

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

The Lord has once again knocked on our door. We just received the news that at about 4:00 a.m. today (local time), he visited our community of Fianarantsoa, Madagascar to call to contemplate his eternal glory our sister:

RAHARISOA SR. LÉA
born in Fandriana (Fianarantsoa), Madagascar, on 21 February 1978.

In recent days Sr. Léa and several other sisters were struck by a severe form of the flu but, for reasons as yet unknown, Sr. Léa suddenly passed away as a result of it. For a little over a year, she had been the superior of the community of Fianarantsoa, which was opened just four years ago so as to welcome and accompany young Malagasy women in a part of Madagascar rich in vocations.

Sr. Léa entered the Congregation in the community of Antananarive, Madagascar on 23 August 1997, after receiving her high school diploma. She made her postulancy there and in 2001 was sent to Nairobi, Kenya to learn English and to make her novitiate along with other young women from various African nations. She made her first profession on 29 June 2003 in the Delegation house of Antananarive. During her Juniorate, she continued her religious formation and lived a time of apostolic experience in Tulear.

In 2010 Sr. Léa came to Italy to study Italian and participate in the course of preparation for perpetual vows together with a large group of sisters from different continents. It was an unforgettable experience for her. She wrote that she felt strengthened and confirmed in her desire to belong totally to the Lord, the *All* of her life," and that her sense of belonging to the Congregation had deepened. After her perpetual profession, made in Antananarive on 24 June 2012, she returned to Italy for an extended period of study, first obtaining a Baccalaureate in Philosophy from the Pontifical Lateran University and then, in 2016, a License in Biblical Theology from the Gregorian University, where, she said, she had worked to the maximum of her possibilities.

With her characteristic rectitude and fortitude, Sr. Léa then returned to Madagascar to carry out *God's apostolate*, as she called the Pauline mission. She well understood what this meant and tried with all her strength to overcome her shyness in order to be a true Pauline. Her participation in the Congregation's International Meeting for the Apostolate gave her a wonderful opportunity to deepen her spirit of universality and expand her heart to the dimensions of the world.

Due to her academic preparation, Sr. Léa was entrusted with the responsibility of the circumscription's Bible Project, which involved adapting the notes and introductions of the FSP *African Bible* to the specific reality of Madagascar. Trusting in the grace of her vocation, she competently coordinated the work of about a dozen expert biblical scholars, in the fervent belief that if the Word of God was widely read, meditated and disseminated, it would transform the lives of everyone.

Sr. Léa carried out her service as superior of the community of Fianarantsoa and, since last August, also the office of Delegation councilor, with great commitment. Resolved to fostering the growth of her circumscription in love for the Church, she took advantage of every opportunity to encourage the sisters to participate in various ecclesial events. Her life truly testified to her joyful consecration to the Lord and to her profound desire to be guided by him in everything. Sr. Léa's call to heaven, although unexpected, certainly did not find her unprepared. In her request for admission to perpetual profession, she had written: "I believe that the Lord has used everything that has happened to me to fulfill his plan for my life."

Together with our sisters of Madagascar and their families, we adore his plan today, in the certainty that for Sr. Léa—and also for all of us—it is a plan of love, mercy and salvation.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 29 November 2021