

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

At 1:45 a.m. last night, our merciful Father visited our community of Lisbon, Portugal, to call to himself our sister:

**BERTA CATARINA ZELINDA – SR. ANDREIA
born in Concordia, Brazil, on 2 February 1939.**

This dear sister was sent as a missionary to Portugal in 1970 and lived for more than fifty years in our communities there. She was proud to be an apostle and to devote all her energies to spreading the Gospel, even when health problems would have made it advisable for her to rest more.

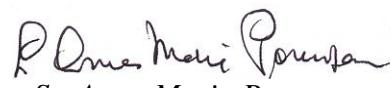
She entered the Congregation in Porto Alegre, Brazil, on 23 March 1953, at the age of fourteen. After a time of formation in this house, she was sent to the Divine Master community in São Paulo to make her novitiate, which concluded with her first profession on 30 June 1961. In his preaching that year, Blessed James Alberione strongly emphasized the pastoral dimension of the Pauline mission, saying: “You must have an apostolic heart, a pastoral heart, and then pastoral activity.... Your energies must be dedicated primarily to propaganda, to disseminating the Word, because we possess treasures, but if we don’t make them available to others...” (FSP61, p. 345). With this yearning in her heart, Sr. Andreia carried out the itinerant apostolate in the community of Rio de Janeiro during her Juniorate. After her perpetual profession in 1966, she was called to the mission *ad gentes*, first in Boston, U.S.A., and then from 1970 onward, in our communities in Portugal.

She lived in Lisbon, Faro and Porto, doing great good and carrying out various services: from that of local superior in Porto and Faro, to work in the book centers, to that of vocationist and errand-runner. But above all, she carried out the mission of “propaganda” with great zeal in every community to which she was assigned. Sr. Andreia gave a great impetus to itinerant diffusion to families, schools, parishes, businesses and holiday resorts. Propaganda was her great love. She didn’t mind that the work was exhausting; instead, she performed it with great generosity, covering hundreds of kilometers up and down the country. Like Paul, she wanted to be *all things to all people* in order to give wings to the Gospel. She had a special fondness for the city of Faro, the nerve center of the Algarve region and an important tourist destination in southern Portugal. She was stationed there several times, most recently from 1998-2017, after which she had to be transferred to the delegation house in Lisbon because of her declining health. In Faro she was widely known everywhere, even on the beaches, for her apostolic fervor and full-time commitment to the Gospel. Especially during the different tourist seasons, she didn’t stick to a fixed schedule, but devoted herself selflessly to the Pauline apostolate by means of book displays and visits to institutes, offices and schools.

About four years ago, Sr. Andreia was obliged to leave the itinerant apostolate and accept a transfer to Lisbon because of her deteriorating physical condition due to spinal surgery and other health issues. Giving up the active apostolate was a step that caused her profound suffering. On 30 September 2021, she was hospitalized because of serious heart problems and lung cancer. The latter condition had been dormant but had suddenly reawakened and spread to her pancreas.

On 14 October she was released from the hospital and returned home, but at that point her physical resources were totally depleted. She was lovingly cared for by the sisters of her community and today, surrounded by them, she surrendered herself into the arms of God the Father in serenity and peace. With confidence, we entrust to Sr. Andreia’s intercession the young people interested in the Pauline life so that, following her example, they too might become bold and fervent apostles, animated by a single, compelling passion: the Gospel of Jesus.

Affectionately,


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan

Rome, 17 December 2021