



ISTITUTO PIA SOCIETÀ
FIGLIE DI S. PAOLO
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Dearest Sisters,

At 11:50 p.m. last night (local time), our merciful Father visited our community of Santiago, Chile, to call to himself one of our sisters just a few days before her golden jubilee of consecrated life:

LIZAMA HERMOSILLA – SR. MARIA HORTENSIA
born in Santiago, Chile, on 1 August 1947.

Sr. Hortensia was a simple, joyful, generous and happy person who spent her energies to the very end for every sister and community, and for the growth of the Pauline mission and presence in Chile.

She entered the Congregation, in the “La Florida” community of Santiago on 8 Dec. 1966. After a time of apostolic experience in Concepción, she made her novitiate in Santiago, concluding it with her first profession on 29 June 1972. Afterward, Sr. Hortensia obtained a diploma in catechesis and participated in several courses for formators so that she could serve as a vocationist and also as a competent and creative formator. She transmitted to young women her love and enthusiasm for the Pauline charism and for the whole Pauline Family, as well as for the Liturgy, music and the various languages of communication. But Sr. Hortensia will be remembered above all for her long curriculum as a much-loved superior. She was a person capable of listening to, encouraging, and welcoming the sisters entrusted to her care, communicating to them her strong sense of belonging to the Congregation and her great love for its mission. She began this service in 1981, first as local superior in Santiago and then in Antofagasta, in northern Chile, before being appointed Delegation Superior while simultaneously serving as local superior in Santiago. Sr. Hortensia’s term as Delegation Superior was renewed twice: in 1990 and 1993.

At the end of this extended period of service in her circumscription, she had the chance to spend a year of renewal and updating in Rome to celebrate her 25th anniversary of religious profession. When she returned to Chile, she was put in charge of ongoing formation and the formation of the circumscription’s juniors. In 2002, she was once again appointed Delegation Superior and reconfirmed in that office for another two consecutive terms.

It was precisely during this period that Sr. Hortensia had the satisfaction of bringing to fruition one of the circumscription’s most desired initiatives and its “crowning achievement”: the construction of the new “Thecla Merlo” house in Santiago—a beautiful and comfortable dwelling capable of accommodating all the Delegation’s sisters, especially its the older and ailing members.

In 2011, while serving as book center coordinator, she accepted the office of Delegation vicar and also that of local superior of Concepción—a community she deeply loved and where she was able to rest in times of great fatigue. Three years later, Sr. Hortensia was once again serving as Delegation Superior in Santiago, in addition to continuing the role of apostolic coordinator. During this time, she took on the responsibility of helping the sisters redesign the Pauline presence in Chile in view of the establishment of the new province of “Southern America,” that would include the Chilean Delegation.

In 2019, Sr. Hortensia returned to Concepción as local superior and it was there that, about a year ago, she was diagnosed as suffering from an advanced stage of cancer. She wrote to the sisters: “Frankly, it has been very hard for me to adjust to this reality, but I am aware that I am not alone in this battle. I am depending on the Lord help me and hold me close to himself and to his Mother, who is also my Mother. I ask you, my sisters, to collaborate with me on this journey in whatever way you can. My own family is already pouring out their love and support. I thank God for everything...” And gratitude to God and to the sisters for all the affection and care she received was the notable feature of the last stage of Sr. Hortensia’s life. Her single, burning desire was to see Jesus. What she had written in block letters on the eve of her perpetual profession was being fulfilled in her life: “Here I am, my God. Here I am to do your will... I love the Church, I love the Congregation. God has seized me so as to consecrate me to himself!”

After a painful agony, surrounded by sisters who loved her dearly and just minutes prior to the opening of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, Sr. Hortensia’s Bridegroom appeared to call her to his side forever. Affectionately,

Rome, 24 June 2022


Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan