1965, at the age of eighteen, after having graduated from high school. In this central house of the Indian province, she spent her novitiate, which she concluded with her first profession on 29 June 1971. From her youth, she had lived the spirit of the covenant with great awareness: in the requests for admission to the different stages of religious life, there emerged an awareness of her own weakness but also a trusting abandonment into the hands of the Father.

She soon had the opportunity to experience the challenges of the Pauline mission in North East India, in the populous metropolis of Calcutta and in the small community of Shillong, where she dedicated herself for over ten years, with zeal and enthusiasm, to spreading the Gospel in families, schools and parishes. In 1984, she returned to Mumbai for a theological refresher course and continued to dedicate herself to spreading the Gospel with generosity and a spirit of sacrifice. In 1987 she took charge of the warehouse and shipping departments, and five years later she was transferred to Dimapur, in the state of Nagaland, to manage the book center, carrying out the Pauline mission in this area with its distinctly Eastern characteristics. She radiated joy and brought life to the communities with her humorous and jovial nature. She was simple, straightforward, hard-working, open to change and novelty. Because of her precision, love for the apostolate and concern for her sisters, she was entrusted with the service of bursar in the communities of New Delhi, Mangalore and Trivandrum. With a simplicity that was truly proverbial, Sr Elizabeth put each person at ease. She took every care to ensure that the Word could spread among the immense population of the Indian subcontinent and especially among the poor, for whom she had particular concern. She was generous and responsible in everything, a true sister with whom one would willingly share the joys and sufferings of life.

Illness soon came knocking at her door: in 2015 she had to undergo surgery and chemotherapy due to the onset of a tumor for which she was forced to spend long periods in the infirmary of the Mumbai community. But the illness did not keep her to herself—as soon as possible, she was available to visit the Vasai community and help in the book center.

For about four years, she was in the house in Trivandrum, Kerala, where she lived the last stage of her life. Hospitalized for a few months, she lived through the severe suffering that had completely debilitated her, in a spirit of serenity, abandonment and offering. Recently, she had shown signs of improvement, reviving everyone's hope of her recovery, but yesterday, through a cardiopulmonary arrest, the Bridegroom invited her to arise and go to Him: "Arise, my friend... and come!" (Songs 2:10). As we celebrate today the feast of Mary Magdalene, the "apostle of the new and greater hope", we imagine that Sr Elizabeth already recognizes her Lord as the Living One, as she clasps his feet in an affectionate embrace and answers him with immense love: "Rabbuni... Master!"

Affectionately,


sr Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 22 July 2021