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Dearest Sisters,

With deep emotion, we want to inform you that at 4:30 p.m. today, God our merciful Father visited the Verduno Hospital of Cuneo, Italy, to call to himself a fervent Pauline missionary:

RIBONI TERESA – SR. MARIA ELISABETTA
born in Offanengo (Cremona), Italy, on 10 June 1931.

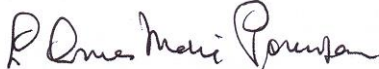
Sr. Elisabetta entered the Congregation in Alba, Italy, on 16 March 1954. After a few years of formation, she completed her novitiate in Rome and made her first profession on 30 June 1957. As a young professed, she carried out several very meaningful apostolic experiences in the communities of Siena and Arezzo. Following her perpetual profession in 1962, she worked for a time in the Center for Non-Pauline Editions in Rome and in our Ravenna book center. At this point, she was ready for the great leap of faith that would take her to the Philippines, but her final destination was an almost entirely-Muslim country: Pakistan.

During the first session Vatican Council II, the Archbishop of Karachi had asked insistently that the Daughters of St. Paul come to his diocese to carry out the Pauline apostolate and take charge of the diocesan typography. Maestra Thecla, who was already ill at that time, asked her Vicar General, M. Ignazia Balla, to study the situation, saying that on her part she would be happy to make this foundation. But many difficulties, some of them seemingly insurmountable, arose on the part of the Pakistani government due to its new immigration laws. Finally, on 15 August 1965, Sr. Elisabetta and two other FSPs arrived in the country's capital, Karachi, one of the most densely-inhabited cities in the world. The sisters' initial experience in the diocesan typography soon ended and they began the apostolate of diffusion to English-speaking families and schools while at the same time studying Urdu, the national language. For Sr. Elisabetta, this was the start of a truly new missionary adventure in a very different and unknown culture, to which she dedicated her life day after day for more than fifty years.

She first lived in Karachi, where over the years she served numerous times as local superior and book center manager. In 1983, when the Congregation's new Pakistani Delegation was set up, she was appointed superior of Lahore, Delegation bursar and community bursar. Afterward, she joyfully returned to Karachi, while still holding the offices of vice delegate, councilor for the economy and local superior. Superior, Delegation and local bursar, book center manager: these were the offices that Sr. Elisabetta held time and again, with great wisdom and love, in the communities of both Lahore and Karachi. In her role as bursar, she entrusted all the Delegation's activities and resources to divine providence. Her immense faith in this divine assistance was very concrete and she steadfastly strove to transmit it to the young Pakistani sisters, urging them to live their vow of poverty by means of a lifestyle characterized by moderation and great trust in the Lord. Even the sturdy buildings that were gradually built were a testament to Sr. Elisabetta's certainty that the Father would not fail to provide the sisters with the economic aid they needed if they lived the spirit of the Pact with great faith. She was especially proud of the house of formation and closely monitored every detail of its construction. She wanted the building to be solid, spacious and ready to welcome many young candidates, who were the future of evangelization in that land.

In 2017, the Lord asked Sr. Elisabetta to take another leap of faith, namely: to return to Italy definitively, leaving her beloved Delegation and its administration in other hands. At first she was sent to the community of Udine, but soon she had to be transferred to Alba because of her deteriorating health. Until the very end, however, Sr. Elisabetta had only one thought, one desire: to give God her *all* for the sake of the Pauline mission in Pakistan, its local vocations and their formation. From Italy, she followed with joy the progress the sisters were making, offering her sufferings and her very life for the Pakistani Delegation.

Her call to heaven came unexpectedly. About a week ago, a serious respiratory problem made it necessary to admit her to Verduno Hospital in Cuneo. Although her situation was critical, Sr. Elisabetta was fully conscious and was greatly comforted by a visit from her family, including one of her brothers, a Consolata Missionary. She also had the joy of saying a final farewell to the sisters of her community. By now everything was ready for the heavenly banquet that awaited her. Today she received the prize promised by the Lord to his faithful apostles and now lives among the saints forever. Affectionately.


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 15 November 2021