

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

At 4:30 this morning, the vigil of the Assumption, Mary—the Gate of Heaven—visited our James Alberione community, Albano, Italy, to accompany into the presence of her divine Son our sister:

ARGENTO MARIA – SR. MARIA STEFANINA
born in Castrofilippo (Agrigento), Italy, on 9 February 1931.

Sr. Stefanina is another sister who leaves to all of us the fragrance of her goodness, kindness, docility, joy and industriousness. These were the qualities that made her a much-loved and esteemed superior in the ten communities in which she was called to carry out this service. In her simplicity, she sincerely desired the good of each person and did her utmost to enrich the Pauline life and adapt our apostolic mission to the needs of the times.

She entered the Congregation in the house in Rome on 5 October 1950, bringing with her the warmth, flavors and hospitality of her beloved Sicily. She made her novitiate in Rome, concluding it with her first profession on 19 March 1954—a Marian Year and the 40th anniversary of the PF.

As a young professed, she was assigned to our Castro Pretorio community, Rome, where she spread the Word of God in the institutes, schools and businesses of the city. After her perpetual profession in 1959, she worked in our Cremona and Reggio Calabria book centers, where she offered everyone, along with a big smile, books and study aids useful for their human and spiritual formation.

In 1970, Sr. Stefanina was transferred to La Spezia, where she began a long curriculum as local superior, interspersed by brief breaks during which she worked in our book centers. In 1975, she was appointed local superior in Messina, and in 1980, she was asked to carry out the same service in Milan. Sr. Stefanina was the first superior of our Paolo Uccello community in that big metropolis, home of the province's new publishing center, which was still taking its first steps. She felt very felt inadequate for the job, but with humility, simplicity and great respect, she accepted this service, always available to respond to the many needs of the community, including as a driver.

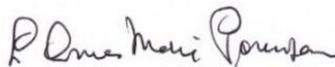
In 1983, she spent some time in our Genoa book center, before resuming the office of local superior, first in Mestre and later in Livorno. After an interval in Trieste, she was appointed superior of Caltanissetta—a service she carried out for two consecutive terms. In 1998, she was made superior of Grosseto and then of Alexandria. But this was not the end of the requests made of her: in Alba, she helped to assist our elderly and sick sisters, and after a short time in Pavia, she once again accepted the role of local superior, this time in Sassari. Sr. Stefanina had no particular desires except to fulfill the will of God as fully as possible. On one occasion, she wrote to the Superior General with deep conviction: "It is Jesus who leads us where he wants, when he wants and how he wants. All he asks of me is complete adherence to his will..."

After another interval in Reggio Emilia, Sr. Stefanina was transferred in 2013 to our James Alberione community, Albano, due to health issues. Her physical deterioration had given rise to serious concern especially with regard to the onset of Alzheimer's disease, which gradually deprived her of the use of speech. But Sr. Stefanina's luminous gaze continued to communicate silently with those around her: she never complained about anything, never manifested any special needs, and instead gave thanks for everything, radiating the peace and serenity that pervaded her heart.

On this eve of the Feast of the Assumption, let us pray for our dearest Stefanina in the words of St. Paul VI, a Pope she loved very much: "Mary, Gate of heaven and mirror of divine light, sanctuary of the Covenant between God and humanity, may our souls take refuge in you. Let them follow in your radiant path, transported by a hope that the world does not have—that of eternal bliss."

Affectionately,

Rome, 14 August 2022


Sr Anna Maria Parenzan