

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

At about 4:00 o'clock this morning, one of our sisters in the infirmary wing of our Divine Providence community (Via Antonino Pio), Rome, finished her *good fight of faith* and was called to eternal life:

SCHIRRU GIUSTINA – SR. MARIA ELIANA
born in Oristano, Italy on 9 March 1938.

Sr. Eliana entered the Congregation in the Divine Providence community in Rome on 28 May 1956. After a period of formation and apostolic experience in the Castro Pretorio community, she made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 30 June 1960. It was the day on which the Founder launched a Biblical Year for the Pauline Family and he reminded the newly-professed sisters that “our whole life is a *journey* toward our heavenly homeland” and that “it places you in the hands of the God from whom you came” (cf. FSP60, p.82).

Sr. Eliana began her *journey* as a professed sister in the community of Ascoli Piceno, where she spent her Junioriate carrying out the itinerant apostolate with enthusiasm, a spirit of availability and generosity. After her perpetual profession in 1965 in the Queen of Apostles Sanctuary, Rome, she continued her *journey* in the communities of Cremona, Foggia and Palermo, where she diffused the Gospel to families, institutes and businesses with great commitment.

In 1974, she was transferred to Cantanzaro and then to Turin, where she dedicated herself to promotion of the cinema apostolate in the St. Paul Film Agency there. In Turin, she also had the chance to work for a few years as a book agent, diffusing our Pauline publications to lay book stores in the area. Living *on the move* was the dominant feature of her life.

Following this, she had the opportunity to undergo a time of spiritual updating at our Mother-house in Alba and to lend a hand in the community's large and busy bindery. She was then called to live the Pauline mission in the Arezzo and Sassari book centers, where she worked above all in the audiovisual department and stock room. Subsequently, in Cagliari and Naples, she promoted our Pauline periodicals with perseverance and passion in the local FSP agencies. In Massa, Arezzo and Rome she continued to work with great generosity and cordiality at the book center's service desk, the place of her daily self-offering, which brought her into contact with people of all ages and social classes. Her sociability and witty comments helped to establish a favorable relationship with everyone who approached her.

About ten years ago, while Sr. Eliana was a member of the Queen of Apostles community in Rome, she began to manifest the first signs of Alzheimer's disease. Little by little she lost her memory and the ability to manage her life. But as long as her strength allowed it, she worked with attention, precision and kindness in the community's laundry and ironing room, happy to be useful. Her innate sense of humor enabled her to render the discomforts and disadvantages of her malady more bearable.

But the disease continued its relentless progress and 2013 she was transferred to the St. Paul wing of the Divine Providence community (Via Antonino Pio) where, despite her diminishing strength, she continued to radiate serenity, peace and benevolence. It was clear that Sr. M. Eliana's journey was coming to an end and at dawn today the Divine Master found her worthy to live his own experience: “I came from the Father into the world; now I am leaving the world to go to the Father” (Jn. 16:28). Our sister's *journey* as God's postmistress, filled with joys but also many trials, thus brought her to the doors of eternal life, where she now rejoices in communion with the saints in unending Light.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 17 September 2021